

The Short Stories of Aldous Huxley

Aldous Huxley

Contents

List of Short Stories in Chronological Order	7
List of Short Stories in Alphabetical Order	10
Selected Non-Fiction	13
The Olive Tree and Other Essays	15
Note	17
Writers and Readers	18
T. H. Huxley as a Literary Man	38
Words and Behaviour	55
Modern Fetishism	64
LITERATURE AND EXAMINATIONS	68
English Snobbery	72
Time and the Machine	74
New-Fashioned Christmas	76
Historical Generalizations	78
Crébillon The Younger	81
Justifications	88
D. H. Lawrence	110

B. R. HAYDON	127
Waterworks and Kings	137
In a Tunisian Oasis	138
The Olive Tree	148
 What are You Going to Do About it?	 156
Contents	157
Introduction	157
I	158
II	158
III	159
IV	160
V	160
VI	162
VII	164
VIII	166
IX	168
X	170
XI	173
XII	174
 The Perennial Philosophy	 179
Introduction	182
1. That Art Thou	186
2. The Nature of the Ground	200
3. Personality, Sanctity, Divine Incarnation	211
4. God in the World	227
5. Charity	244
6. Mortification, Non-Attachment, Right Livelihood	255
7. Truth	275

8. Religion and Temperament	290
9. Self-Knowledge	301
10. Grace and Free Will	304
11. Good and Evil	312
12. Time and Eternity	318
13. Salvation, Deliverance, Enlightenment	330
14. Immortality and Survival	338
15. Silence	342
16. Prayer	345
17. Suffering	351
18. Faith	356
19. God is not mocked	359
20. Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum	363
21. Idolatry	368
22. Emotionalism	371
23. The Miraculous	375
24. Ritual, Symbol, Sacrament	377
25. Spiritual Exercises	386
26. Perseverance and Regularity	399
27. Contemplation, Action and Social Utility	401
 Science, Liberty and Peace	 407
I.	408
II.	422

The Devils of Loudun	439
Chapter One	440
Chapter Two	464
Chapter Three	481
II	484
III	488
Chapter Four	501
Chapter Five	518
Chapter Six	529
Chapter Seven	542
II	551
Chapter Eight	565
Chapter Nine	588
Chapter Ten	609
Chapter Eleven	623
Epilogue	645
 The Doors of Perception	 655
William Blake	657
 Heaven and Hell	 686
Contents	688
Foreword	689
Introduction	690
Appendix I	711
Appendix II	714
Appendix III	717
Appendix IV	723
Appendix V	724
Appendix VI	725
Appendix VII	726
Appendix VIII	727

Brave New World Revisited	728
Contents	730
Foreword	731
I. Over-Population	732
II. Quantity, Quality, Morality	738
III. Over-Organization	739
IV. Propaganda in a Democratic Society	746
V. Propaganda Under a Dictatorship	750
VI. The Arts of Selling	754
VII. Brainwashing	760
VIII. Chemical Persuasion	765
IX. Subconscious Persuasion	770
X. Hypnopaedia	774
XI. Education for Freedom	780
XII. What Can Be Done?	786

List of Short Stories in Chronological Order

- FARCICAL HISTORY OF RICHARD GREENOW
- HAPPILY EVER AFTER
- EUPOMPUS GAVE SPLENDOUR TO ART BY NUMBERS
- HAPPY FAMILIES
- CYNTHIA
- THE BOOKSHOP
- THE DEATH OF LULLY
- THE GIOCONDA SMILE
- PERMUTATIONS AMONG THE NIGHTINGALES
- THE TILLOTSON BANQUET
- GREEN TUNNELS
- NUNS AT LUNCHEON
- UNCLE SPENCER
- LITTLE MEXICAN
- HUBERT AND MINNIE
- FARD
- THE PORTRAIT
- YOUNG ARCHIMEDES
- TWO OR THREE GRACES
- HALF-HOLIDAY
- THE MONOCLE
- FAIRY GODMOTHER
- CHAWDRON
- THE REST CURE
- THE CLAXTONS

- AFTER THE FIREWORKS
- EUPOMPUS GAVE SPLENDOUR TO ART BY NUMBERS
- SIR HERCULES

List of Short Stories in Alphabetical Order

- AFTER THE FIREWORKS
- CHAWDRON
- CYNTHIA
- EUPOMPUS GAVE SPLENDOUR TO ART BY NUMBERS
- EUPOMPUS GAVE SPLENDOUR TO ART BY NUMBERS
- FAIRY GODMOTHER
- FARCICAL HISTORY OF RICHARD GREENOW
- FARD
- GREEN TUNNELS
- HALF-HOLIDAY
- HAPPILY EVER AFTER
- HAPPY FAMILIES
- HUBERT AND MINNIE
- LITTLE MEXICAN
- NUNS AT LUNCHEON
- PERMUTATIONS AMONG THE NIGHTINGALES
- SIR HERCULES
- THE BOOKSHOP
- THE CLAXTONS
- THE DEATH OF LULLY
- THE GIOCONDA SMILE
- THE MONOCLE
- THE PORTRAIT
- THE REST CURE
- THE TILLOTSON BANQUET

- TWO OR THREE GRACES
- UNCLE SPENCER
- YOUNG ARCHIMEDES

Selected Non-Fiction

Huxley's last home and where he died was located at the top of Mulholland Highway, beneath the first "O" in the Hollywood sign.

The Olive Tree and Other Essays

CONTENTS

- NOTE
- WRITERS AND READERS
- T. H. HUXLEY AS A LITERARY MAN]
- WORDS AND BEHAVIOUR
- MODERN FETISHISM
- LITERATURE AND EXAMINATIONS
- ENGLISH SNOBBERY
- TIME AND THE MACHINE
- NEW-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS
- HISTORICAL GENERALIZATIONS
- CRÉBILLON THE YOUNGER
- JUSTIFICATIONS
- D. H. LAWRENCE
- B. R. HAYDON
- WATERWORKS AND KINGS
- IN A TUNISIAN OASIS
- THE OLIVE TREE

Note

GRATEFUL THANKS ARE due to the following for their kind permission to reprint certain of these essays: To Messrs. Macmillan and Co. Ltd., for 'T. H. Huxley as a Literary Man'; to Messrs. William Heinemann Ltd., for the Introduction to 'The Letters of D. H. Lawrence'; and to Messrs. Peter Davies Ltd., for 'B. R. Haydon.'

The essays entitled 'Crébillon the Younger' and 'In a Tunisian Oasis' were included in the author's 'Essays New and Old,' published in a limited edition in 1926. The remaining essays in this volume have not previously appeared in book form.

Writers and Readers

IN EUROPE AND America universal primary education has created a reading public which is practically co-extensive with the adult population. Demand has called forth a correspondingly huge supply: twenty thousand million pounds of wood pulp and esparto grass are annually blackened with printer's ink; the production of newspapers takes rank, in many countries, among the major industries; in English, French and German alone, forty thousand new books are published every year.

A vast activity of writers, a vast and hungry passivity of readers. And when the two come together, what happens? How much and in what ways do the readers respond to the writers? What is the extent, what the limitations, of the influence exercised by writers on their readers? How do extraneous circumstances affect that influence? What are the laws of its waxing and its waning? Hard questions; and the more one thinks about them, the harder they seem. But seeing that they are of intimate concern to all of us (for all of us are readers, with an annual average consumption of probably a million words a year), it will be worth while at least to look for the answers.

The relations existing between scientific writers and their readers are governed by rules agreed upon in advance. So far as we are concerned, there is no problem of scientific literature; and I shall therefore make no further reference to the subject. For the purposes of this analysis, non-scientific writing may be divided into three main classes. In the first we place that vast corpus of literature which is not even intended to have any positive effect upon the reader — all that doughy, woolly, anodyne writing that exists merely to fill a gap of leisure, to kill time and prevent thought, to deaden and diffuse emotion. To a considerable extent reading has become, for almost all of us, an addiction, like cigarette-smoking. We read, most of the time, not because we wish to instruct ourselves, not because we long to have our feelings touched and our imagination fired, but because reading is one of our bad habits, because we suffer when we have time to spare and no printed matter with which to plug the void. Deprived of their newspapers or a novel, reading-addicts will fall back on cookery books, on the literature that is wrapped round bottles of patent medicine, on those instructions for keeping the contents crisp which are printed on the outside of boxes of breakfast cereals. On anything. Of this kind of literature — the literature that exists merely because the second nature of habituated readers abhors a vacuum — it is unnecessary to say more than that there is a great deal of it and that it effectively performs its function.

Into the second class I put the two main types of propagandist literature — that which aims at modifying the religious and ethical opinions and the personal behaviour

of its readers, and that which aims at modifying their social, political and economic opinions and behaviour.

For the sake of convenience, and because it must be given a name, we will call the third class imaginative literature. Such literature does not set out to be specifically propagandist, but may none the less profoundly affect its readers' habits of thought, feeling and action.

Let us begin with the propagandists.

What hosts of them there are! All over the world thousands of men and women pass their whole lives denouncing, instructing, commanding, cajoling, imploring their fellows. With what results? One finds it rather hard to say. Most propagandists do their work in the dark, draw bows at a venture. They write; but they don't know how far they will succeed in influencing their readers, nor what are the best means for influencing them, nor how long their influence will last. There is, as yet, no science of propaganda.

This fact may seem the more surprising when we reflect that there is something not far removed from a science of advertising. In the course of years advertisers have come to be fairly expert at selling things to the public. They know accurately enough the potentialities and limitations of different kinds of propaganda — what you can do, for example, by mere statement and repetition; by appeals to such well-organized sentiments as snobbery and the urge towards social conformity; by playing on the animal instincts, such as greed, lust and especially fear in all its forms, from the fear of sickness and death to the fear of being ugly, absurd or physically repugnant to one's fellows.

If, then, commercial propagandists know their business so well, why is it that ethical and political propagandists should know theirs on the whole so badly? The answer is that the problems with which the advertisers have to deal are fundamentally unlike the problems which confront moralists and, in most cases, politicians. A great deal of advertising is concerned with matters of no importance whatsoever. Thus, I need soap; but it makes not the smallest difference to me whether I buy soap manufactured by X or soap manufactured by Y. This being so, I can allow myself to be influenced in my choice by such entirely irrelevant considerations as the sex appeal of the girl who smiles so alluringly from X's posters, or the puns and comic drawings on Y's. In many cases, of course, I do not need the commodity at all. But as I have a certain amount of money to spare and am possessed by the strange desire to collect unnecessary objects, I succumb easily to anyone who asks me to buy superfluities and luxuries. In these cases commercial propaganda is an invitation to give in to a natural or acquired craving. In no circumstances does it ever call upon the reader to resist a temptation; always it begs him to succumb. It is not very difficult to persuade people to do what they are all longing to do.

When readers are asked to buy luxuries and superfluities, or to choose between two brands of the same indispensable necessity, nothing serious is at stake. Advertising is concerned, in these cases, with secondary and marginal values. In other cases, however,

it matters or seems to matter a great deal whether the reader allows himself to be influenced by the commercial propagandist or no. Suffering from some pain or physical disability, he is told of the extraordinary cures effected by M's pills or N's lotion. Naturally, he buys at once. In such cases the advertiser has only to make the article persuasively known; the reader's urgent need does the rest.

Ethical and political propagandists have a very different task. The business of the moralist is to persuade people to overcome their egotism and their personal cravings, in the interest either of a supernatural order, or of their own higher selves, or of society. The philosophies underlying the ethical teaching may vary; but the practical advice remains in all cases the same, and this advice is in the main unpleasant; whereas the advice given by commercial propagandists is in the main thoroughly pleasant. There is only one fly in the ointment offered by commercial propagandists; they want your money. Some political propagandists are also moralists; they invite their readers to repress their cravings and set limits to their egotistical impulses, to work and suffer for some cause which is to bring happiness in the future. Others demand no personal effort from their readers — merely their adherence to a party, whose success will save the world automatically and, so to speak, from the outside. The first has to persuade people to do something which is on the whole disagreeable. The second has to persuade them of the correctness of a policy which, though it imposes no immediate discomforts, admittedly brings no immediate rewards. Both must compete with other propagandists. The art of political propaganda is much less highly developed than the art of commercial propaganda; it is not surprising.

Long experience has taught the moralists that the mere advertising of virtue is not enough to make people virtuous. During the last few thousands of years, incalculable quantities of hortatory literature have been produced in every civilized country of the world. The moral standard remains, none the less, pretty low. True, if all this ethical propaganda had never been made, the standard might be even lower. We can't tell. I suspect, however, that if we could measure it, we should find that the mechanical efficiency of ethical propaganda through literature was seldom in excess of one per cent. In individual cases and where, for some reason, circumstances are peculiarly favourable, written propaganda may be more efficient than in others. But, in general, if people behave as well as they do, it is not because they have read about good behaviour and the social or metaphysical reasons for being virtuous; it is because they have been subjected, during childhood, to a more or less intensive, more or less systematic training in good behaviour. The propagandists of morality do not rely exclusively or even mainly on the written word.

Unlike the advertisers, political and social propagandists generally work in the dark and are quite uncertain as to the kind of effects they will be able to produce upon their readers. Propagandists themselves seldom admit this fact. Like the rest of us, they like to insist upon their own importance. Moreover, there has been a tendency among historians and political theorists to lend support to their claims. This is not surprising. Being themselves professional writers, historians and political theorists are naturally

prone to exaggerate the significance of literature. In most studies of modern history, a great deal of space is devoted to the analysis of different political and economic theories; and it is tacitly or explicitly assumed that the propagation of these theories in the writings of literary men had a more or less decisive influence on the course of history. In other and more reverberant words, the literary men are credited with having 'built Nineveh with their sighing and Babel itself with their mirth.' Let us try to discover how far the facts confirm or invalidate this proud claim.

Consider the propagandist activities of the periodical press. Rich men and politicians have a fixed belief that if they can control the press they will be able to control public opinion — to control it even in a country where democratic institutions are allowed to function without gross interference. They buy up newspapers — partly in order to make money (for the production of newspapers is a very profitable industry), but mainly in the confident hope of being able to persuade the electorate to do what they want it to do. But in fact, as recent history proves, they fail just as often as they succeed. Thus, we see that the electoral successes of the English Liberal Party before the war, and of the Labour Party after, were won in the teeth of opposition by a newspaper press that was and is overwhelmingly conservative. It can be shown by a simple arithmetical calculation that there must be millions of English men and women who regularly read a tory newspaper and regularly vote against the tories. The same is true of France, where it is clear that many readers of the conservative press vote socialist and even communist at elections. We are led to two conclusions: first, that most people choose their daily paper, not for its opinions, but for its entertainingness, its capacity to amuse and fill the vacancies of leisure. Second, that written propaganda is less efficacious than the habits and prejudices, the class loyalties and professional interests of the readers.

Nor must we forget that propaganda is largely at the mercy of circumstances. Sometimes circumstances fight against propaganda; at other times, they fight no less effectively on its side. Thus, during the khaki election which returned the first Coalition Government under Lloyd George, and during the gold-standard election of 1931, circumstances fought on the same side as the majority of press propagandists — and fought with tremendous effect. Significant, in this context, is the case of Allied propaganda during the World War. Up till the summer of 1918 the propaganda designed to undermine the will-to-fight of the German troops was almost perfectly ineffective. During and after that summer, when hunger and a series of unsuccessful battles had prepared the ground for it, this propaganda achieved its purpose. But the leaflets which Lord Northcliffe's organization scattered with such good effect during July and August could have done absolutely nothing to discourage the German troops during their victorious offensive against Saint-Quentin in the month of March.

Propaganda by even the greatest masters of style is as much at the mercy of circumstances as propaganda by the worst journalists. Ruskin's diatribes against machinery and the factory system influenced only those who were in an economic position similar to his own; on those who profited by machinery and the factory system they had

no influence whatever. From the beginning of the twelfth century to the time of the Council of Trent, denunciations of ecclesiastical and monastic abuses were poured forth almost without intermission. And yet, in spite of the eloquence of great writers and great churchmen, like St. Bernard and St. Bonaventura, nothing was done. It needed the circumstances of the Reformation to produce the counter-Reformation. Upon his contemporaries the influence of Voltaire was enormous. Lucian had as much talent as Voltaire and wrote of religion with the same disintegrating irony. And yet, so far as we can judge, his writings were completely without effect. The Syrians of the second century were busily engaged in converting themselves to Christianity and a number of other Oriental religions; Lucian's irony fell on ears that were deaf to everything but theology and occultism. In France, during the first half of the eighteenth century, a peculiar combination of historical circumstances had predisposed the educated to a certain religious and political scepticism; people were ready and eager to welcome Voltaire's attacks on the existing order of things. Political and religious propaganda is effective, it would seem, only upon those who are already partly or entirely convinced of its truth.

Let us consider a modern example. Since the war two well-written and persuasive pieces of propaganda have figured among the very best of best-sellers — I refer to Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and H. G. Wells's *Outline of History*. In Europe and America many millions of people read the German's indictment of war and the Englishman's plea for internationalism. With what results? It is hard indeed to say. All that we can be sure of is that nationalistic feeling was never so acutely inflamed as it is to-day and the expenditure on armaments never higher. Once more, circumstances have been more effective in moulding men's minds than conscious literary propagandists. The influence of Wells and Remarque, which was doubtless considerable at the time of the appearance of their books, lasted only as long as the post-war disgust with fighting and the post-war era of prosperity. A new generation, whose members had no first-hand knowledge of war, came to maturity, and along with it appeared the great depression. In the desperate effort to preserve a local prosperity, governments raised tariffs, established quotas, subsidized exports. Economic nationalism was everywhere intensified. For every people all foreigners were automatically transformed into enemies. At the same time despair and the sense of having been wronged, of being the victims of a monstrous injustice, were driving millions to seek consolation and a vicarious triumph in the religion of nationalism. Why, we may ask in passing, did these unhappy victims of war choose nationalism as their consolation rather than Christianity? The reason is to be sought, not in the superior efficacy of nationalist propaganda, but in the historical situation as a whole. The prestige of science is not sufficiently great to induce men to apply scientific methods to the affairs of social and individual existence; it is great enough, however, to make them reject the tenets of the transcendental religions. For a large part of the population, science has made the Christian dogmas intellectually unacceptable. Contemporary superstition is therefore compelled to assume a positivistic form. The desire to worship persists, but since modern men find

it impossible to believe in any but observable entities, it follows that they must vent this desire upon gods that can be actually seen and heard, or whose existence can at least be easily inferred from the facts of immediate experience. Nations and dictators are only too clearly observable. It is on these tribal deities that the longing to worship now vents itself. One of the oddest and most unexpected results of scientific progress has been the general reversion from monotheism to local idolatries. The beginnings of this process are clearly observable among the German philosophers at the opening of the nineteenth century. Take a Moravian Brother; endow him with a great deal of intelligence, and subject him to a good eighteenth-century education and a first-hand experience of invasion and foreign tyranny; the result will be a deeply religious man, incapable of finding intellectual satisfaction in the traditional Christianity of his childhood, but ready to pour out all his devotion, all his will-to-worship, upon the nation. In a single word, the result will be Fichte. In Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, the religion of Nazism is to a great extent anticipated. But whereas the Nazis have invented a jargon of their own, Fichte, it is significant, still employs the language of Pietism. He writes of patriotic experiences in the same words as were used by the Moravians to describe religious experiences. In Fichte, as well as in a number of his less eminent contemporaries, we can actually study an intermediate type between two distinct species — the revivalist Christian and the revivalist nation-worshipper. Since the introduction of universal education innumerable people have gone through a process akin to that which caused Fichte to become dissatisfied with the Pietism of his childhood and made it natural for him to seek another outlet for his will-to-worship. The Napoleonic invasion gave intensity to Fichte's religion of nationalism; defeat and an imperfect victory in the World War have done the same for the Germans and Italians of our own generation. In a word, the historical circumstances of recent years have conspired to intensify nationalism and throw discredit on internationalism, whether religious or political, whether based on Christian theology or a rationalistic view of the world. At the same time, of course, governments have deliberately fostered nationalistic fervour to serve their own political purposes. To these causes must be added the apparently normal human tendency to delight in periodical changes of intellectual and emotional fashion. The very popularity of an author during a certain period is a reason why he should become unpopular later on. The conversions due to the preaching of Wells and Remarque were in general superficial and short-lived. It is not to be wondered at.

But now, let us suppose for the sake of argument, that these conversions had been for the most part profound and, in spite of changed conditions, lasting. Would that fact have greatly altered the present situation, so long as the world's rulers had remained unconverted? It is possible to argue that the really influential book is not that which converts ten millions of casual readers, but rather that which converts the very few who, at any given moment, succeed in seizing power. Marx and Sorel have been influential in the modern world, not so much because they were best-sellers (Sorel in particular was not at all a widely read author), but because among their few readers were two men,

called respectively Lenin and Mussolini. In a less spectacular way, but still profoundly, the writings of Jeremy Bentham affected the course of nineteenth-century history. Their circulation was not large; but they counted among their readers men like Chadwick, Grote, Romilly, Brougham — administrators, educationists, legal reformers, who did their best to put into practice what Bentham had preached. It may be that the future ruler of some great country will grow up with a passion for Wells. In that case, *The Outline* will be not merely a record of past history, but indirectly a maker of history to come. Up to the present, in spite of its circulation, it has not affected the course of history.

Social and political propaganda, as I have said, is effective, as a rule, only upon those whom circumstances have partly or completely convinced of its truth. In other words, it is influential only when it is a rationalization of the desires, sentiments, prejudices or interests of those to whom it is addressed. A theology or a political theory may be defined as an intellectual device for enabling people to do in cold blood things which, without the theology or the theory, they could only do in the heat of passion. Circumstances, whether external or internal and purely psychological, produce in certain persons a state of discontent, for example, a desire for change, a passionate aspiration for something new. These emotional states may find occasional outlet in violent but undirected activity. But now comes the writer with a theology or a political theory, in terms of which these vague feelings can be rationalized. The energy developed by the prevailing passions of the masses is given a direction and at the same time strengthened and made continuous. Sporadic outbursts are converted by the rationalization into purposive and unremitting activity. The mechanism of successful propaganda may be roughly summed up as follows. Men accept the propagandist's theology or political theory, because it apparently justifies and explains the sentiments and desires evoked in them by the circumstances. The theory may, of course, be completely absurd from a scientific point of view; but this is of no importance so long as men believe it to be true. Having accepted the theory, men will work in obedience to its precepts even in times of emotional tranquillity. Moreover, the theory will often cause them to perform in cold blood acts which they would hardly have performed even in a state of emotional excitement.

Our nature abhors a moral and intellectual vacuum. Passion and self-interest may be our chief motives; but we hate to admit the fact even to ourselves. We are not happy unless our acts of passion can be made to look as though they were dictated by reason, unless self-interest be explained and embellished so as to seem to be idealistic. Particular grievances call not only for redress, but also for the formulation of universally valid reasons why they should be redressed. Particular cravings cry aloud to be legitimized in terms of a rational philosophy and a traditionally acceptable ethic. The moral and intellectual vacuum is perpetually in process of formation, and it sucks into itself whatever explanatory or justificatory writing happens at the moment to be available. Clean or dirty, brackish or sweet — any water will serve the turn of a pump that has been emptied of its air. And, analogously, any philosophical writing, good, bad or

indifferent, will serve the turn of people who are under the compulsion of desire or of self-interest, and who consequently feel the need of intellectual and moral justification. Hence the extraordinary success, at a particular historical moment, of books that, to a later generation, seem almost completely valueless; hence the temporary importance and power of manifestly second-rate and negligible writers. Let us consider a concrete example. The organization of eighteenth-century French society was hopelessly inefficient, and its pattern so anachronistic that great numbers of individual Frenchmen, unable to fit into the scheme of things, suffered acute discomfort. The sense of grievance and the desire for change were intense; and correspondingly intense was the desire for a philosophy that should rationalize this desire and legitimize this grievance in terms of pure reason and absolute justice. Yearning to be filled, the moral and intellectual vacuum sucked into itself whatever writings were available. Among these was the *De l'Esprit* of Helvétius. This is a thoroughly bad book, full of preposterous stuff. But though obviously untrue, some of its theses (such as that which affirmed the equality of all intellects and the consequent possibility of transforming any child at will into a Newton or a Raphael) were well suited to rationalize and justify the contemporary claims for political, religious and economic reform. During a few years the book was invested with a significance, and exercised an influence, which its intrinsic literary and philosophical merits could not justify. Its fortune was made, not by the ability of its author, but by the needs of its readers.

There have been writers whose influence depended neither on their own powers, nor yet on the necessities of their readers, but simply upon fashion. To us, the writings of most of the original fourteenth- and fifteenth-century humanists seem wholly unreadable. Nor are we singular in our judgment; for within a hundred years their works had fallen into an almost complete oblivion. And yet, for their contemporaries, these works were exciting and persuasive. The fact that a man could turn out a tolerably specious imitation of Cicero or Sallust was, for two whole generations of Renaissance readers, a sufficient reason for attaching importance to what he wrote. Gian Galeazzo Visconti of Milan was often heard to say that a thousand Florentine cavalry could not do him so much harm as a single Latin letter from the Chancellor of Florence, the humanist Coluccio Salutati. The rediscovery of ancient literature was an event of profound significance. It is easy to understand why so much importance came to be attached, during the fifteenth century, to pure Latinity: why it was that scholars like Valla and Poggio should have wielded such extraordinary power. But the fashion which, a century later, invested the ruffianly Pietro Aretino with the almost magical prestige that had belonged to the original humanists is wholly unaccountable. Aretino was a lively writer, some of whose works can still be read with interest. But why he should have wielded the influence that he did, and why all the kings and princes in Europe should have thought it worth while to pay him blackmail, are mysteries which we cannot explain, except by saying that for some reason he became the mode.

At every period of history certain writings are regarded by all or some members of a given society as being *ex hypothesi* true. They are therefore charged with an

unquestionable authority. To show that this authority is on the side of the cause he supports has always been one of the propagandist's tasks. Where it is not possible for him to make them serve his purposes the propagandist has to discredit the existing authorities. The devil opens the attack by quoting Scripture; then, when the quotations fail him, trots out the Higher Criticism and shows that Scripture has no more authority than the *Pickwick Papers*. At any given moment there are certain fixed landmarks of authority; the propaganda of the period has to orientate itself in relation to these landmarks. Correct orientation to existing authority is one of the conditions making for success of propaganda.

We see, then, that the effectiveness of propaganda is determined by the circumstances of the time when it is written. These circumstances are of two kinds — circumstances external to the individual, and internal or psychological circumstances. External circumstances may change catastrophically, as during a war; or gradually, as when means of production are altered and economic prosperity is increased or diminished. Changes in external circumstances are, of course, accompanied by changes in internal circumstances. But internal circumstances may also change on their own account, independently, to a certain extent, of external circumstances and according to an autonomous rhythm of their own. History pursues an undulatory course; and these undulations are the result, to some extent at least, of the tendency displayed by human beings to react, after a certain time, away from the prevailing habits of thought and feeling towards other habits. (This process is greatly complicated by the fact that in modern heterogeneous societies there are numerous co-existing groups with different habits of thought and feeling. But it is unnecessary to discuss these complications here.) The autonomous nature of psychological undulations is confirmed by the facts of history. Thus the ardour of all violently active religious and political movements has generally given place to relative indifference and worldliness after a period of anything from a few months to twenty-five years.

'All active religions,' writes Professor Crane Brinton, in the concluding paragraph of his recently published *Decade of Revolution*, 'tend to become inactive within a generation at most. The wise, experienced and consistently inactive religious institution known as the Roman Catholic Church has always been threatened by outbreaks of active religion. Until Luther, at least, such outbreaks were tamed, strait-jacketed with laws and institutions. . . . Since the Reformation the great outbreaks of active religion have taken place outside the Church of Rome. Of these, the earliest, Calvinism, has long since been sobered. . . . The second, Jacobinism, has in the Third Republic made its compromise with the flesh. . . . The third, Marxism, would appear to the outsider to be entering the inactive stage, at least in Russia.' It is worth while to illustrate the undulations of history by a few concrete examples. It took the Franciscan movement about twenty years to lose the passion of its early zeal. Francis founded his first cell in 1209, and the Bull by which Gregory IX set aside his Testament and permitted trustees to hold and administer property for the benefit of the Order was promulgated in 1230. The French Revolution had its Thermidorean reaction after only five years,

Savonarola ruled the city of Florence for eight years; but the popular reaction against his movement of religious and moral reform had begun some time before the end. The great Kentucky Revival lasted from 1797 to about 1805; but the Welsh Revival of 1904 was over in two years.

It is probably true to say that movements make up in duration what they lack in intensity. Thus, it seems to have taken a full generation for educated Englishmen to react away from the genteel religious scepticism which prevailed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Addison complained that in his time the very appearances of Christianity had vanished; Leibniz could record the fact that in England even 'natural religion' was languishing. And these are opinions which the facts confirm. The literature of unbelief was as popular as fiction. For example, Woolston's Discourses against miracles sold upwards of thirty thousand copies. But a change was at hand. In a letter dated 1776 and addressed to Gibbon on the publication of the first volume of his history, Hume summed up his impressions of contemporary English thought in the following words: 'Among many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in England prognosticates the fall of philosophy and decay of taste.' Fourteen years later, in 1790, Burke remarked that 'not one man born within the last forty years has read a word of Collins, Toland, Tyndal, or of any of that flock of so-called free-thinkers. Atheism is not only against our reason; it is against our instinct.' Forty years is probably a pretty accurate computation. Charles Wesley was converted in 1736 and John in 1738. By 1750 the movement of which those conversions were at once a symptom and a cause must have gone far enough to spoil the market for deistic literature. After several minor fluctuations, a new period of educated scepticism set in about the middle of the nineteenth century and was succeeded towards the end of the century by another reaction towards faith. Owing, however, to the assaults of nineteenth-century rationalism, this new faith could not be exclusively Christian or transcendental in character, but expressed itself in terms of a variety of pseudo-religious forms, of which the most important was nationalism. Rudyard Kipling was the early twentieth-century equivalent of Cardinal Newman and Wesley. The mistake of all propagandists has been to suppose that the psychological movement which they observe in the society around them is destined to go on continuously in the same direction. Thus we see that in a time of scepticism, sceptical propagandists announce with triumph that superstition is dead and reason triumphant. In a time of religious reaction, Christian and nationalistic propagandists announced with equal satisfaction and certainty that scepticism has for ever been destroyed. Both, it is hardly necessary to say, are wrong. The course of history is undulatory, because (among other reasons) self-conscious men and women easily grow tired of a mode of thought and feeling which has lasted for more than a certain time. Propaganda gives force and direction to the successive movements of popular feeling and desire; but it does not do much to create those movements. The propagandist is a man who canalizes an already existing stream. In a land where there is no water, he digs in vain.

In a democratic state, any propagandist will have rivals competing with him for the support of the public. In totalitarian states there is no liberty of expression for writers and no liberty of choice for their readers. There is only one propagandist — the State.

That all-powerful rulers who make a regular use of terrorism should also be the most active propagandists known to history seems at first sight paradoxical. But you can do anything with bayonets except sit on them. Even a despot cannot govern for any length of time without the consent of his subjects. Dictatorial propaganda aims first of all at the legitimizing in popular estimation of the dictator's government. Old-established governments do not need to produce certificates of legitimacy. Long habit makes it seem 'natural' to people that they should be ruled by an absolute or constitutional monarch, by a republican president, by a prince bishop, by an oligarchy of senatorial families — whichever the case may be. New rulers have to prove that they have not usurped their title, but possess some higher right to govern than the mere fact of having grabbed power. Usurpation, like any other crime, has to justify itself in terms of the prevailing code of values — in terms, that is to say, of the very system which brands it as a crime. For example, in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there were two acknowledged sources of political power: the Empire and the Church. For this reason the men who had succeeded, by fraud or violence, in seizing the government of a city, generally hastened to have themselves appointed Vicars of the Church or Hereditary Captains of the Empire. To be able to tyrannize effectively they needed the title and appearance of constitutional authority. Since the French Revolution the recognized sources of power have been the People and the Nation. When modern despots have to legitimize their usurpations they do so in terms of nationalism and of that humanitarian democracy they themselves have overthrown. They issue propaganda to prove that their regime is for the good of the people or else, if the economic facts make nonsense of such a claim, for the good of that mystical entity, different from and superior to the mere individuals composing it, the Nation. But the general acknowledgment that his government is legitimate is not enough for the totalitarian dictator; he demands from his subjects that they shall all think and feel alike, and he uses every device of propaganda in order to make them think and feel alike. Complete psychological homogeneity occurs among primitive peoples. But the conditions of such homogeneity are, first, that the population shall be small; secondly, that it shall live in an isolation due either to geography or to the exclusiveness of the local religion; and, thirdly, that its system of production shall be more or less completely unspecialized. European dictators may wish and try to make their peoples as homogeneous as a tribe of Melanesians, to impose upon them a conformity as complete as that which exists among the Australian aborigines. But circumstances must finally prove too strong for them. Fifty million professionally specialized men and women cannot live together without emphasizing one another's natural diversities. Nor, with the best will in the world, can the dictator isolate himself from all contact with the outside world. This is one of the reasons why, in the long run, he is bound to fail. Meanwhile, he is sure of at least a partial and temporary success. Dictatorial

propaganda demands obedience and even considerable financial and other sacrifices; but by way of compensation it assures the individual that, as a member of a chosen nation, race, or class, he is superior to all other individuals in the world; it dissipates his sense of personal inferiority by investing him with the vicarious glory of the community; it gives him reasons for thinking well of himself, it provides with enemies whom he may blame for his own shortcomings and upon whom he may vent his latent brutality and love of bullying. Commercial propaganda is acceptable, because it encourages men and women to satisfy their sensuous cravings and offers them escapes from their physical pains and discomforts. Dictatorial propaganda, which is always nationalistic or revolutionary propaganda, is acceptable because it encourages men and women to give free rein to their pride, vanity and other egotistical tendencies, and because it provides them with psychological devices for overcoming their sense of personal inferiority. Dictatorial propaganda promotes the ugly reality of prejudice and passion to the rank of an ideal. Dictators are the popes of nationalism; and the creed of nationalism is that what ought to be is merely what is, only a good deal more so. All individuals seek justifications for such passions as envy, hatred, avarice and cruelty; by means of nationalistic and revolutionary propaganda, dictators provide them with such justifications. It follows, therefore, that this propaganda of the dictators is certain to enjoy a certain temporary popularity. In the long run, as I have said, the impossibility of reducing a huge, educated population to the spiritual homogeneity of a savage tribe will tell against it. Furthermore, human beings have a strong tendency towards rationality and decency. (If they had not, they would not desire to legitimize their prejudices and their passions.) A doctrine that identifies what ought to be with the lowest elements of actual reality cannot remain acceptable for long. Finally, policies based upon a tribal morality simply won't work in the modern world. The danger is that, in process of proving that they don't work, the dictators may destroy that world.

Dictatorial propaganda may be classified under two heads: negative and positive. Positive propaganda consists of all that is written, negative propaganda, of all that is not written. In all dictatorial propaganda, silence is at least as important as speech, suppressio veri as suggestio falsi. Indeed, the negative propaganda of silence is probably more effective as an instrument of persuasion and mental regimentation than speech. Silence creates the conditions in which such words as are spoken or written take most effect.

An excess of positive propaganda evokes boredom and exasperation in the minds of those to whom it is addressed. Advertising experts are well aware that, after a certain point, an increase in the pressure of salesmanship produces rapidly diminishing and finally negative returns. What is true of commercial propaganda seems to be equally true, in this respect, of political propaganda. Thus, most observers agree that at the Danzig elections, the Nazi propagandists harmed their cause by 'protesting too much.' Danzig, however, was a free city; the opposition was allowed to speak and the ground had not been prepared for positive propaganda by a preliminary course of silence and suppression. What are the effects of excessive positive propaganda within the totali-

tarian state? Reliable evidence is not available. Significant, however, in this context is the decline, since the advent of Nazism, in the circulation of German newspapers. Protesting too much and all in the same way, the propagandists succeeded only in disgusting their readers. *Suppressio veri* has one enormous advantage over *suggestio falsi*: in order to say nothing, you do not have to be a great stylist. People may get bored with positive propaganda; but where negative propaganda is so effective that there is no alternative to the spoken and written suggestions that come to them, all but the most independent end by accepting those suggestions.

The propagandists of the future will probably be chemists and physiologists as well as writers. A cachet containing three-quarters of a gramme of chloral and three-quarters of a milligram of scopolamine will produce in the person who swallows it a state of complete psychological malleability, akin to the state of a subject under deep hypnosis. Any suggestion made to the patient while in this artificially induced trance penetrates to the very depths of the sub-conscious mind and may produce a permanent modification in the habitual modes of thought and feeling. In France, where the technique has been in experimental use for several years, it has been found that two or three courses of suggestion under chloral and scopolamine can change the habits even of the victims of alcohol and irrepressible sexual addictions. A peculiarity of the drug is that the amnesia which follows it is retrospective; the patient has no memories of a period which begins several hours before the drug's administrations. Catch a man unawares and give him a cachet; he will return to consciousness firmly believing all the suggestions you have made during his stupor and wholly unaware of the way this astonishing conversion has been effected. A system of propaganda, combining pharmacology with literature, should be completely and infallibly effective. The thought is extremely disquieting.

So far, I have dealt with the influence exercised by writers who wish to persuade their readers to adopt some particular kind of social or political attitude. We must now consider the ways in which writers influence readers as private individuals. The influence of writers in the sphere of personal thought, feeling and behaviour is probably even more important than their influence in the sphere of politics. But the task of defining that influence or of exactly assessing its amount is one of extraordinary difficulty. 'Art,' it has been said, 'is the forgiveness of sins.' In the best art we perceive persons, things and situations more clearly than in life and as though they were in some way more real than realities themselves. But this clearer perception is at the same time less personal and egotistic. Writers who permit their readers to see in this intense but impersonal way exercise an influence which, though not easily definable, is certainly profound and salutary.

Works of imaginative literature have another and more easily recognizable effect; by a kind of suggestion they modify the characters of those who read them. The French philosopher, Jules de Gaultier, has said that one of the essential faculties of the human being is 'the power granted to man to conceive himself as other than he is.' He calls this power 'bovarism' after the heroine of Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary*. To

some extent all men and women live under false names, are disguised as someone else, assume, whether consciously or unconsciously, a borrowed character. This persona, as Jung calls it, is formed to a great extent by a process of imitation. Sometimes the imitation is of living human beings, sometimes of fictional or historic characters; sometimes of virtuous and socially desirable personages, sometimes of criminals and adventurers. It may be, in the significant phrase of Thomas à Kempis, the Imitation of Christ; or it may be the imitation of the heroines of Mr. Michael Arlen's novels; the imitation of Julius Caesar or of the Buddha; of Mussolini or Werther; of Stavrogin or Sainte Thérèse de Lisieux or the gunmen of penny dreadfuls. People have bovarized themselves into the likeness of every kind of real or imaginary being. Sometimes the imitator chooses a model fairly like himself; but it also happens that he chooses one who is profoundly dissimilar. What de Gaultier calls the bovaric angle between reality and assumed persona may be wide or narrow. In extreme cases the bovaric angle can be equal to two right angles. In other words, the real and assumed characters may have exactly opposite tendencies. Most of us, I imagine, go through life with a bovaric angle of between forty-five and ninety degrees.

Teachers have always tried to exploit the bovaric tendencies of their pupils, and the historical and literary model for imitation has from time immemorial played an important part in all moral education. Like other propagandists, however, educators are still unable to foresee how their pupils will respond to moral propaganda. Sometimes the response is positive, sometimes negative. We do not yet know enough to say, in any given circumstances, which it will be. The influence of books is certainly very great; but nobody, least of all their writers, can say in advance who will be influenced, or in what way, or for how long. The extreme form of bovarism is paranoia. Here the individual plays a part so wholeheartedly that he comes to believe that he actually is the character he is impersonating. The influence of books on paranoiacs must be very considerable. People suffering from the paranoia of persecution often imagine that they are the victims of a diabolical secret society, which is identified with some real organization, such as that of the Freemasons or the Jesuits, about which the patient has read in history books or perhaps in works of fiction. In cases of the paranoia of ambition, books certainly serve to canalize the patient's madness. Megalomaniacs believe themselves to be divine or royal personages, or descendants of great historical figures, of whom they can have heard only in books. There is material here for an interesting medico-literary study.

Incidentally it may be remarked that many authors are themselves mildly paranoid in character. Books become popular because they vicariously satisfy a common wish. In many cases, also, they are written with the aim of satisfying the author's secret wishes, of realizing, if only in words, his bovaristic dreams. Consult a library catalogue and you will find that more books have been written on the career of Napoleon than on any other single subject. This fact casts a strange and rather terrifying light on the mentality of modern European writers and readers. How are we going to get rid

of war, so long as people find their keenest bovaristic satisfaction in the story of the world's most spectacular militarist?

The course of psychological history is undulatory; therefore it happens that the literary models most commonly imitated at one period lose their popularity with succeeding generations. Thus, in the early eighteenth century, what Englishman or Frenchman would have desired to imitate those monsters of honour, who figured in the romances and plays of the later sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries? And who at the same period would have dreamed of assuming the sentimental roles so popular after about 1760? In a majority of cases readers choose to play the parts that come easiest to them. Thus it is obviously extremely difficult to act the part of a saint. For this reason the New Testament, though more widely read in Europe and over a longer period than any other book, has produced relatively few successful imitators of its central character. People have always preferred to play parts that would allow them to satisfy their appetites or their will to power. As in the time of Paolo and Francesca, the favourite heroes are still personages like Lancelot — great warriors and great lovers.

Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
esser baciato da cotanto amante,
questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,
la bocca mi baciò tutto tremante.
Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse;
quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante.

Dante provides us with a perfect example of erotic bovarism actively at work.

Certain fictional personages continue to make their appeal even over long periods and through considerable fluctuations in the habits of thought and feeling. Stendhal's Julien Sorel, for example, is still alive in France; and I was interested to learn from a Communist friend that this exemplar of ruthless individualism had recently achieved a great popularity in Russia. The vitality of Hamlet after more than three hundred years remains so great that the Nazis have found it necessary to discountenance revivals of the tragedy for fear that it should cause young Germans to forget the 'heroic' rôle which they are now supposed to play.

It sometimes happens that writers who are without influence on the habits of thought and feeling of their contemporaries begin to exercise such an influence after their death, when circumstances have so changed as to make their doctrine more acceptable. Thus, William Blake's peculiar sexual mysticism did not come into its own until the twentieth century. Blake died in 1827; but in a certain sense he was a contemporary of D. H. Lawrence. Along with Lawrence, he exercised a considerable influence over many people in post-war England and elsewhere. Whether the nature of this influence was what either Blake or Lawrence would have liked it to be is extremely doubtful. In a majority of cases, we may suspect, the mystical doctrines of Blake and Lawrence were used by their readers merely as a justification for a desire to indulge in the maximum amount of sexual promiscuity with a minimum amount of responsibility. That Lawrence passionately disapproved of such a use being made of his writings, I

know; and it is highly probable that Blake would have shared his feelings. It is one of the ironies of the writer's fate that he can never be quite sure what sort of influence he will have upon his readers. Lawrence's books, as we have seen, were used as justifications for sexual promiscuity. For this reason they were outlawed by the Nazis when they first came into power, as mere Schmutzliteratur. Now, it appears, the Nazis have changed their minds about Lawrence; and his writings are accepted as justifications for violence, anti-rationalism, idolatry and the worship of blood. That Lawrence meant to make his readers turn from intellectualism and conscious emotionalism towards the Dark Gods of instinct and physiology, is unquestionable. But it is safe to say that he did not mean to turn them into Nazis. Men are influenced by books to assume a character that is not entirely their own; but the character they assume may be quite different from the character idealized by the writer.

Even propagandists may achieve results quite unlike those they meant to achieve by their writings. For example, by persistently attacking an institution authors hope to persuade either its supporters or its victims to reform it. But in practice they may just as easily produce a precisely opposite effect. For invectives often act as a kind of vaccination against the danger of reform. Mr. Shaw's writings are revolutionary in intention, and yet he has become a favourite among the more intelligent members of the bourgeoisie; they read his satires and denunciations, laugh at themselves a little, decide that it's all really too bad; then, feeling that they have paid the tribute which capitalism owes to social justice, close the book and go on behaving as they have always behaved. The works of revolutionary writers may serve as prophylactics against revolution. Instead of producing the active will to change, they produce cynicism, which is the acceptance of things as they are, combined with the derisive knowledge that they couldn't be worse — a knowledge that is felt by the person who possesses it to excuse him from making any personal effort to change the intolerable situation. Cynicism can affect not only those who profit by the existence of an undesirable state of things, but also those who are its victims. During the centuries which preceded the Reformation, cynical acceptance of the evils of ecclesiastical corruption was common among those who paid the piper as well as among those who called the tune, among the intelligent laity as well as among the princes of the Church. The fact of corruption was accepted as inevitable, like bad weather — a kind of bad weather that was at the same time a joke. Boccaccio, Chaucer, Poggio and their lesser contemporaries denounced, but at the same time they laughed. Poggio's employers at the Vatican (he was a papal secretary) laughed with them. At a later date Erasmus's ecclesiastical and princely friends laughed no less heartily over his satirical comments on kings and clerics. So did all the rest of the reading public. For Erasmus was, for his period, a prodigious best-seller. The Paris edition of his Colloquies sold twenty-four thousand copies in a few weeks — an incredibly large figure, when one reflects that the book was written in Latin. Of his Praise of Folly a hundred editions were printed between 1512 and 1676 — most of them during the earlier part of that period.

After Luther had taken his revolutionary action, and when it had become clear that the movement for reform was a serious menace to the existing order of things, the official attitude towards Erasmus's writings began to change. In 1528 the Colloquies were suppressed, as being dangerously subversive. From fosterers of an amused acceptance and prophylactics against revolution, his denunciatory and satirical writings had been transformed, by the new circumstances, into dangerous revolutionary propaganda. Erasmus's failure to achieve what he meant to achieve was doubly complete. He meant to persuade the existing hierarchy to reform itself; he only succeeded in making it cynically laugh at itself. Then came Luther; and the writings which their author had penned as propaganda for rational reform within the Church were transformed automatically into propaganda for a revolution, of which he disapproved. And when the Church did reform itself, it was not at all in the Erasmian way. But luckily for Erasmus, he was not there to witness that reformation. Three years before the Society of Jesus came into the world the old humanist had passed out of it — none too early.

Let us return to our imaginative literature. Readers, as we have seen, often borrow characters from books in order to use them, bovaristically, in real life. But they also reverse this process and, projecting themselves out of reality into literature, live a compensatory life of fantasy between the lines of print. One of the main functions of all popular fiction, drama and now the cinema has been to provide people with the means of assuaging, vicariously and in fancy, their unsatisfied longings, with the psychological equivalents of stimulants and narcotics. The power of such literature to impose upon those whom we may call its addicts a kind of drugged acceptance of even the most sordid realities is probably very considerable. In real life one Englishman out of every sixty thousand is a peer, one out of every three hundred thousand has an income of a hundred thousand pounds a year. A census of fictional characters has never, so far as I know, been made; but I should guess that one out of a hundred, perhaps even one out of fifty, was either a lord, or a millionaire, or both at once. The presence of so many aristocrats and plutocrats in our literature has two causes. The first is that the rich and powerful enjoy more liberty than the poor and so are in a position to make their own tragedies, not merely to have disaster forced upon them from outside. There can be no drama without personal choice; and, proverbially, beggars cannot be choosers. Only people with incomes can afford to do much choosing in this world. 'Their rich and noble souls' (to quote one of Butler's Erewhonian authors) 'can defy all material impediment; whereas the souls of the poor are clogged and hampered by matter, which sticks fast about them as treacle to the wings of a fly. . . . This is the secret of the homage which we see rich men receive from those who are poorer than themselves.' Of the homage, too, that they receive from authors. The rich, the powerful and the talented are freer than ordinary folk and are therefore the predestined subjects of imaginative literature. The other reason why literature is so lavish with wealth and titles is to be sought in the very fact that the real world is so niggardly of these things. Authors themselves and their readers desire imaginary compensations for their poverty and social insignificance. In the lordly and gilded world of literature they

get it. Nor are poverty and powerlessness their only troubles; it is more than likely that they are also plain, have an insufficient or unromantic sex life; are married and wish they weren't, or unmarried and wish they were; are too old or too young; in a word, are themselves and not somebody else. Hence those Don Juans, those melting beauties, those innocent young kittens, those beautifully brutal boys, those luscious adventuresses. Hence Hollywood, hence the beauty chorus. When I was last at Margate a gigantic new movie palace had just been opened. Its name implied a whole social programme, a complete theory of art; it was called 'Dreamland.' At the present time, the cinema acts far more effectively as the opium of the people than does religion.

Hitherto I have described the more obvious effects produced by imaginative literature upon its readers. But it works also less conspicuously and in subtler ways:

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind? . . .

He much, the old man, who, clearest-soul'd of men,

Saw The Wide Prospect and the Asian Fen,

And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay, though blind. . . .

And, in The Waste Land, Mr. Eliot uses the same metaphor:

O swallow swallow

Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie

These fragments I have shored against my ruins

Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe

Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih.

Words have power to support, to buttress, to hold together. And are at the same time moulds, into which we pour our own thought — and it takes their nobler and more splendid form — at the same time channels and conduits into which we divert the stream of our being — and it flows significantly towards a comprehensible end. They prop, they give form and direction to our experience. And at the same time they themselves provide experience of a new kind, intense, pure, unalloyed with irrelevance. Words expressing desire may be more moving than the presence of the desired person. The hatred we feel at the sight of our enemies is often less intense than the hatred we feel when we read a curse or an invective. In words men find a new universe of thought and feeling, clearer and more comprehensible than the universe of daily experience. The verbal universe is at once a mould for reality and a substitute for it, a superior reality. And what props the mind, what shores up its impending ruin, is contact with this superior reality of ordered beauty and significance.

In the past the minds of cultured Europeans were shaped and shored up by the Bible and the Greek and Latin classics. Men's philosophy of life tended to crystallize itself in phrases from the Gospels or the Odes of Horace, from the Iliad or the Psalms. Job and Sappho, Juvenal and the Preacher gave style to their despairs, their loves, their indignations, their cynicisms. Experience taught them the wisdom that flowed along verbal channels prepared by Aeschylus and Solomon; and the existence of these verbal channels was itself an invitation to learn wisdom from experience. To-day most

of us resemble Shakespeare in at least one important respect: we know little Latin and less Greek. Even the Bible is rapidly becoming, if not a closed, at any rate a very rarely opened book. The phrases of the Authorized Version no longer prop and mould and canalize our minds. St. Paul and the Psalmist have gone the way of Virgil and Horace. What authors have taken their place? Whose words support contemporary men and women? The answer is that there exists no single set of authoritative books. The common ground of all the Western cultures has slipped away from under our feet.

Locally authoritative literatures are filling the vacuum created by the virtual disappearance from the modern consciousness of those internationally authoritative literatures which dominated men's minds in the past. *Mein Kampf* is a gospel and has had a sale comparable to that of the Bible — two million copies in ten years. For Russians, Marx and Lenin have become what Aristotle was for educated Europeans in the thirteenth century. (Lenin's works, in twenty-seven volumes, have already sold four million sets.) In Italy Mussolini ha sempre ragione; no higher claim was made by the orthodox for Moses or the Evangelists.

The peoples of the West no longer share a literature and a system of ancient wisdom. All that they now have in common is science and information. Now, science is knowledge, not wisdom; deals with quantities, not with the qualities of which we are immediately aware. In so far as we are enjoying and suffering beings, its words seem to us mostly irrelevant and beside the point. Moreover, these words are arranged without art; therefore possess no magical power and are incapable of propping or moulding the mind of the reader.

The same is true of that other bond of union between the peoples, shared information. The disseminators of information often try to write with the compulsive magic of art; but how rarely they succeed! It is not with fragments of the daily paper that we shore up our ruins.

The literature of information has, as its subject-matter, events which people feel to be humanly relevant. Unfortunately, journalism treats these profoundly interesting themes in what is, for all its flashing brilliance, a profoundly uninteresting, superficial way. Moreover, its business is to record history from day to day; it can never afford to linger over any particular episode. As little can the reader afford to linger. Even if the daily paper were well written, its very dailiness would preclude the possibility of his remembering any part of its contents. Materially, a thing of printer's ink and wood pulp, a newspaper does not outlast the day of its publication; by sunset it is in the dust-bin or the cess-pool. In the reader's memory its contents survive hardly so long. Nobody who reads — as well as all the rest — two or three papers a day can possibly be expected to remember what is in them. Yesterday's news is chased out of mind by to-day's. We remember what we read several times and with intense concentration. It was thus, because they were authoritative and had a mysterious prestige, that the Bible and the Greek and Latin classics were read. It is not thus that we read the *Daily Mail* or the *Petit Parisien*.

In modern scientific method we have a technique for invention; technological progress proceeds at an accelerating speed. But social change is inevitably associated with technological progress. To quicken the rate of the second is to quicken the rate of the first. The subject-matter of the literature of information has been enormously increased and has become more disquietingly significant than ever before. At the same time improvements in the technique for supplying information have created a demand for information. Our tendency is to attach an ever-increasing importance to news and to that quality of last-minute contemporaneity which invests even certain works of art, even certain scientific hypotheses and philosophical speculations, with the glamour of a political assassination or a Derby result. Accustomed as we are to devouring information, we make a habit of reading a great deal very rapidly. There must be many people who, once having escaped from school or the university, never read anything with concentration or more than once. They have no verbal props to shore against their ruins. Nor, indeed, do they need any props. A mind that is sufficiently pulverized and sufficiently agitated supports itself by the very violence of its motion. It ceases to be a ruin and becomes a whirling sandstorm.

In a certain sense our passion for information defeats its own object, which is increased knowledge of the world and other human beings. We are provided with a vastly greater supply of facts than our ancestors ever had an opportunity of considering. And yet our knowledge of other peoples is probably less thorough and intimate than theirs. In 1500 an educated Frenchman or German knew very little about current political events in England and nothing at all of the activities, so lavishly recorded in our literature of information, of English criminals, aristocrats, sportsmen, actresses. Nevertheless, he probably knew more about the intimate intellectual and emotional processes of Englishmen than his better-informed descendants know to-day. This knowledge was derived from introspection. Knowing himself he knew them. Minds moulded by the same religious and secular literatures were in a position to understand one another in a way which is inconceivable to men who have in common only science and information. By discrediting the Bible and providing a more obviously useful substitute for the study of the dead languages, triumphant science has completed the work of spiritual disunion which was begun when it undermined belief in transcendental religion and so prepared the way for the positivistic superstitions of nationalism and dictatorship. It remains to be seen whether it will discover a way to put this shattered Humpty-Dumpty together again.

T. H. Huxley as a Literary Man

MR. G. K. Chesterton has a genius for saying new and surprising things about old subjects. We are grateful to him for his originality. But there is such a thing as being too original by half; and it sometimes happens that what Mr. Chesterton says is so new and so surprising that it has very little perceptible relevance to the subject under discussion. For example, in that stimulating little book, *The Victorian Age in Literature*, he says of Lord Macaulay and T. H. Huxley that 'they were both much more under the influence of their own admirable rhetoric than they knew. Huxley, especially, was much more a literary than a scientific man.'

Well, this is new and surprising enough — new and surprising, indeed, to the point of being quite untrue. The records of Huxley's scientific achievements are there to prove the contrary. He was a man of science first of all — a man of science who also had, what quite a number of men of science before and after his day have had, a literary gift.

Being myself of the literary profession, I think I can guess how a fellow man of letters would arrive at the conclusion so boldly enunciated in Mr. Chesterton's book. The process is simplicity itself. All that is required is a little systematic and selective ignorance. Ostrich-like, one shuts one's eyes to the scientific achievements of one's subject. One refrains from reading any of his technical papers (and, incidentally, even if one did read them, one would not understand them); and one concentrates exclusively on his more accessible, his more specifically literary productions. The result is that one comes, logically and inevitably, to the conclusion that 'Huxley, especially, was much more a literary than a scientific man.' Q.E.D. It is as evident as a proposition of Euclid.

It would be easy to apply the same process to other men of science and to arrive at exactly similar conclusions. Thus, if you choose to forget the 'Experimental Researches' and remember only the Calvinistic sermons, you can say of Faraday that he was much less a man of science than a nonconformist preacher. Concentrate on Clerk Maxwell's beautiful letters, and you will be able to conclude that the author of the electromagnetic theory of light was not so much the successor of Newton as of Mme. de Sévigné and Horace Walpole. And if you listen to the musical improvisations rather than to the lectures on relativity, you will have every reason for saying that Einstein is more significant as a violinist than as a mathematical physicist.

Such conclusions are based, as I have said, on systematic and selective ignorance. Now, systematic ignorance of past science is doubtless deplorable. But, however deplorable, it is not, except with a special effort, to be avoided. Those who have not had a scientific education are incapable of understanding the technicalities of any scientific

paper. Those who have been educated in one branch of science are hardly better off than laymen, when it comes to understanding a paper in some other branch. And those who have been educated in the particular science under consideration have no need to refer to the original papers of their predecessors. Every generation of scientific men starts where the previous generation left off; and the most advanced discoveries of one age constitute the elementary axioms of the next. We are not in the habit of inspecting the foundations of the houses in which we live; and, similarly, men of science are not in the habit of referring to the original paper of their predecessors. 'I am toiling over my chapter about Owen,' writes Huxley towards the end of his life, in 1894. 'The thing that strikes me most is, how he and I and all the things we fought about belong to antiquity.' It was, to a large extent, thanks to Huxley's own labours that they belonged to antiquity. A prolific discoverer is continuously superannuating his earlier self.

Except, then, for the historians of science, nobody studies at first hand those contributions to knowledge to which the great discoverers of the past owe their scientific reputations. By what seems a strange paradox, the older scientists survive mainly as artists. A work of art can never be taken for granted, and so forgotten; neither can it ever be disproved and therefore thrown aside. Science is soon out of date, art is not.

Of this fact Huxley himself was well aware. In one of his letters he comments upon it with characteristic humour. 'At the Christmas dinner,' we are told in his biography, 'he invariably delighted the children by carving wonderful beasts, generally pigs, out of orange peel. When the marriage of his eldest daughter had taken her away from this important function, she was sent the best specimen as a reminder. "I call it," he writes in the accompanying letter, "Piggurne, or Harmony in Orange and White." ' This was written in 1878, the year of Whistler's action against Ruskin; nocturnes and colour harmonies were very much 'in the news.' ' "Preserve it, my dear child," he goes on, "as evidence of the paternal genius, when those light and fugitive productions which are buried in the Philosophical Transactions and elsewhere are forgotten." '

The jesting words express a truth. Productions published in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society may not be light; but they are in a very real sense fugitive. The substance of a scientific paper is incorporated into the general stock of knowledge; but the paper itself is doomed to oblivion. Not so the pig made of orange peel. If sufficiently well carved, it may continue to give pleasure and to excite admiration for an indefinite period — or at any rate so long as the peel holds together. What is true of orange-peel pigs is true, a fortiori, of those monuments more lasting than brass, well-written books.

As a scientific man, Huxley, like all his great contemporaries and predecessors, is now a mere historical figure. Most of us are content to accept his scientific reputation on authority, without ever having consulted the original evidence on which it was based. As a literary man, however, he is still a living force. His non-technical writings have the persistent contemporariness that is a quality of all good art. People go on reading his books and enjoying them. Mr. Chesterton affirms, as a matter of historical fact, that Huxley 'was much more of a literary than a scientific man.' In which Mr. Chesterton

is wrong. But if he had said that Huxley 'is much more of a literary than a scientific man,' he would have been quite right. In so far as Huxley is still alive, influential and contemporary, it is as the man of letters. Such is the privilege of art. Orange-peel pigs are less transient than scientific papers.

There are several ways in which I might deal with Huxley's career as a man of letters. There is, for example, the biographical approach. But the biographical ground has been so thoroughly covered in the *Life and Letters* that I could do nothing in this line but summarize what has been said before. I prefer, therefore, to approach the subject as a purely literary critic. Now, much has been written in rather vague and general terms of Huxley's style. I shall, accordingly, try to do something more definite and precise. Taking characteristic specimens of Huxley's writings, I shall analyse them with a view to showing what exactly were the technical means he employed to produce his effects. Critics, it seems to me, content themselves too often with the mere application of epithets. Majestic, flat, sublime, passionate — criticism is in many cases just a calling of laudatory or disparaging names. But this is not enough. Critics should take pains to show why such and such a piece of writing provokes us to call it by such and such a name. The observable facts of literature are words arranged in certain patterns. The words have a meaning independent of the pattern in which they are arranged; but it is the pattern that gives to this meaning its peculiar quality and intensity; that can make a statement seem somehow truer or somehow less true than the truth. Moreover, a word-pattern of one kind will cause us to say of its inventor: 'This man is (for example) sincere'; of another kind: 'This man is affected and false.' It is the business of the literary artist to make word-patterns in such a way that his readers shall be compelled to draw certain inferences from them. It is the business of the critic to show how our judgments are affected by variations in word-patterns. This is what I shall try to do in the present case.

But before beginning my analysis of Huxley's achievements as a literary artist, I think it would be advisable to say a few words by way of general introduction about the relations between literature and science.

The function of language is twofold: to communicate emotion and to give information. The rudimentary language of the lower animals seems to be purely emotive. Beasts make noises to express desire, fear, anger and the like; to let off their superfluous energy; and to make their presence known to their fellow-creatures. Never do they express a concept. When a startled blackbird flies off at our approach with his characteristic cry, he is not saying, 'There is a man'; he is saying, 'I am afraid' — or rather, he is simply screaming with terror. And at the sound of the scream, other blackbirds are terrified. Communication is by emotional infection, never, apparently, by conceptual statement.

Man has invented concepts. He does not merely scream with terror: he also says why and of what he is afraid. The noises he makes stand for classes of objects. He can do what the animal can never do: he can make an exact statement untinged by passion. In other words, he can write scientifically.

But because he can do this, it does not follow that he very often wants to do it. In most of the circumstances of life, he wants not only to inform, but also to move — above all, to be moved as well as to be informed. Literature is the art of making statements movingly.

Now, the emotions which a literary statement may cause us to feel are of two distinct types. They may be what I will call the ‘biological emotions’ — emotions, that is to say, with a survival value, such as fear, anger, delight or disgust, all of which we share with the lower animals. Or they may be more specifically human emotions — luxury feelings, which we might lose without seriously imperilling our chances of survival.

Literature, in common with the other arts, arouses in us, over and above any kind of biological emotion, a certain luxury feeling, to which we give the name of the aesthetic emotion. We describe as beautiful anything which makes us experience this feeling.

Let us now consider the case of a writer who is trying to make a statement which shall cause his readers to have a certain biological feeling — say, a feeling of anger. By using words with suitable significances and associations, by expressing himself in terms of metaphors that call up the right kind of images, he can make it clear to his readers that he feels angry himself (or, vicariously, in the person of a fictional character) and that he wants them to feel angry too. Whether they respond or remain unmoved depends, to a very considerable extent, on his powers as an artist — on his powers, that is to say, as a giver of aesthetic emotions. If he can arrange his words and phrases in a pattern which his readers will consider beautiful, then he is likely to succeed. If not, he is likely to fail. Biological feelings can be well and promptly communicated only by words arranged so as to give us aesthetic feelings. And the same thing is true even of the most abstract ideas. We are more likely to take in an idea which is expressed with art, beautifully, than if it is expressed in language that gives us no aesthetic satisfaction.

True, facts and theories can be communicated in terms that give the reader no aesthetic satisfaction. So can the passions. But neither passion nor facts and theories can be communicated rapidly and persuasively in such terms. Whatever is expressed with art — whether it be a lover’s despair or a metaphysical theory — pierces the mind and compels assent and acceptance. Against that which is expressed without art, our understandings are naturally armoured. We have a certain difficulty in taking in anything that is not intrinsically elegant; a certain eagerness to accept anything that moves us aesthetically. Handsome faces are sometimes associated with ugly characters; and in the same way, alas! literary art may be associated with untruth. The natural human tendency to believe what is beautiful has been the source of innumerable errors. If only Plato had written as badly as Immanuel Kant! But his voice was, unfortunately, the voice of an angel, even when it was uttering demonstrable nonsense. And if Darwin’s style had been as excellent as Samuel Butler’s, Mr. Bernard Shaw would not at present be a preacher of Lamarckism— ‘a doctrine,’ as Professor J. B. S. Haldane has remarked, ‘supported by far less positive evidence than exists for the reality of witchcraft.’

Science is investigation. But if it were only investigation, it would be without fruit, and useless. Henry Cavendish investigated for the mere fun of the thing, and left the world in ignorance of his most important discoveries. Our admiration for his genius is tempered by a certain disapproval; we feel that such a man is selfish and anti-social. Science is investigation; yes. But it is also, and no less essentially, communication. But all communication is literature. In one of its aspects, then, science is a branch of literature.

It may be objected that I apply the term ‘literature’ too indiscriminately — that, instead of using the word to cover all verbal communications whatsoever, I should limit its connotation to a certain class of communications. To this objection, I reply interrogatively: Which particular class of verbal communications constitutes literature? The answers to this question are generally very vague. For example, literature has been defined as ‘the interpretation of life through the medium of words’; while a distinction is often drawn between ‘words used to record observations of fact, either as an end in themselves, or as a basis for generalizations, and words used as a means for transferring experience.’ But, frankly, this sort of thing won’t do; it is too hazy. Not much better is the distinction between literature and science implied by Wordsworth in his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*. ‘The remotest discoveries of the chemist, the botanist, or the mineralogist will be as proper objects of the poet’s art as any upon which he is now employed, if the time should ever come, when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings.’ But who, we may inquire, are the people whom Wordsworth calls ‘us’? Is it not obvious that the more intelligent a man is, and the more highly cultivated, the wider will be the range of things which are ‘material to him as an enjoying and suffering being’? Moreover, as every verbal communication can be made well or badly, every verbal communication is susceptible of affecting some men, at any rate, as aesthetic enjoyers and sufferers. It goes without saying, of course, that only those who understand the terms in which the communication is made will have any aesthetic feelings about it. Englishmen are clearly not the best judges of Chinese poetry, and those who have not had a scientific education will be unable to understand, much less to appreciate and enjoy, works written in a highly technical language. But for anyone who knows what they are talking about, the very mathematicians are men of letters — men of algebraical letters, no doubt; but even χ and sigma and psi can be aesthetically good or bad, *litterae humaniores* or inhuman letters. I have heard mathematicians groaning over the demonstrations of Kelvin. Ponderous and clumsy, they bludgeon the mind into a reluctant assent. Whereas to be convinced by Clerk Maxwell’s elegant equations is a pleasure; and reading Niels Abel on hyperelliptic functions is almost, it seems, like listening to Mozart’s chamber music. For the mathematically illiterate, like myself, these things are, of course, mere scribbles, without significance and without form. For those whom Nature has endowed with suitable talents and who have had the right education, they are works of art, some exquisite, some atrociously bad. What is true of a mathematical argument is equally

true of arguments couched in words. Even plain records of observed fact may be, in their own way, beautiful or ugly. From all which we must conclude that all verbal communications whatsoever are literature.

Some kinds of literature, however, are more widely accessible than others. Also, certain classes of experience give more artistic scope to those who communicate them than do certain other classes of experience. For example, a man who writes about his experiences of love or pain has more scope for arranging words in an aesthetically satisfying way than one who sets out to give an account of his observations on, say, deep-sea fish. All communications are literature; but their potentialities for beauty are unequal. A good account of deep-sea fish can never be as richly, variously and subtly beautiful as a good poem about love. But, on the other hand, a bad account of fish can probably never be so monstrous as a bad love-poem.

To make clearer what I have been saying, let me give two specific examples. The following is an extract from an article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on the furnishing of Anglican churches after the Reformation: 'When tables were substituted for altars in the English churches, these were not merely movable, but, at the administration of the Lord's Supper, were actually moved into the body of the church, and placed table-wise — that is, with the long sides turned to the north and south, and the narrow ends to the east and west. In the time of Archbishop Laud, however, the present practice of the Church of England was introduced. The communion table, though still of wood and movable, is, in fact, never moved; it is placed altar-wise — that is, with the longer axis running north and south. Often there is a reredos behind it; it is also fenced in by rails to preserve it from profanation of various kinds.'

This is a simple and, as it happens, not a very good specimen of scientific literature. We read it without feeling any emotion, whether biological or aesthetic. The words are neither exciting nor beautiful; they are merely informative — and informative in what is, on the whole, rather an inelegant way.

Let us now listen to what Milton had to say on the same subject. 'The table of communion, now become a table of separation, stands like an exalted platform on the brow of the quire, fortified with bulwark and barricado to keep off the profane touch of the laics, whilst the obscene and surfeited priest scruples not to paw and mammock the sacramental bread as familiarly as his tavern biscuit.'

This is a statement about church furnishing; but not, as I think you may have noticed, a scientific statement — that is to say, a merely informative and unimpassioned statement. Milton, it is clear, designed to communicate, along with the facts about altars, certain biological feelings of his own — as hatred of priests and sympathy for an exploited laity. Thanks to the skilful use of a number of technical literary devices — devices which, unfortunately, I have no time to describe and analyse — the passage also gives us a lively feeling of aesthetic satisfaction. Milton communicates what he has to say with art; that is to say, he communicates it successfully. He really makes us feel, at any rate while we are reading him, some of his own indignation.

Huxley, as I shall show in due course, was an artist in both these kinds of literature — an artist in pure scientific statement, and also, on occasion, an artist in the communication of what I have called the biological feelings. Both his pure scientific and his emotive statements arouse aesthetic feelings; in other words, each kind of statement is, in its own way, beautiful.

Huxley realized very well the importance of being an artist. Of the Germans he writes: ‘As men of research in positive science they are magnificently laborious and accurate. But most of them have no notion of style, and seem to compose their books with a pitchfork.’ Determined that his own books should not justify a similar reproach, he cultivated his literary gifts with conscientious industry. ‘It constantly becomes more and more difficult for me to finish things satisfactorily,’ he writes to Hooker in 1860. The reason for this was that his standard of literary excellence was constantly becoming higher. Let me quote in this context a letter to his French translator, de Varigny. ‘I am quite conscious that the condensed and idiomatic English into which I always try to put my thoughts must present many difficulties to a translator. . . . The fact is that I have a great love and respect for my native tongue, and take great pains to use it properly. Sometimes I write essays half a dozen times before I can get them into the proper shape; and I believe I become more fastidious as I grow older.’ It was an effective fastidiousness; Huxley undoubtedly wrote better as he grew older.

What were his artistic principles and ideals? The following passage from a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1886 is illuminating:

‘That a young Englishman may be turned out of one of our universities, “epopt and perfect,” as far as their system takes him, and yet ignorant of the noble literature which has grown up in these islands during the last three centuries, no less than of the philosophical and political ideas which have most profoundly influenced modern civilization, is a fact in the history of the nineteenth century which the twentieth will find hard to believe; though perhaps it is not more incredible than our current superstition that whoso wishes to write and speak English well should mould his style after the models furnished by classical antiquity. For my part, I venture to doubt the wisdom of attempting to mould one’s style by any other process than that of striving after the clear and forcible expression of definite conceptions; in which process the Glassian precept, “first catch your definite conceptions,” is probably the most difficult to obey. But still I mark among distinguished contemporary speakers and writers of English, saturated with antiquity, not a few to whom, it seems to me, the study of Hobbes might have taught dignity, of Swift, concision and clearness, of Goldsmith and Defoe, simplicity.

‘Well, among a hundred young men whose university career is finished, is there one whose attention has ever been directed by his literary instructors to a page of Hobbes, or Swift, or Goldsmith, or Defoe? In my boyhood we were familiar with Robinson Crusoe, The Vicar of Wakefield and Gulliver’s Travels; and though the treasures of “Middle English” were hidden from us, my impression is that we ran less chance of learning to write and speak the “middling English” of popular orators and head masters

than if we had been perfect in such mysteries and ignorant of those three masterpieces. It has been the fashion to decry the eighteenth century, as young fops laugh at their fathers. But we were there in germ; and a "Professor of Eighteenth-Century History and Literature" who knew his business might tell young Englishmen more of that which it is profoundly important that they should know, but which at present remains hidden from them, than any other instructor: and, incidentally, they would learn to know good English when they see or hear it — perhaps even to distinguish between slipshod copiousness and true eloquence, and that alone would be a great gain.'

To literary beginners, Huxley's advice was: 'Say that which has to be said in such language that you can stand cross-examination on each word.' And again: 'Be clear, though you may be convicted of error. If you are clearly wrong, you will run up against a fact sometime and get set right. If you shuffle with your subject and study chiefly to use language which will give you a loophole of escape either way, there is no hope for you.' 'Veracity,' he said on another occasion, 'is the heart of morality.' It was also the heart of his literary style. For all those rhetorical devices by means of which the sophist and the politician seek to make the worse appear the better cause Huxley felt an almost passionate disapproval. 'When some chieftain,' he wrote, 'famous in political warfare, ventures into the region of letters or of science, in full confidence that the methods which have brought fame and honour in his own province will answer there, he is apt to forget that he will be judged by those people on whom rhetorical artifices have long since ceased to take effect; and to whom mere dexterity in putting together cleverly ambiguous phrases, and even the great art of offensive misrepresentation, are unspeakably wearisome.'

The chieftain in question was Mr. Gladstone, with whom, in 1891, Huxley was having the Gadarene swine controversy. Four years later, in the last year of his life, Huxley was to remark, in a conversation recorded by Mr. Wilfrid Ward, on the philosophical methods of another eminent politician, Mr. Arthur Balfour. 'No human being holds the opinion he (Balfour) speaks of as Naturalism. He is a good debater. He knows the value of a word. The word "Naturalism" has a bad sound and unpleasant associations. It would tell against us in the House of Commons, and so it will with his readers.' Huxley was also a good debater; he also knew the value of a word. But his passion for veracity always kept him from taking any unfair rhetorical advantages of an opponent. The candour with which he acknowledged a weakness in his own case was always complete, and though he made full use of a rich variety of literary devices to bring home what he wanted to say, he never abused his great rhetorical powers. Truth was more important to him than personal triumph, and he relied more on a forceful clarity to convince his readers than on the brilliant and exciting ambiguities of propagandist eloquence.

For the purposes of literary analysis, Huxley's writings may be divided into three classes: first, the purely descriptive; secondly, the philosophical and sociological; and thirdly, the controversial and (to use once more a repellent, but irreplaceable, word) the emotive. To the first of these classes belong the technical scientific papers; to the

second, the studies of Hume and Berkeley and a number of essays on metaphysical, ethical and educational subjects; and to the third, certain of the essays on Christian and Hebrew tradition and the essays containing criticisms of other people's ideas or a defence of his own. It is hardly necessary to say that, in reality, the three classes overlap. The descriptive papers contain philosophical matter in the form of generalizations and scientific hypotheses. The philosophical and sociological essays have their controversial and their emotionally moving passages; and as most of the controversies are on philosophical subjects, the controversial essays are to a considerable extent purely philosophical. Still, imperfect as it is, the classification is none the less useful. The writings of the first two classes are strictly scientific writings; that is to say, they are meant to communicate facts and ideas, not passions. They are of the same kind as the passage from the *Encyclopaedia* quoted at an earlier stage in this lecture. The writings of the third class belong to the same genus as my quotation from Milton. They are intended to communicate feelings as well as information — and biological feeling as well as pure aesthetic feeling. I propose now to deal with these three classes of Huxley's writings in order.

To describe with precision even the simplest object is extremely difficult. Just how difficult only those who have attempted the task professionally can realize. Let me ask you to imagine yourselves suddenly called upon to explain to some Martian visitor the exact form, function and mode of operation of, say, a corkscrew. The thing seems simple enough; and yet I suspect that, after a few minutes of stammering hesitations, most of us would find ourselves reduced to making spiral gestures with a forefinger and going through a pantomime of bottle-opening. The difficulties of describing in a clear and intelligible way such an incomparably more elaborate piece of machinery as a living organism, for example, are proportionately greater.

Not only is exact description difficult; it is also, of all kinds of writing, that which has in it the least potentialities of beauty. The object to be described stares the author uncompromisingly in the face. His business is to render its likeness in words, point by point, in such a way that someone who had never seen it would be able to reconstruct it from his description, as from a blue print. He must therefore call every spade consistently and exclusively a spade — never anything else. But the higher forms of literature depend for many of their most delicate effects on spades being called on occasion by other names. Non-scientific writers are free to use a variety of synonyms to express the same idea in subtly different ways; are free to employ words with variously coloured overtones of association; are free to express themselves, in terms now of one metaphor, now of another. Not so the maker of verbal blue prints. The only beauties he can hope, or, indeed, has any right to create are beauties of orderly composition and, in detail, of verbal clarity. Huxley's scientific papers prove him to have had a remarkable talent for this austere and ungrateful kind of writing. His descriptions of the most complicated organic structures are astonishingly lucid. We are reminded, as we read, that their author was an accomplished draughtsman. 'I should make it absolutely necessary,' he writes in one of his essays on education, 'for everybody to learn to draw. . . . You

will find it,' he goes on, 'an implement of learning of extreme value. It gives you the means of training the young in attention and accuracy, which are two things in which all mankind are more deficient than in any other mental quality whatever. The whole of my life has been spent in trying to give my proper attention to things and to be accurate, and I have not succeeded as well as I could wish; and other people, I am afraid, are not much more fortunate.' No artist, I suppose, has ever succeeded as well as he could wish; but many have succeeded as well as other, less talented people could wish. In its own kind, such a book as Huxley's *Treatise on the Crayfish* is a model of excellence. Quotation cannot do justice to the composition of the book as a whole, and the unavoidable use of technical terms makes the citing even of short extracts unsuitable on such an occasion as the present. The following passage may serve, however, to give some idea of the lucidity of Huxley's descriptive style:

'In the dorsal wall of the heart two small oval apertures are visible, provided with valvular lips, which open inwards, or towards the internal cavity of the heart. There is a similar aperture in each of the two lateral faces of the heart, and two others in its inferior face, making six in all. These apertures readily admit fluid into the heart, but oppose its exit. On the other hand, at the origins of the arteries there are small valvular folds directed in such a manner as to permit the exit of fluid from the heart, while they prevent its entrance.'

This is nakedly plain and unadorned; but it does what it was intended to do — it gives the reader a satisfyingly accurate picture of what is being described. Some modern popularizers of science have sought to 'humanize' their writing. The following is an example of the late Dr. Dorsey's humanized — his all-too-humanized — scientific style:

'If we find that the thing we trust to pick the mother of our children is simply a double-barrelled pump, knowledge of our heart or the liquid refreshment it pumps to our brains will not grow more nerve cells, but it should make us less nervous and more respectful of the pump and the refreshment it delivers; when it stops, the brain starves to death.'

Obscure almost to meaninglessness, vulgar, vague — this is the humanization of science with a vengeance! Deplorably but, I suppose, naturally enough, this kind of popular science is thoroughly popular in the other, the box-office sense of the term. Tennyson's generalization, that we needs must love the highest when we see it, has but the slenderest justification in observable fact.

So much for the writings of the first class. Those of the second are more interesting, both to the general reader and to the literary critic. Philosophical writings have much higher potentialities of beauty than purely descriptive writings. The descriptive writer is confined within the narrow prison of the material objects whose likeness he is trying to render. The philosopher is the inhabitant of a much more spacious, because a purely mental, universe. There is, if I may so express myself, more room in the theory of knowledge than in a crayfish's heart. No doubt, if we could feel as certain about epistemology as we do about the shape and function of crustacean viscera, the

philosopher's universe would be as narrow as the descriptive naturalist's. But we do not feel as certain. Ignorance has many advantages. Man's uncertainties in regard to all the major issues of life allow the philosopher much enviable freedom — freedom, among other things, to employ all kinds of artistic devices, from the use of which the descriptive naturalist is quite debarred.

The passages from Huxley's philosophical writings which I now propose to quote and analyse have been chosen mainly, of course, because they exhibit characteristic excellences of style, but partly, also, for the sake of their content. Huxley's philosophical doctrines are outside my province, and I shall not discuss them. What I have done, however, is to choose as my literary examples passages which illustrate his views on a number of important questions. They show how cautious and profound a thinker he was — how very far from being that arrogant and cocksure materialist at whom, as at a convenient Aunt Sally, certain contemporary publicists are wont to fling their dialectical brickbats.

Huxley's use of purely rhythmical effects was always masterly, and my first three examples are intended to illustrate his practice in this branch of literary art. Here is a paragraph on scientific hypotheses:

'All science starts with hypotheses — in other words, with assumptions that are unproved, while they may be, and often are, erroneous, but which are better than nothing to the searcher after order in the maze of phenomena. And the historical progress of every science depends on the criticism of hypotheses — on the gradual stripping off, that is, of their untrue or superfluous parts — until there remains only that exact verbal expression of as much as we know of the facts, and no more, which constitutes a perfect scientific theory.'

The substance of this paragraph happens to be intrinsically correct. But we are the more willing to believe its truth because of the way in which that truth is expressed. Huxley's utterance has something peculiarly judicious and persuasive about it. The secret is to be found in his rhythm. If we analyse the crucial first sentence, we shall find that it consists of three more or less equal long phrases, followed by three more or less equal short ones. Thus:

'All science starts with hypotheses —
in other words, with assumptions that are unproved,
while they may be, and often are, erroneous;
but which are better than nothing
to the searcher after order
in the maze of phenomena.'

The long opening phrases state all that can be said against hypotheses — state it with a firm and heavy emphasis. Then, suddenly, in the second half of the sentence, the movement quickens, and the brisk and lively rhythm of the three last phrases brings home the value of hypotheses with an appeal to the aesthetic sensibilities as well as to the intellect.

My second example is from a passage dealing with ‘those who oppose the doctrine of necessity’:

‘They rest [writes Huxley] on the absurd presumption that the proposition “I can do as I like” is contradictory to the doctrine of necessity. The answer is: nobody doubts that, at any rate within certain limits, you can do as you like. But what determines your likings and dislikings? Did you make your own constitution? Is it your contrivance that one thing is pleasant and another is painful? And even if it were, why did you prefer to make it after the one fashion rather than the other? The passionate assertion of the consciousness of their freedom, which is the favourite refuge of the opponents of the doctrine of necessity, is mere futility, for nobody denies it. What they really have to do, if they would upset the necessarian argument, is to prove that they are free to associate any emotion whatever with any idea whatever; to like pain as much as pleasure, vice as much as virtue; in short, to prove that, whatever may be the fixity of order of the universe of things, that of thought is given over to chance.’

Again, this is a very sound argument; but its penetrative force and immediate persuasiveness are unquestionably increased by the manner of its expression. The anti-necessarian case is attacked in a series of short, sharp phrases, each carrying a simple question demanding a simple and, for the arguer’s opponents, a most damaging answer:

‘But what determines your likings and dislikings?’

Did you make your own constitution?

Is it your contrivance that one thing is pleasant and another is painful?’

The phrases lengthen as the argument deals with subtler points of detail; then, in the last sentence, where Huxley convicts his opponents of upholding an absurdity, they contract to the emphatically alliterative brevity of

‘to like pain as much as pleasure,
vice as much as virtue.’

After which the absurdity of the anti-necessarian case is generalized; there is a long preparatory phrase, followed by a brief, simple and, we are made to feel, definitive conclusion:

‘to prove that, whatever may be the fixity of order
of the universe of things,
that of thought is given over to chance.’

The persuasive effectiveness of these last phrases is enhanced by the use of alliteration. ‘Things’ and ‘thought’ are key words. Their alliterative resemblance serves to emphasize the unjustifiable distinction which the anti-necessarians draw between the two worlds. And the insistent recurrence in both phrases of the v-sound of prove, whatever, universe and of given and over enhances the same effect.

The passage I am now about to quote is remarkable both for what it says and for the particularly solemn and noble manner of the saying:

‘In whichever way we look at the matter, morality is based on feeling, not on reason; though reason alone is competent to trace out the effects of our actions and thereby dictate conduct. Justice is founded on the love of one’s neighbour; and goodness is a

kind of beauty. The moral law, like the laws of physical nature, rests in the long run upon instinctive intuitions, and is neither more nor less “innate” and “necessary” than they are. Some people cannot by any means be got to understand the first book of Euclid; but the truths of mathematics are no less necessary and binding on the great mass of mankind. Some there are who cannot feel the difference between the “Sonata Appassionata” and “Cherry Ripe,” or between a gravestone-cutter’s cherub and the Apollo Belvedere; but the canons of art are none the less acknowledged. While some there may be who, devoid of sympathy, are incapable of a sense of duty; but neither does their existence affect the foundations of morality. Such pathological deviations from true manhood are merely the halt, the lame and the blind of the world of consciousness; and the anatomist of the mind leaves them aside, as the anatomist of the body would ignore abnormal specimens.

‘And as there are Pascals and Mozarts, Newtons and Raphaels, in whom the innate faculty for science or art needs but a touch to spring into full vigour, and through whom the human race obtains new possibilities of knowledge and new conceptions of beauty; so there have been men of moral genius, to whom we owe ideals of duty and visions of moral perfection, which ordinary mankind could never have attained; though, happily for them, they can feel the beauty of a vision which lay beyond the reach of their dull imaginations, and count life well spent in shaping some faint image of it in the actual world.’

As a piece of reflective writing, this is quite admirable; and it will be worth while, I think, to take some trouble to analyse out the technical devices which make it so effective. The secret of the peculiar beauty of this grave and noble passage is to be found, I believe, in the author’s use of what, for lack of a better term, I will call ‘caesura-sentences.’ Hebrew literature provides the classical type of the caesura-sentence. Open any of the poetical books of the Bible at random, and you will find all the examples you want. ‘His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.’ Or, ‘Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.’ The whole system of Hebrew poetry was based on the division of each sentence by a caesura into two distinct, but related clauses. Anglo-Saxon verse was written on a somewhat similar principle. The caesura-sentence is common in the work of some of the greatest English prose-writers. One of them, Sir Thomas Browne, used it constantly. Here, for example, is a characteristic passage from the ‘Urn Burial’: ‘Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living beings. We slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves.’ It was Browne, I think, who first demonstrated the peculiar suitability of the caesura-sentence for the expression of grave meditations on the nature of things, for the utterance of profound and rather melancholy aphorisms. The clauses into which he divides his sentence are generally short. Sometimes the two clauses are more or less evenly balanced. Sometimes a longer clause is succeeded by a shorter, and the effect is one of finality, of the last word having been spoken. Sometimes the shorter

comes first, and the long clause after the caesura seems to open up wide prospects of contemplation and speculative argument.

I could give other examples of the use of caesura-sentences by writers as far apart as Dr. Johnson and De Quincey. But time presses; and besides, these examples would be superfluous. For, as it so happens, Huxley's use of the caesura-sentence is very similar to Browne's. He employs it, in the great majority of cases, when he wants to express himself in meditative aphorisms about the nature of life in general. Thus: 'Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience — incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime.' Again, 'Pain and sorrow knock at our doors more loudly than pleasure and happiness; and the prints of their heavy footsteps are less easily effaced.' Here is another example, where the clauses are much shorter: 'There is but one right, and the possibilities of wrong are infinite.' Here yet one more, in which, as the statement made is more complicated, the clauses have to be longer than usual: 'It is one of the last lessons one learns from experience, but not the least important, that a heavy tax is levied upon all forms of success; and that failure is one of the commonest disguises assumed by blessings.'

In the long passage quoted just now much of that effect of noble and meditative gravity is obtained by the judicious use of caesura-sentences. The tone is set by a sentence that might almost have been penned by Sir Thomas Browne himself: 'Justice is founded on the love of one's neighbour; and goodness is a kind of beauty.' All the rest of the first paragraph is built up of fundamentally similar caesura-sentences, some almost as brief and simple as the foregoing, some long and complicated, but preserving through their length and complication the peculiar quality (as of a sad and deeply reflective soliloquy, an argument of the mind with its inmost self), the musically pensive essence of the Brownean formula.

Before leaving the subject of Huxley's philosophical writings, I must say something about his use of images and his choice of words. Since accuracy and veracity were the qualities at which he consistently aimed, Huxley was sparing in the use of images. Ideas can be very vividly expressed in terms of metaphor and simile; but, since analogies are rarely complete, this vividness is too often achieved at the cost of precision. Seldom, and only with the greatest caution, does Huxley attempt anything like a full-blown simile. The most striking one I can remember is that in which he compares living beings to the whirlpool below Niagara:

'However changeful is the contour of its crest, this wave has been visible, approximately in the same place, and with the same general form, for centuries past. Seen from a mile off, it would seem to be a stationary hillock of water. Viewed closely, it is a typical expression of the conflicting impulses generated by a swift rush of material particles. Now, with all our appliances, we cannot get within a good many miles, so to speak, of the crayfish. If we could, we should see that it was nothing but the constant form of a similar turmoil of material molecules, which are constantly flowing into the animal on one side, and streaming out on the other.'

Only where analogies were as close as this one between the living body and the vortex would Huxley venture to make use of similes. He was never prepared to enliven the manner of his books at the expense of their matter.

Huxley's vocabulary is probably the weakest point in all his literary equipment. True, it was perfectly adequate to the clear and forceful statement of his ideas. But the sensitive reader cannot help feeling that the choice of words might, without any impairment of scientific efficiency, have been more exquisite. For example, we miss in his writings that studied alternation of words of Greek and Latin with words of Teutonic origin — an alternation so rich, when skilfully handled, as by Milton, in powerful and startling literary effects. To illustrate the defects in Huxley's vocabulary would be a lengthy and laborious process, which I cannot undertake in the time at my disposal. It must be enough to say that, good as his choice of words generally is, it might unquestionably have been better.

Let us turn now to the third division of Huxley's writings, the controversial and emotive. As a controversialist, Huxley was severe, but always courteous. We must not expect to find in his polemical writings those thunderous comminations, that jeering and abuse which make Milton's prose such lively reading. Still, he could be sarcastic enough when he wanted, and his wit was pointed and barbed by the elegance with which he expressed himself. Here is a passage from a brief biography of Descartes, which shows what was the nature of his talents in this direction:

'Trained by the best educators of the seventeenth century, the Jesuits; naturally endowed with a dialectic grasp and subtlety which even they could hardly improve; and with a passion for getting at the truth which even they could hardly impair, Descartes possessed in addition a rare mastery of literary expression.'

One could quote many similar passages. From the neat antithesis to the odd and laughter-provoking word — Huxley used every device for the expression of sarcasm and irony.

In the passages in which his aim was to convey, along with ideas, a certain quality of passion, Huxley resorted very often to literary allusion — particularly to biblical allusion. Here is a characteristic example:

'The politician tells us, "You must educate the masses because they are going to be masters." The clergy join in the cry for education, for they affirm that the people are drifting away from church and chapel into the broadest infidelity. The manufacturers and the capitalists swell the chorus lustily. They declare that ignorance makes bad workmen; that England will soon be unable to turn out cotton goods, or steam engines, cheaper than other people; and then, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory will be departed from us. And a few voices are lifted up in favour of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being, doing and suffering, and that it is as true now as ever it was, that the people perish for lack of knowledge.'

Here the two, or rather the three, biblical references produce a variety of powerful emotional effects — produce them, let us note in passing, only upon those who know

their Bible. Those who do not know their Bible will fail to appreciate the chief beauties of this passage almost as completely as those who do not know their Functions of Complex Variables must fail to appreciate the beauties of Niels Abel's mathematical literature. Every writer assumes in his readers a knowledge of the work of certain other writers. His assumptions, I may add, are frequently quite unjustified.

Let us now consider the emotional effects which Huxley aimed at producing and which, upon those who know the sacred writings as well as he, he did and still does produce. Ichabod, it will be remembered, was so named, 'because the glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken.' To mention Ichabod in this context is to imply a richly sarcastic disquisition on the nature of the capitalists' god. The tone changes, in the last sentence, from ironical to earnest and pathetic; and those final words, 'the people perish for lack of knowledge,' put us in mind of two noble biblical passages: one from the book of the prophet Hosea, who affirms that 'the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land' and that 'the people are destroyed for lack of knowledge'; the other from the book of Proverbs, to the effect that 'where there is no vision, the people perish.' The double reference produces the effect Huxley desired. The true reason for universal education could not be stated more concisely or more movingly.

Occasionally, Huxley's biblical references take the form, not of direct citation, but of the use of little tags of obsolescent language borrowed from the Authorized Version. After a long passage of lucid and essentially modern exposition, he will sometimes announce the oncoming of his peroration by a phrase or two of sixteenth-century prayer-book or Bible English. Our modern taste has veered away from this practice; but among writers of the early and middle nineteenth century it was very common. Lamb and his contemporaries were constantly dropping into Wardour Street Elizabethan; Carlyle's writings are a warehouse of every kind of fancy-dress language; Herman Melville made a habit of breaking out, whenever he was excited, into bogus Shakespeare; the very love-letters of the Brownings are peppered with learned archaisms. Indeed, one of the major defects of nineteenth-century literature, at any rate in our eyes, was its inordinate literariness, its habit of verbal dressing up and playing stylistic charades. That Huxley should have made brief and occasional use of the literary devices so freely exploited by his contemporaries is not surprising. Fortunately, his passion for veracity prevented him from overdoing the literariness.

I have constantly spoken, in the course of these analyses, of 'literary devices.' The phrase is a rather unfortunate one; for it is liable to call up in the hearer's mind a picture of someone laboriously practising a mixture of card-sharping and cookery. The words make us visualize the man of letters turning over the pages of some literary Mrs. Beeton in quest of the best recipe for an epigram or a dirge; or else as a trickster preparing for his game with the reader by carefully marking the cards. But in point of fact the man of letters does most of his work not by calculation, not by the application of formulas, but by aesthetic intuition. He has something to say, and he sets it down in the words which he finds most satisfying aesthetically. After the event comes the critic, who discovers that he was using a certain kind of literary device, which can be

classified in its proper chapter of the cookery-book. The process is largely irreversible. Lacking talent, you cannot, out of the cookery-book, concoct a good work of art. The best you can hope to do is to produce an imitation, which may, for a short time, deceive the unwary into thinking it the genuine article.

Huxley's was unquestionably the genuine article. In this necessarily perfunctory discussion of a few characteristic examples of his writing, I have tried to show why he was a great man of letters, and how he produced those artistic effects, which cause us to make this critical judgment. The analysis might be carried much further, but not by a lecturer and not within the lecturer's allotted hour. 'Had we but world enough and time . . .' Alas! we never have.

* * *

|

Delivered as the Huxley Memorial Lecture, 1932.

|

Words and Behaviour

WORDS FORM THE thread on which we string our experiences. Without them we should live spasmodically and intermittently. Hatred itself is not so strong that animals will not forget it, if distracted, even in the presence of the enemy. Watch a pair of cats, crouching on the brink of a fight. Balefully the eyes glare; from far down in the throat of each come bursts of a strange, strangled noise of defiance; as though animated by a life of their own, the tails twitch and tremble. What aimed intensity of loathing! Another moment and surely there must be an explosion. But no; all of a sudden one of the two creatures turns away, hoists a hind leg in a more than fascist salute and, with the same fixed and focussed attention as it had given a moment before to its enemy, begins to make a lingual toilet. Animal love is as much at the mercy of distractions as animal hatred. The dumb creation lives a life made up of discrete and mutually irrelevant episodes. Such as it is, the consistency of human characters is due to the words upon which all human experiences are strung. We are purposeful because we can describe our feelings in rememberable words, can justify and rationalize our desires in terms of some kind of argument. Faced by an enemy we do not allow an itch to distract us from our emotions; the mere word 'enemy' is enough to keep us reminded of our hatred, to convince us that we do well to be angry. Similarly the word 'love' bridges for us those chasms of momentary indifference and boredom which gape from time to time between even the most ardent lovers. Feeling and desire provide us with our motive power; words give continuity to what we do and to a considerable extent determine our direction. Inappropriate and badly chosen words vitiate thought and lead to wrong or foolish conduct. Most ignorances are vincible, and in the greater number of cases stupidity is what the Buddha pronounced it to be, a sin. For, consciously or sub-consciously, it is with deliberation that we do not know or fail to understand — because incomprehension allows us, with a good conscience, to evade unpleasant obligations and responsibilities, because ignorance is the best excuse for going on doing what one likes, but ought not, to do. Our egotisms are incessantly fighting to preserve themselves, not only from external enemies, but also from the assaults of the other and better self with which they are so uncomfortably associated. Ignorance is egotism's most effective defence against that Dr. Jekyll in us who desires perfection; stupidity, its subtlest stratagem. If, as so often happens, we choose to give continuity to our experience by means of words which falsify the facts, this is because the falsification is somehow to our advantage as egotists.

Consider, for example, the case of war. War is enormously discreditable to those who order it to be waged and even to those who merely tolerate its existence. Furthermore,

to developed sensibilities the facts of war are revolting and horrifying. To falsify these facts, and by so doing to make war seem less evil than it really is, and our own responsibility in tolerating war less heavy, is doubly to our advantage. By suppressing and distorting the truth, we protect our sensibilities and preserve our self-esteem. Now, language is, among other things, a device which men use for suppressing and distorting the truth. Finding the reality of war too unpleasant to contemplate, we create a verbal alternative to that reality, parallel with it, but in quality quite different from it. That which we contemplate thenceforward is not that to which we react emotionally and upon which we pass our moral judgments, is not war as it is in fact, but the fiction of war as it exists in our pleasantly falsifying verbiage. Our stupidity in using inappropriate language turns out, on analysis, to be the most refined cunning.

The most shocking fact about war is that its victims and its instruments are individual human beings, and that these individual human beings are condemned by the monstrous conventions of politics to murder or be murdered in quarrels not their own, to inflict upon the innocent and, innocent themselves of any crime against their enemies, to suffer cruelties of every kind.

The language of strategy and politics is designed, so far as it is possible, to conceal this fact, to make it appear as though wars were not fought by individuals drilled to murder one another in cold blood and without provocation, but either by impersonal and therefore wholly non-moral and impassible forces, or else by personified abstractions.

Here are a few examples of the first kind of falsification. In place of ‘cavalrymen’ or ‘foot-soldiers’ military writers like to speak of ‘sabres’ and ‘rifles.’ Here is a sentence from a description of the Battle of Marengo: ‘According to Victor’s report, the French retreat was orderly; it is certain, at any rate, that the regiments held together, for the six thousand Austrian sabres found no opportunity to charge home.’ The battle is between sabres in line and muskets in *échelon* — a mere clash of ironmongery.

On other occasions there is no question of anything so vulgarly material as ironmongery. The battles are between Platonic ideas, between the abstractions of physics and mathematics. Forces interact; weights are flung into scales; masses are set in motion. Or else it is all a matter of geometry. Lines swing and sweep; are protracted or curved; pivot on a fixed point.

Alternatively the combatants are personal, in the sense that they are personifications. There is ‘the enemy,’ in the singular, making ‘his’ plans, striking ‘his’ blows. The attribution of personal characteristics to collectivities, to geographical expressions, to institutions, is a source, as we shall see, of endless confusions in political thought, of innumerable political mistakes and crimes. Personification in politics is an error which we make because it is to our advantage as egotists to be able to feel violently proud of our country and of ourselves as belonging to it, and to believe that all the misfortunes due to our own mistakes are really the work of the Foreigner. It is easier to feel violently towards a person than towards an abstraction; hence our habit of making political personifications. In some cases military personifications are merely special

instances of political personifications. A particular collectivity, the army or the warring nation, is given the name and, along with the name, the attributes of a single person, in order that we may be able to love or hate it more intensely than we could do if we thought of it as what it really is: a number of diverse individuals. In other cases personification is used for the purpose of concealing the fundamental absurdity and monstrosity of war. What is absurd and monstrous about war is that men who have no personal quarrel should be trained to murder one another in cold blood. By personifying opposing armies or countries, we are able to think of war as a conflict between individuals. The same result is obtained by writing of war as though it were carried on exclusively by the generals in command and not by the private soldiers in their armies. ('Rennenkampf had pressed back von Schubert.') The implication in both cases is that war is indistinguishable from a bout of fisticuffs in a bar room. Whereas in reality it is profoundly different. A scrap between two individuals is forgivable; mass murder, deliberately organized, is a monstrous iniquity. We still choose to use war as an instrument of policy; and to comprehend the full wickedness and absurdity of war would therefore be inconvenient. For, once we understood, we should have to make some effort to get rid of the abominable thing. Accordingly, when we talk about war, we use a language which conceals or embellishes its reality. Ignoring the facts, so far as we possibly can, we imply that battles are not fought by soldiers, but by things, principles, allegories, personified collectivities, or (at the most human) by opposing commanders, pitched against one another in single combat. For the same reason, when we have to describe the processes and the results of war, we employ a rich variety of euphemisms. Even the most violently patriotic and militaristic are reluctant to call a spade by its own name. To conceal their intentions even from themselves, they make use of picturesque metaphors. We find them, for example, clamouring for war planes numerous and powerful enough to go and 'destroy the hornets in their nests' — in other words, to go and throw thermite, high explosives and vesicants upon the inhabitants of neighbouring countries before they have time to come and do the same to us. And how reassuring is the language of historians and strategists! They write admiringly of those military geniuses who know 'when to strike at the enemy's line' (a single combatant deranges the geometrical constructions of a personification); when to 'turn his flank'; when to 'execute an enveloping movement.' As though they were engineers discussing the strength of materials and the distribution of stresses, they talk of abstract entities called 'man power' and 'fire power.' They sum up the long-drawn sufferings and atrocities of trench warfare in the phrase, 'a war of attrition'; the massacre and mangling of human beings is assimilated to the grinding of a lens.

A dangerously abstract word, which figures in all discussions about war, is 'force.' Those who believe in organizing collective security by means of military pacts against a possible aggressor are particularly fond of this word. 'You cannot,' they say, 'have international justice unless you are prepared to impose it by force.' 'Peace-loving countries must unite to use force against aggressive dictatorships.' 'Democratic institutions must be protected, if need be, by force.' And so on.

Now, the word 'force,' when used in reference to human relations, has no single, definite meaning. There is the 'force' used by parents when, without resort to any kind of physical violence, they compel their children to act or refrain from acting in some particular way. There is the 'force' used by attendants in an asylum when they try to prevent a maniac from hurting himself or others. There is the 'force' used by the police when they control a crowd, and that other 'force' which they use in a baton charge. And finally there is the 'force' used in war. This, of course, varies with the technological devices at the disposal of the belligerents, with the policies they are pursuing, and with the particular circumstances of the war in question. But in general it may be said that, in war, 'force' connotes violence and fraud used to the limit of the combatants' capacity.

Variations in quantity, if sufficiently great, produce variations in quality. The 'force' that is war, particularly modern war, is very different from the 'force' that is police action, and the use of the same abstract word to describe the two dissimilar processes is profoundly misleading. (Still more misleading, of course, is the explicit assimilation of a war, waged by allied League-of-Nations powers against an aggressor, to police action against a criminal. The first is the use of violence and fraud without limit against innocent and guilty alike; the second is the use of strictly limited violence and a minimum of fraud exclusively against the guilty.)

Reality is a succession of concrete and particular situations. When we think about such situations we should use the particular and concrete words which apply to them. If we use abstract words which apply equally well (and equally badly) to other, quite dissimilar situations, it is certain that we shall think incorrectly.

Let us take the sentences quoted above and translate the abstract word 'force' into language that will render (however inadequately) the concrete and particular realities of contemporary warfare.

'You cannot have international justice, unless you are prepared to impose it by force.' Translated, this becomes: 'You cannot have international justice unless you are prepared, with a view to imposing a just settlement, to drop thermite, high explosives and vesicants upon the inhabitants of foreign cities and to have thermite, high explosives and vesicants dropped in return upon the inhabitants of your cities.' At the end of this proceeding, justice is to be imposed by the victorious party — that is, if there is a victorious party. It should be remarked that justice was to have been imposed by the victorious party at the end of the last war. But, unfortunately, after four years of fighting, the temper of the victors was such that they were quite incapable of making a just settlement. The Allies are reaping in Nazi Germany what they sowed at Versailles. The victors of the next war will have undergone intensive bombardments with thermite, high explosives and vesicants. Will their temper be better than that of the Allies in 1918? Will they be in a fitter state to make a just settlement? The answer, quite obviously, is: No. It is psychologically all but impossible that justice should be secured by the methods of contemporary warfare.

The next two sentences may be taken together. 'Peace-loving countries must unite to use force against aggressive dictatorships. Democratic institutions must be protected, if need be, by force.' Let us translate. 'Peace-loving countries must unite to throw thermite, high explosives and vesicants on the inhabitants of countries ruled by aggressive dictators. They must do this, and of course abide the consequences, in order to preserve peace and democratic institutions.' Two questions immediately propound themselves. First, is it likely that peace can be secured by a process calculated to reduce the orderly life of our complicated societies to chaos? And, second, is it likely that democratic institutions will flourish in a state of chaos? Again, the answers are pretty clearly in the negative.

By using the abstract word 'force,' instead of terms which at least attempt to describe the realities of war as it is to-day, the preachers of collective security through military collaboration disguise from themselves and from others, not only the contemporary facts, but also the probable consequences of their favourite policy. The attempt to secure justice, peace and democracy by 'force' seems reasonable enough until we realize, first, that this non-committal word stands, in the circumstances of our age, for activities which can hardly fail to result in social chaos; and second, that the consequences of social chaos are injustice, chronic warfare and tyranny. The moment we think in concrete and particular terms of the concrete and particular process called 'modern war,' we see that a policy which worked (or at least didn't result in complete disaster) in the past has no prospect whatever of working in the immediate future. The attempt to secure justice, peace and democracy by means of a 'force,' which means, at this particular moment of history, thermite, high explosives and vesicants, is about as reasonable as the attempt to put out a fire with a colourless liquid that happens to be, not water, but petrol.

What applies to the 'force' that is war applies in large measure to the 'force' that is revolution. It seems inherently very unlikely that social justice and social peace can be secured by thermite, high explosives and vesicants. At first, it may be, the parties in a civil war would hesitate to use such instruments on their fellow-countrymen. But there can be little doubt that, if the conflict were prolonged (as it probably would be between the evenly balanced Right and Left of a highly industrialized society), the combatants would end by losing their scruples.

The alternatives confronting us seem to be plain enough. Either we invent and conscientiously employ a new technique for making revolutions and settling international disputes; or else we cling to the old technique and, using 'force' (that is to say, thermite, high explosives and vesicants), destroy ourselves. Those who, for whatever motive, disguise the nature of the second alternative under inappropriate language, render the world a grave disservice. They lead us into one of the temptations we find it hardest to resist — the temptation to run away from reality, to pretend that facts are not what they are. Like Shelley (but without Shelley's acute awareness of what he was doing) we are perpetually weaving

A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun

Of this familiar life.

We protect our minds by an elaborate system of abstractions, ambiguities, metaphors and similes from the reality we do not wish to know too clearly; we lie to ourselves, in order that we may still have the excuse of ignorance, the alibi of stupidity and incomprehension, possessing which we can continue with a good conscience to commit and tolerate the most monstrous crimes:

The poor wretch who has learned his only prayers
From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
To ask a blessing from his Heavenly Father,
Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
And technical in victories and defeats,
And all our dainty terms for fratricide;
Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our tongues
Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
We join no meaning and attach no form!
As if the soldier died without a wound:
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang: as if the wretch
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
Passed off to Heaven translated and not killed;
As though he had no wife to pine for him,
No God to judge him.

The language we use about war is inappropriate, and its inappropriateness is designed to conceal a reality so odious that we do not wish to know it. The language we use about politics is also inappropriate; but here our mistake has a different purpose. Our principal aim in this case is to arouse and, having aroused, to rationalize and justify such intrinsically agreeable sentiments as pride and hatred, self-esteem and contempt for others. To achieve this end we speak about the facts of politics in words which more or less completely misrepresent them.

The concrete realities of politics are individual human beings, living together in national groups. Politicians — and to some extent we are all politicians — substitute abstractions for these concrete realities, and having done this, proceed to invest each abstraction with an appearance of concreteness by personifying it. For example, the concrete reality of which 'Britain' is the abstraction consists of some forty-odd millions of diverse individuals living on an island off the west coast of Europe. The personification of this abstraction appears, in classical fancy-dress and holding a very large toasting fork, on the backside of our copper coinage; appears in verbal form, every time we talk about international politics. 'Britain,' the abstraction from forty millions of Britons, is endowed with thoughts, sensibilities and emotions, even with a sex — for, in spite of John Bull, the country is always a female.

Now, it is of course possible that 'Britain' is more than a mere name — is an entity that possesses some kind of reality distinct from that of the individuals constituting

the group to which the name is applied. But this entity, if it exists, is certainly not a young lady with a toasting fork; nor is it possible to believe (though some eminent philosophers have preached the doctrine) that it should possess anything in the nature of a personal will. One must agree with T. H. Green that 'there can be nothing in a nation, however exalted its mission, or in a society however perfectly organized, which is not in the persons composing the nation or the society. . . . We cannot suppose a national spirit and will to exist except as the spirit and will of individuals.' But the moment we start resolutely thinking about our world in terms of individual persons we find ourselves at the same time thinking in terms of universality. 'The great rational religions,' writes Professor Whitehead, 'are the outcome of the emergence of a religious consciousness that is universal, as distinguished from tribal, or even social. Because it is universal, it introduces the note of solitariness.' (And he might have added that, because it is solitary, it introduces the note of universality.) 'The reason of this connection between universality and solitude is that universality is a disconnection from immediate surroundings.' And conversely the disconnection from immediate surroundings, particularly such social surrounding as the tribe or nation, the insistence on the person as the fundamental reality, leads to the conception of an all-embracing unity.

A nation, then, may be more than a mere abstraction, may possess some kind of real existence apart from its constituent members. But there is no reason to suppose that it is a person; indeed, there is every reason to suppose that it isn't. Those who speak as though it were a person (and some go further than this and speak as though it were a personal god) do so, because it is to their interest as egotists to make precisely this mistake.

In the case of the ruling class these interests are in part material. The personification of the nation as a sacred being, different from and superior to its constituent members, is merely (I quote the words of a great French jurist, Léon Duguit) 'a way of imposing authority by making people believe it is an authority *de jure* and not merely *de facto*.' By habitually talking of the nation as though it were a person with thoughts, feelings and a will of its own, the rulers of a country legitimate their own powers. Personification leads easily to deification; and where the nation is deified, its government ceases to be a mere convenience, like drains or a telephone system, and, partaking in the sacredness of the entity it represents, claims to give orders by divine right and demands the unquestioning obedience due to a god. Rulers seldom find it hard to recognize their friends. Hegel, the man who elaborated an inappropriate figure of speech into a complete philosophy of politics, was a favourite of the Prussian government. 'Es ist,' he had written, 'es ist der Gang Gottes in der Welt, das der Staat ist.' The decoration bestowed on him by Frederick William III was richly deserved.

Unlike their rulers, the ruled have no material interest in using inappropriate language about states and nations. For them, the reward of being mistaken is psychological. The personified and deified nation becomes, in the minds of the individuals composing it, a kind of enlargement of themselves. The superhuman qualities which

belong to the young lady with the toasting fork, the young lady with plaits and a brass soutien-gorge, the young lady in a Phrygian bonnet, are claimed by individual Englishmen, Germans and Frenchmen as being, at least in part, their own. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. But there would be no need to die, no need of war, if it had not been even sweeter to boast and swagger for one's country, to hate, despise, swindle and bully for it. Loyalty to the personified nation, or to the personified class or party, justifies the loyal in indulging all those passions which good manners and the moral code do not allow them to display in their relations with their neighbours. The personified entity is a being, not only great and noble, but also insanely proud, vain and touchy; fiercely rapacious; a braggart; bound by no considerations of right and wrong. (Hegel condemned as hopelessly shallow all those who dared to apply ethical standards to the activities of nations. To condone and applaud every iniquity committed in the name of the State was to him a sign of philosophical profundity.) Identifying themselves with this god, individuals find relief from the constraints of ordinary social decency, feel themselves justified in giving rein, within duly prescribed limits, to their criminal proclivities. As a loyal nationalist or party-man, one can enjoy the luxury of behaving badly with a good conscience.

The evil passions are further justified by another linguistic error — the error of speaking about certain categories of persons as though they were mere embodied abstractions. Foreigners and those who disagree with us are not thought of as men and women like ourselves and our fellow-countrymen; they are thought of as representatives and, so to say, symbols of a class. In so far as they have any personality at all, it is the personality we mistakenly attribute to their class — a personality that is, by definition, intrinsically evil. We know that the harming or killing of men and women is wrong, and we are reluctant consciously to do what we know to be wrong. But when particular men and women are thought of merely as representatives of a class, which has previously been defined as evil and personified in the shape of a devil, then the reluctance to hurt or murder disappears. Brown, Jones and Robinson are no longer thought of as Brown, Jones and Robinson, but as heretics, gentiles, Yids, niggers, barbarians, Huns, communists, capitalists, fascists, liberals — whichever the case may be. When they have been called such names and assimilated to the accursed class to which the names apply, Brown, Jones and Robinson cease to be conceived as what they really are — human persons — and become for the users of this fatally inappropriate language mere vermin or, worse, demons whom it is right and proper to destroy as thoroughly and as painfully as possible. Wherever persons are present, questions of morality arise. Rulers of nations and leaders of parties find morality embarrassing. That is why they take such pains to depersonalize their opponents. All propaganda directed against an opposing group has but one aim: to substitute diabolical abstractions for concrete persons. The propagandist's purpose is to make one set of people forget that certain other sets of people are human. By robbing them of their personality, he puts them outside the pale of moral obligation. Mere symbols can have no rights — particularly when that of which they are symbolical is, by definition, evil.

Politics can become moral only on one condition: that its problems shall be spoken of and thought about exclusively in terms of concrete reality; that is to say, of persons. To depersonify human beings and to personify abstractions are complementary errors which lead, by an inexorable logic, to war between nations and to idolatrous worship of the State, with consequent governmental oppression. All current political thought is a mixture, in varying proportions, between thought in terms of concrete realities and thought in terms of depersonified symbols and personified abstractions. In the democratic countries the problems of internal politics are thought about mainly in terms of concrete reality; those of external politics, mainly in terms of abstractions and symbols. In dictatorial countries the proportion of concrete to abstract and symbolic thought is lower than in democratic countries. Dictators talk little of persons, much of personified abstractions, such as the Nation, the State, the Party, and much of depersonified symbols, such as Yids, Bolshies, Capitalists. The stupidity of politicians who talk about a world of persons as though it were not a world of persons is due in the main to self-interest. In a fictitious world of symbols and personified abstractions, rulers find that they can rule more effectively, and the ruled, that they can gratify instincts which the conventions of good manners and the imperatives of morality demand that they should repress. To think correctly is the condition of behaving well. It is also in itself a moral act; those who would think correctly must resist considerable temptations.

Modern Fetishism

THE CULT OF relics was first rationalized in terms of Christian theology by Cyril of Jerusalem. Unrationalized, it had, of course, existed since the time of the earliest martyrs. Indeed, it had existed long before the coming of Christianity. The Christian cult of relics is merely a special case of an immemorial and universal tendency to attribute mana to certain inanimate objects. The word fetish is derived from the Latin *factitius*, and 'was first used in connection with Africa by the Portuguese discoverers of the last half of the fifteenth century; relics of saints, rosaries and images were then abundant all over Europe and were regarded as possessing magical virtue; they were termed by the Portuguese *feitiços* (i.e. charms). Early voyagers to West Africa applied this term to the wooden figures, stones, etc., regarded as the temporary residence of gods or spirits, and to charms.' There were good anthropologists four hundred years before the invention of anthropology.

Relic worship was officially abolished by all the Protestant reformers. But just as it preceded, so too this cult has survived, Catholicism. Where such deep-rooted tendencies as fetishism are concerned, all that reformers can hope to abolish is the temporary form, not the abiding substance. Officially rejected by theologians, fetishism does not cease to exist. All that happens is that, from being public and respectable, its manifestations become secret, personal and slightly shameful. Defined in terms of sociology, magic is merely unauthorized, private religion. During the war there were probably more fetishes in use among Protestants and agnostics than in the whole of Africa and Melanesia, more even than in the Europe of the later Middle Ages, when churches numbered their relics by the thousand. Nor, of course, has the cult of public fetishes and avowable relics altogether disappeared; it has merely moved away from the churches and established itself elsewhere. Thus, the flag has taken the place, as a cult object, of the cross; and in the icon corner one sees the image, not of a saint, but of the local dictator or a favourite political author. Even the ancient cult of bones and mummies has been laicized and brought up to date. The graves of the martyrs of the Commune are yearly visited by great crowds of Parisian workmen; and, in the Kremlin, stuffed and refrigerated, Lenin is preserved as an object of adoration for millions of pious atheists. Nor are benighted foreigners the only modern relic worshippers; for at this present moment (1933) we in England are being simultaneously invited, as Maecenases, and, as tax-payers, compelled to contribute towards the purchase, as a national fetish, of the Codex Sinaiticus.

'There are people,' the Director of the British Museum is reported as saying, 'people who criticize the spending of such a large sum of money at a time like this; but the

offer by the Government (of £1 for every £1 subscribed by the public) shows that they realize the importance of watching over the intellectual needs as well as the material needs of the nation.' And Sir Frederic Kenyon concludes a letter to *The Times* with the sentence: 'Where millions are spent on the material needs and amusements of the people, may not £100,000 be properly spent upon their minds and souls?' To this question I hasten to return an enthusiastic affirmative. I should like to see a great deal more than a hundred thousand pounds spent on people's 'minds and souls.' But the money spent on the Codex Sinaiticus is not money spent on 'minds and souls'; it is money spent on a relic, a mere *feitico*. And the Government which helps to purchase such *feiticos* is not 'watching over the intellectual interests of the nation'; it is indulging, at the tax-payer's expense, in a costly gesture of superstition and idolatry.

All spiritual values may be catalogued under one or other of the three heads: Good, True, Beautiful. Let us dispassionately consider the Codex Sinaiticus and try to estimate its position under each of these three categories.

I will begin with Beauty. Where does the Codex stand in the hierarchy of things beautiful? Obviously, very low. True, the large uncial script in which it is written is pleasant enough; but the book is not and does not claim to be a work of art. At the best, it is a pretty little piece of competent craftsmanship.

Let us consider it now in relation to Truth. Its truth value was very considerable; for the study of the manuscript led to the discovery of a number of interesting and hitherto unknown facts about the text of the Bible. But is there any reason to suppose that further study will elicit any new facts of importance? And, for the purposes of scholarship, does the original manuscript possess any marked and significant superiority over photographic reproductions? And, finally, what is there to prevent the searchers after more historical truth from going to Russia to look for it?

We come now to the category of Goodness. Of what makes for goodness the Codex clearly possesses no more than any other copy of the Bible. Indeed, for practical purposes, it actually possesses less than the Authorized Version you can buy for five shillings at the nearest bookseller's. For the five-shilling Bible is comprehensible and available; whereas the Codex is kept locked up in a box and can be read only by experts. Its light is permanently under a bushel. The ordinary visitor to the British Museum looks at it through two intervening layers, one of plate glass, the other of his own ignorance. What he understands of the Codex is nil. What he feels, if he feels anything when he examines it, is a vague sentimental awe, mingled with self-satisfaction. The Codex for him is just an equivalent — yet another equivalent — of Shakespeare's birthplace. Having peered at it and perhaps taken off his hat to it, he goes away with the comfortable conviction that he has done his duty by Culture and Religion. A bus trip to Stratford-on-Avon is for thousands of Shakespeare's fellow-countrymen sufficient excuse for never looking into *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*. They feel that they have done enough by paying an idolatrous visit to the shrine of the Bard; to read him would be a work of supererogation. It is now to be the same with the Bible. The Codex Sinaiticus stands to the Bible in exactly the same relation as Anne Hathaway's cottage to the

works of Shakespeare. If you regard idolatry as a good thing, then you will wholeheartedly approve of the purchase of the Codex. I happen to regard idolatry as a very bad thing — all the worse for the fact that it has roots that go deep into our human and sub-human nature.

The general conclusions which impose themselves are these. The Codex is not beautiful. Its truth value seems to be pretty well exhausted; and anyhow such truth value as it still does possess is as readily available in facsimile as in the original, and in Leningrad as in London. Finally, its powers to propagate the good which, in common with all other copies of the Bible, it contains, is exceptionally, almost uniquely, small. On the contrary, its power to propagate a habit of stupid and irrational idolatry is exceptionally great.

In view of all this, one may be permitted to wonder how precisely ‘the intellectual needs of the nation’ are being served by the acquisition of this costly fetish; or in what sense, other than a purely Pickwickian one, it can be said that our hundred thousand pounds are being spent upon the people’s ‘minds and souls.’ The truth of the matter is that the purchase is wholly unjustifiable in terms of a rationally idealistic philosophy. Spiritually, the Codex is valueless. If it is precious, it is precious only for its rarity, its associations and because it is superstitiously felt to contain some kind of mana.

There is in almost all human beings a stamp-collector and a fetish-worshipper; and it is to these personages that the Codex makes its appeal. Our hundred thousand pounds have bought us an object which is a mixture between the British Guiana Two-Cent, 1851, and the Thaumaturgical Arm of St. Francis Xavier.

The tendencies to superstition and mere collecting are, as I have said, almost universal; they are not for that reason rational or good. A Government which professes to care about ‘the mind and soul of the people,’ to watch over ‘the intellectual needs of the nation,’ has no business to spend public money for the gratification of these absurd and always slightly discreditable passions. Its business is to encourage all manifestations of the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

The Government’s action seems the more unjustifiable when we reflect that it has consistently put forward the plea of economy as an excuse for cutting down the grants (small enough, heaven knows, at the best of times) for scientific research. ‘It has been decided to concentrate available funds on the work of the most immediate practical value to industry, leaving to happier times the expansion of work, of which the results could only be available at some more distant date.’ In other and less hideously official words, it has been decided that the pursuit of truth for truth’s sake is too expensive. But when it comes to buying a stamp-collector’s fetish, fifty thousand pounds of other people’s money are stumped up without the smallest hesitation.

What applies to Truth applies also to Beauty. The Government is too poor to spend more than a miserably small sum on the acquisition of beautiful objects, or on the encouragement of men and women capable of adding to the existing store of artistic beauty. But it has money to spare for idolatry and mere bibliophily. Our National Church had the good sense to abolish the cult of relics; our National Government has

now officially reversed the policy of these reforming idealists, and the tax-payer is to find fifty thousand pounds for the purchase of a fetish.

LITERATURE AND EXAMINATIONS

IT HAPPENS ON the average once every three or four months. The postman drops into my letter-box an envelope addressed in an unfamiliar writing and postmarked anywhere from Oslo to Algiers. Opening it, I find a letter, sometimes in strange English, sometimes in one of the foreign languages with which an ordinarily cultured person is supposed to be familiar. The writer begins by an apology. He (or as often she) is sorry to trouble me, but the fact is that he or she is a student at the university of X or Y or Z, and that, in order to obtain his or her Doctorate of Letters, Diploma of Pedagogy, Bachelorship of Modern Languages, Aggregation to the University, or whatever the thing may happen to be called, he or she is writing a thesis about my books — or more often about some particular aspect of my books, such as their style, their construction, the influence upon them of other books, the idea of God in them, their Weltanschauung or Geschlechtsphilosophie. This being so, will I kindly furnish biographical material, a bibliography of all the reviews and criticisms written in every language, together with copies of such books as the writer happens to have been unable to obtain. In many cases the letter ends with an appeal to my better feelings: will I please do everything that is asked of me, because, if I don't, the writer will be unable to obtain the coveted post at the local University, Lycée, Gymnasium, Preparatoria, or what not, and will have to be content with a job as a teacher in an elementary school.

My feelings when one of these letters arrives are extremely mixed. That I should be treated as though I were a classical author of some earlier century, simultaneously amuses and depresses me, tickles my self-esteem and at the same time punctures it. I like very naturally to think that I am being read; but the idea that I am being studied fills me, after the first outburst of laughter, with a deepening gloom. There is something extremely disagreeable about being treated as though one were dead when one supposes — perhaps (and this is the really disquieting thought) mistakenly — that one is still very much alive. Nor is the anticipation of posthumous Fame any compensating satisfaction. For to be sufficiently famous to deserve elaborate study in a modern university is quite humiliatingly easy. Merely to have published is now a sufficient claim to academic attention. As time passes and the numbers of aspirants to diplomas and doctorates continues to pile up, it becomes increasingly difficult to find any significant aspect of a good writer's work which has not already formed the subject of a thesis. The candidate for academic honours has no choice but to study the insignificant aspects of a good writer's work or else the work, not yet explored,

because universally deemed not worth exploring, of a bad writer. Universities do me the honour of treating me as though I were defunct and a classic; but it is an honour, alas, that I share with Flecknoe and Pixéricourt, with Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau and Nahum Tate.

Walter Raleigh used to say that the teaching of literature always verged on the absurd. He understated the case. The teaching of literature often oversteps the verge and tumbles headlong into the most grotesque absurdity. It is absurd, for example, that students should be forced to spend months and years of their lives on the study of writers who are, by universal consent, of no importance whatsoever. It is equally absurd that they should spend months and years on the study of unimportant aspects of the work of good writers. Very many of the scores of theses produced each year in the various universities of the world are totally pointless. But the teaching of literature produces other absurdities no less monstrous than the learned thesis about a trivial theme. Comparatively few students aspire to specialized learning. For every doctor there are hundreds of bachelors. These obtain their degrees by retailing at second hand a little of the learning and a good deal of the literary criticism of others. Fashions in criticism change, and the candidate must be able to regurgitate the judgment in vogue in academic circles at the time of his ordeal. Success in literary examinations comes to those who know, among other things, what formulae happen, momentarily, to be correct.

What applies to literature applies also to the fine arts. For there are now academic institutions which actually give people degrees in art — minor degrees for those who know a list of dates and can repeat the proper ritual mantras about pictures and churches and statues; higher degrees to those who undertake profound original researches into the work of the deservedly neglected artists of the past.

The ultimate cause for this on the whole deplorable state of things is economic. Degrees have a definite cash value. The possession of a given diploma may make all the difference (as my correspondents so often point out in their appeals to my better feelings) between low wages and a low social position in an elementary school and good wages, with considerable social prestige, in the hierarchy of secondary education. Literature and fine arts figure in most curricula at the present time; men and women aspire to teach these subjects; headmasters and education authorities want to be able to distinguish between those who are ‘qualified’ to teach them and those who are not; universities oblige by creating faculties of literature and fine arts, complete with all the apparatus of diplomas, degrees and doctorates.

Now it is obviously necessary that, for examination purposes, literature and the fine arts should convert themselves, at any rate partially, into parodies of the exact sciences. Literature and art appeal as much to the affective and conative as to the merely cognitive side of man’s being. But if you are going to give people marks for literature and art, you must ask them questions that can be answered correctly or incorrectly, you must set them tasks which can be performed only by dint of persevering industriousness. Candidates for the lower degrees will be required, like candidates for

the lower degrees in chemistry, say, or biology, to read text-books and do 'practical' work. (In the case of literature, this practical work consists, like the theoretical work, in reading. But whereas theoretical reading is a reading of text-books, practical reading is a reading of the original texts.) Candidates for the higher degrees are expected, like the prospective doctor of science, to do a piece of original research and record their discoveries in a thesis. Even the laboratory methods of exact science are parodied. Literature does not lend itself to being weighed or measured; but at least its material embodiments can be minutely observed and accurately reproduced. The editing of texts has become a branch of microscopy.

It is quite true, of course, that literature and the fine arts have non-literary and non-artistic aspects. They provide important documents in the fields, for example, of social and economic history, of psychology, of philology and the philosophy of language. Moreover, writers and artists employ techniques of expression which profitably lend themselves to scientific analysis. Thus, the *alchimie du verbe*, as Rimbaud called it, can be made to yield some at least of its strange secrets; the geometry and optics of picture-making are worthy of the most serious study. In so far as they are not literature and not art, literature and art can be subjected most fruitfully to the methods of science. And, in effect, much excellent work in history, psychology and so forth has been done by the writers of supposedly literary and artistic theses. All would be well if universities would insist that such work is frankly historical, psychological and the rest, and that it has little or nothing to do with literature as literature, or with art as art. But unfortunately this necessary distinction is not drawn. Under the present dispensation, absurd pseudo-scientific research — into the date, shall we say, of John Chalkhill's second marriage, into the indebtedness of Shadwell to Molière — is as freely encouraged as genuinely scientific research carried out for the purpose of establishing significant relations between one set of facts and another. Moreover, the scientifically treatable, non-literary and non-artistic aspects of literature and art are kept hopelessly mixed up with their purely literary and artistic aspects. Candidates are given marks for displaying symptoms, not merely of knowledge, but also of sensibility and judgment — other people's sensibility, in general practice, and other people's judgment. Perfectly good scientific work has to be accompanied by the repetition of the mantras of fashionable criticism. The aesthetic heart must be worn, all through the weary hours of the final examination, palpitating on the sleeve. Every candidate for the bachelorship or doctorate is expected to overflow with the pious phrases of 'appreciation.' The present examination system is calculated to produce the literary and artistic equivalents of Tartufe and Pecksniff.

That men should hypocritically pay the tribute that philistinism owes to culture is greatly to be desired. The tendency to be realistic and hard-boiled is as dangerous in the sphere of culture as in that of politics. You cannot appeal to the humanitarianism of a fascist who starts out with the realistic assumption that because, in fact, might generally prevails, might is therefore right and should never make any concessions at all. Similarly you cannot appeal to the cultural piety of a low-brow who thinks that,

because most human beings are like himself, low-browism is therefore right and ought to triumph over high-browism. Without moral hypocrisy and intellectual snobbery, the decencies of life would lead a most precarious existence.

Intellectual snobbery, I insist, is an excellent thing; but, as of all excellent things, there may be too much of it. An examination system that encourages the candidate for a degree to adorn his non-literary and non-artistic knowledge of literature and art with a veneer of 'appreciative' cant is calculated to produce an excessive number of cultural Pecksniffs, each convinced, on the strength of his diploma, that he is always right. Under a more rational system of education, degrees in literature and art would not be given. Literary and artistic documents would, however, be used as the material of scientific researches in other fields. Feats of mere industry for industry's sake, such as the compilation of theses about writers valueless from a literary point of view and of no particular historical, psychological, economic or other interest, would be discouraged. The application of exact scientific methods to the typography of old books could safely be left to the voluntary enthusiasm of Nature's philatelists and crossword puzzlers. Meanwhile, of course, efforts would be made to encourage students to read and to look at works of art. Groups would be organized for the reading of papers and the discussion of literary and artistic problems. There would also be exercises in the art of writing clearly and correctly. In this way the natural sensibilities of the students might be developed, and the tendency, so much encouraged by the examination system, to mug up other people's judgments and repeat them, mechanically and without reflection, severely discouraged. At the same time students would be able to feel that their scientific work — the study of the significant non-literary and non-artistic aspects of literary and artistic documents — was genuinely valuable and enlightening, not the mere parody of scientific work that, too often, they are expected to do at present.

As things stand at present, it would be very difficult to make the kind of changes I have indicated above, for the simple reason that there are very many people who, for economic reasons, want degrees in literature and the fine arts. The employers of academic labour regard such degrees as qualifications for comparatively well-paid posts. It will be impossible to change the existing examination system until they have been educated to think differently.

English Snobbery

AFTER A HOLIDAY from periodical literature, I am always staggered, when I get back to a well-stocked reading-room, by the inordinate snobbery of the English press. In no other country do so many newspapers devote so large a proportion of their space to a chronicle of the activities of the merely rich or the merely ennobled. Nowhere else in Europe is gossip-writing a highly paid and creditable profession; nowhere else would such a headline as 'Peer's Cousin in Car Smash' be even imaginable. And where else but in England can one find three expensive but flourishing weeklies devoted to absolutely nothing but the life of the rich and the titled? Not to mention the several other weeklies in which this absorbing theme occupies, not indeed an exclusive, but still an important place.

On whom, one wonders, do these expensive weeklies live? To some extent, of course, upon the elect whom they exhibit walking in the Park with friends, attending race-meetings, eating dinners for Incurables or dancing in fancy dress for Crippled Children. Upon those, in a word, whose photographs have actually been published in their pages and upon all such as may reasonably hope, one memorable day, to achieve the same distinction. The ranks of the snapshot-worthy have recently been swelled by a considerable mass of new recruits. In the past, only the really rich, the definitely titled, the unequivocally West End stars were ever photographed. To-day, in search, no doubt, of new subscribers, the exploiters of snobbery go forth and fairly rake the County hedges and ditches for their material. Captain and Mrs. Knapweed-Knapweed with their daughter Angelica ('Peggy') are now portrayed, walking with friends at hunt steeplechases. A sad decline. But business is business. There are not enough earls or actresses. The Knapweed-Knapweeds must be called in to fill the void.

There are in England only one hundred thousand persons whose income exceeds two thousand pounds a year. Of these not more, I imagine, than ten thousand can even hope to qualify for a place in the snobbery-exploiting weeklies. Compared with the earls and the actresses, the Knapweed-Knapweeds are numerous; but they are not a circulation — and a circulation is precisely what the snobbery-exploiting weeklies possess. These weeklies must be read — disinterestedly, in a certain sense — by thousands for whom the possibility of personally figuring among the walkers-in-parks, or even among their anonymous friends, is simply unimaginable. There is a snobbery which, like virtue, is its own reward.

What precisely, one speculates, is the nature of that reward? For most of the readers of the gossip columns their wealthier contemporaries take rank with film stars and the heroes and heroines of novels. Reading of their activities, they enjoy vicariously the

pleasures — those amazingly boring and unvariegated pleasures — of the rich. What is quotidian reality for earls, actresses and Knapweed-Knapweeds is for them a delightful, compensatory fiction.

There are others, no doubt, who read for the sake of sarcastically laughing. How many? It is impossible to say. They cannot constitute a majority of newspaper readers; for if they did there would very soon be no more society or gossip columns to laugh at. One is forced rather reluctantly to the conclusion that most readers either positively enjoy the snobbery columns of their newspapers, or else accept them with resignation, as part of the established order of things, like the income tax or rain in summer.

Why should the English public proclaim itself so much more keenly interested in the doings of the rich and the titled than the public in other countries? Attachment to tradition may be invoked as one of the causes. The habit, established in long-past days when a title really meant something, of regarding a lord with a kind of awed curiosity still persists in a vestigial state, like the spiritual equivalent of the vermiform appendix. Elsewhere revolution has roughly excised this survival from the days of feudalism. But the last English revolution, that of 1688, was itself made by the aristocracy; instead of being cut out, the appendix rooted itself more firmly in the national consciousness. Another point: the English standard of living is high. There is an immense sub-middle class with enough money to preserve it from rancorous envy of the rich, but not enough to preserve it from boredom; it needs vicarious compensations and manages to find them in the gossip columns.

So much for the snobbery of the people who can never hope to be caught by the camera walking in the Park or drinking champagne for charity. We have now to consider the snobbery of those who have actually enjoyed this privilege. It is, of course, among these last that the passion is most intense. The objects of snobbery are themselves the greatest snobs.

That which, for the vulgar, is no more than a survival of something which once was useful, takes rank in the interior economy of the elect as a vital organ — no mere appendix, but an essential part of the aristocratic intestine. For the rich and the titled, snobbery is not a superfluous luxury, but a necessity; their self-regarding instincts impose it upon them. They are snobs because, like the rest of us, they are egotists. They admire the rich and titled for the good reason that the rich and titled are themselves.

This kind of snobbery exists wherever there is a privileged class. In other countries, however, gestures of aristocratic and plutocratic self-admiration are not received with sympathy, therefore are not made, except in private. For reasons which I have tried to explain above, large numbers of the English derive from gossip column and society weekly a deep satisfaction. They are prepared to listen to the privileged class congratulating itself. Where ears are willing, talk tends to be loud and long. The snobbery of the ruling classes in England is allowed the freest possible expression. Daily it takes the offered opportunity.

Time and the Machine

TIME, AS WE know it, is a very recent invention. The modern time-sense is hardly older than the United States. It is a by-product of industrialism — a sort of psychological analogue of synthetic perfumes and aniline dyes.

Time is our tyrant. We are chronically aware of the moving minute hand, even of the moving second hand. We have to be. There are trains to be caught, clocks to be punched, tasks to be done in specified periods, records to be broken by fractions of a second, machines that set the pace and have to be kept up with. Our consciousness of the smallest units of time is now acute. To us, for example, the moment 8.17 a.m. means something — something very important, if it happens to be the starting time of our daily train. To our ancestors, such an odd eccentric instant was without significance — did not even exist. In inventing the locomotive, Watt and Stevenson were part inventors of time.

Another time-emphasizing entity is the factory and its dependent, the office. Factories exist for the purpose of getting certain quantities of goods made in a certain time. The old artisan worked as it suited him; with the result that consumers generally had to wait for the goods they had ordered from him. The factory is a device for making workmen hurry. The machine revolves so often each minute; so many movements have to be made, so many pieces produced each hour. Result: the factory worker (and the same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the office worker) is compelled to know time in its smallest fractions. In the hand-work age there was no such compulsion to be aware of minutes and seconds.

Our awareness of time has reached such a pitch of intensity that we suffer acutely whenever our travels take us into some corner of the world where people are not interested in minutes and seconds. The unpunctuality of the Orient, for example, is appalling to those who come freshly from a land of fixed meal-times and regular train services. For a modern American or Englishman, waiting is a psychological torture. An Indian accepts the blank hours with resignation, even with satisfaction. He has not lost the fine art of doing nothing. Our notion of time as a collection of minutes, each of which must be filled with some business or amusement, is wholly alien to the Oriental, just as it was wholly alien to the Greek. For the man who lives in a pre-industrial world, time moves at a slow and easy pace; he does not care about each minute, for the good reason that he has not been made conscious of the existence of minutes.

This brings us to a seeming paradox. Acutely aware of the smallest constituent particles of time — of time, as measured by clock-work and train arrivals and the revolutions of machines — industrialized man has to a great extent lost the old aware-

ness of time in its larger divisions. The time of which we have knowledge is artificial, machine-made time. Of natural, cosmic time, as it is measured out by sun and moon, we are for the most part almost wholly unconscious. Pre-industrial people know time in its daily, monthly and seasonal rhythms. They are aware of sunrise, noon and sunset; of the full moon and the new; of equinox and solstice; of spring and summer, autumn and winter. All the old religions, including Catholic Christianity, have insisted on this daily and seasonal rhythm. Pre-industrial man was never allowed to forget the majestic movement of cosmic time.

Industrialism and urbanism have changed all this. One can live and work in a town without being aware of the daily march of the sun across the sky; without ever seeing the moon and stars. Broadway and Piccadilly are our Milky Way; our constellations are outlined in neon tubes. Even changes of season affect the townsman very little. He is the inhabitant of an artificial universe that is, to a great extent, walled off from the world of nature. Outside the walls, time is cosmic and moves with the motion of sun and stars. Within, it is an affair of revolving wheels and is measured in seconds and minutes — at its longest, in eight-hour days and six-day weeks. We have a new consciousness; but it has been purchased at the expense of the old consciousness.

New-Fashioned Christmas

THE NAME IS still the same; but the thing is almost unrecognizably different from what Charles Dickens meant by 'Christmas.' For example, there was no tree at Dingley Dell, and, except for five shillings to Sam Weller, not a single present was given. Christmas, for Mr. Pickwick and his friends, was an affair of copious eating and still more copious drinking, interrupted by bouts of home-made fun and purely domestic horseplay.

For us, three generations later, the word connotes the Prince Consort's imported Teutonic evergreen; connotes all those endless presents, which it is such a burden to buy and such an embarrassment to receive; connotes restaurants, dance halls, theatres, cabarets — all the highly organized, professional entertainments provided by the astute business men who run the amusement industry. Only the name connects the new-fashioned Christmas with the Pickwickian festival.

The tree, of course, was a mere accident. If Queen Victoria had married a Frenchman we should probably be giving one another *étrennes* and ushering in the year with a series of calls on the most remote and the most personally antipathetic of our innumerable relations. (Relations, in France, are innumerable.) As it was, she took to herself a prince from the land of tannenbaums. It is therefore to a tannenbaum's green branches, and upon Christmas Day, that we attach our gifts.

The tree, I repeat, was an accident, a thing outside the realm of determinism, a product of personal idiosyncrasy. But all the other changes in our Christmas habits, which have taken place since Dickens wrote of Dingley Dell, are the results of great impersonal processes. During Dickens's lifetime, and still more rapidly after his death, industrial production enormously and continuously increased. But production cannot increase unless there is a corresponding increase in consumption. It became necessary to stimulate consumption, to provide the home public with reasons, or, better still, with compelling unreasons, for consuming. Hence the rise of advertisement, and hence the gradual and, as time went on, the more and more deliberate canalization into industrially profitable channels of all such common human impulses and emotions as lent themselves to the process.

The producer who succeeds in thus canalizing some universal human urge opens up for himself and his successors an inexhaustible gold mine. Thus, art and industry have flourished from time immemorial in the rich soil of bereavement and the fear of death. Weddings have been almost as profitable to commerce as funerals, and within the last few years an American man of genius has discovered how even filial affection may be

made a justification for increased consumption; the florists and candy manufacturers of the United States have reason to bless the inventor of Mother's Day.

The love of excitement is as deeply planted in human nature as the love of a mother; the desire for change, for novelty, for a relief from the monotony of every day, as strong as sexual desire or the terror of death. Men have instituted festivals and holidays to satisfy these cravings. Mr. Pickwick's Christmas was a typical feast day of the old style — a time of jollification and excitement, a gaudily glittering 'captain jewel in the carcanet' of grey, uneventful days. Psychologically, it performed its function. Not economically, however — that is, so far as we are concerned. The Pickwickian Christmas did very little to stimulate consumption; it was mainly a gratuitous festivity. A few vintners and distillers and poulterers were the only people whom it greatly profited financially. This was a state of things which an ever-increasingly efficient industrialism could not possibly afford to tolerate. Christmas, accordingly, was canalized. The deep festal impulse of man was harnessed and made to turn a very respectable little wheel in the mills of industry. To-day Christmas is an important economic event. The distributors of goods spend large sums in advertising potential gifts, and (since the man who pays the piper calls the tune) the newspapers reinforce their advertisements by fostering a notion that the mutual goodwill of modern Christians can be expressed only by the exchange of manufactured articles.

The last thirty years have witnessed the promotion of innkeeping and showmanship to the rank of major commercial enterprises. Major commercial enterprises spend money on advertising. Therefore, newspapers are always suggesting that a good time can be enjoyed only by those who take what is offered them by entertainment manufacturers. The Dickensian Christmas-at-Home receives only perfunctory lip-service from a press which draws a steady income from the catering and amusement trades. Home-made fun is gratuitous, and gratuitousness is something which an industrialized world cannot afford to tolerate.

Historical Generalizations

MR. DAWSON CALLS his study* of the Dark Ages 'an Introduction to the History of European Unity.' The words ring a trifle ironically in the ear. That mediaeval unity of culture and religion to which Mr. Dawson's period led up never prevented good Catholic Europeans from cutting one another's throats. Christendom may have been one; but it was in a chronic condition of civil war. What is the value, we may ask, of such a purely platonic unity? What, indeed, is the meaning of the term? To some extent, at least, historians must be behaviourists. If at any given epoch men behave as though they were not united, then surely the society which they constitute can hardly be called a unity. Can the spiritual substance of unity possess reciprocal throat-cutting as one of its accidents and still remain itself? It is a nice question.

We may be at one with Mr. Dawson in 'feeling once more the need for spiritual or at least moral unity,' we may be dissatisfied with 'a civilization that finds its unity in external and superficial things and ignores the deeper needs of man's spiritual nature'; but we must also bear in mind that political and economic unification, though 'external and superficial,' are of equal importance with cultural and spiritual unification. Indeed, the latter cannot be said to exist (except in a platonic and Pickwickian sense) without the former. The unity of mediaeval Christendom never manifested itself as an observable fact of experience; throat-cutting and political disunion made the manifestation impossible.

Mr. Dawson's title-page has delayed me too long. It is time to consider his book. This is quite admirable. Following Mr. Dawson's light, the unspecialized reader finds himself able to thread his way through those obscure corridors of time which extend from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Norman Conquest. The Dark Ages lose their darkness, take on form and significance. Thanks to Mr. Dawson's erudition and his gift of marshalling facts, we begin to have a notion of what it is all about.

The book is short, the period long. Mr. Dawson has had to select, compress and generalize in order to carry us through the centuries at the required speed. For the most part, he generalizes with a sobriety and a caution worthy of the highest praise. We meet, in his pages, with none of those 'deep' metaphysical hypotheses, in terms of which some modern German historians have so excitingly and so unjustifiably interpreted the course of past events. Mr. Dawson is an intellectual ascetic who conscientiously refrains from indulging in such delicious but dangerous extravagances. For this he deserves all our gratitude.

Occasionally, it is true, Mr. Dawson makes a generalization with which I find myself (with all the diffidence of an unlearned dilettante) disagreeing. For example, 'the

modern European,' he says, 'is accustomed to look on society as essentially concerned with the present life, and with material needs, and on religion as an influence on the moral life of the individual. But to the Byzantine, and indeed to mediaeval man in general, the primary society was the religious one, and economic and secular affairs were a secondary consideration.' In confirmation of this Mr. Dawson quotes, among other documents, a passage from the writings of St. Gregory Nazianzen on the interest universally displayed by his fourth-century contemporaries in theology. 'The money changer will talk about the Begotten and the Unbegotten, instead of giving you your money, and if you want a bath, the bath keeper assures you that the Son surely proceeds from nothing.' What Mr. Dawson does not mention is that, in another passage, this same Gregory reproaches the people of Constantinople with an excessive interest in chariot racing — an interest which, in the time of Justinian, a century and a half later, had become so maniacally passionate that Greens and Blues were murdering one another by hundreds and even thousands. Again we must apply the Behaviourist test. If men behave as though they took a passionate interest in something — and it is difficult to prove your devotion to a cause more effectively than by killing and being killed for it — then we must presume that that interest is genuine, a primary rather than a secondary consideration. The actual facts seem to demonstrate that some Byzantines were passionately interested in religion, others (or perhaps they were the same) were no less passionately interested in sport. At any rate, they behaved about both in the same way and were as ready to undergo martyrdom for their favourite jockey as for their favourite article in the Athanasian Creed. The trouble with such generalizations as that of Mr. Dawson is that they ignore the fact that society is never homogeneous and that human beings belong to many different mental species. This seems to be true even in primitive societies displaying the maximum of 'co-consciousness' on the part of their members. Thus, the anthropologist, Radin, well known for his work among the Red Indians, has come to the conclusion that monotheistic beliefs are correlated with a specific temperament and so may be expected to crop up with a certain specific frequency, irrespective of culture. If this is true (and it is in accord with our personal experience of civilized life and with the results of anthropological research among primitive peoples), then what becomes of a generalization like Mr. Dawson's? Obviously, it falls to the ground. You can no more indict an age than you can a nation.

At every epoch some people are primarily interested in the things of the other world, some in the things of this world. The chief difference between a religious and a non-religious epoch would seem to be this: that in a religious epoch those whose main interest is in secular affairs tend to justify that interest in terms of theology (the Greens would hate the Blues for being unorthodox, and vice versa) and to find transcendental motives for sublunary action. In a non-religious age, this-worldly people are free to believe that the things in which they take an interest are intrinsically valuable, while naturally religious people are driven to look for this-worldly justifications (social and political) for their other-worldliness. Sociologically considered, the superiority of a religious to a non-religious epoch lies in the fact that people have more and more

powerful motives for action. The trouble is that you can never be certain whether the action undertaken for religious reasons is going to be good or bad. A characteristic example of mixed action undertaken for religious motives is provided by the pious Mgr. de Belzunce who distinguished himself during the great plague of Marseilles as much by his acts of heroic Christian charity as by his revolting sectarian intolerance.

It took the Lynds and their assistants eighteen months of intensive personal investigation to bring together the materials for their classic study of a modern industrial community, 'Middletown.' This community, as it happened, was a particularly homogeneous one; the Lynds' researches showed that anyone born in Middletown with unusual abilities took the earliest possible opportunity of going somewhere else. Nevertheless, even in this more than ordinarily homogeneous town, the investigators met with many distinct human types, many fundamentally different attitudes towards the problems of life. There existed, of course, a behaviour pattern which was, statistically, normal. But the departures from the norm were considerable. After reading 'Middletown' one becomes more than ever suspicious of the generalizations of historians about the character and mentality of the men and women of past ages. For upon what are these generalizations based? Upon an originally inadequate documentation further reduced by the ravages of time to a random collection of literary and archaeological odds and ends. As statements about the past, such generalizations are therefore of dubious value. They must always be taken with a grain of salt; at best they are only half or three-quarter truths. If they have value, it is as stimulants to make us think about the present. Generalized history is a branch of speculation, connected (often rather arbitrarily and uneasily) with certain facts about the past. Circumstances alter, each age must think its own thoughts. Not until there is a settled and definitive world order can there be such a thing as a settled and definitive version of human history.

* * *

* The Making of Europe, by Christopher Dawson. London, Sheed and Ward, 1932. 12s. 6d.

Crébillon The Younger

PROPHECY IS MAINLY interesting for the light it throws on the age in which it is uttered. The Apocalypse, for example, tells us how a Christian felt about the world at the end of the first century. Manifestly ludicrous as a forecast, Mercier's *L'An 2240* is worth reading, because it shows us what were the ideals of an earnest and rather stupid Frenchman in the year 1770. And the ideals of an earnest and very intelligent Englishman of the early twentieth century may be studied, in all their process of development, in the long series of Mr. Wells's prophetic books. Our notions of the future have something of that significance which Freud attributes to our dreams. And not our notions of the future only: our notions of the past as well. For if prophecy is an expression of our contemporary fears and wishes, so too, to a very great extent, is history — or at least what passes for history among the mass of ordinary unprofessional folk. Utopias, earthly paradises and earthly hells are flowers of the imagination which contrive to blossom and luxuriate even in the midst of the stoniest dates and documents, even within the fixed and narrow boundaries of established fact. The works of St. Thomas survive; we have a record of the acts of Innocent III. But that does not prevent our pictures of the Middle Ages from being as various and as highly coloured as our pictures of Utopia, the Servile State or the New Jerusalem. We see the past through the refractive medium of our prejudices, our tastes, our contemporary fears and hopes. The facts of history exist; but they hardly trouble us. We select and interpret our documents till they square with our theories.

The eighteenth century is a period which has been interpreted and reinterpreted in the most surprisingly various ways: by its own philosophers (for the eighteenth century was highly self-conscious) as the age of reason and enlightenment; by the Romantics and their strange heirs, the Reactionaries and the Early Victorians, as the age of vice and spiritual drought; by the later nineteenth-century sceptics, who curiously combined the strictest Protestant morality with the most dogmatically anti-Christian philosophy, as an age of reason indeed, but of more than dubious character; by the Beardsleyites of the 'nineties, as an epoch of deliciously depraved frivolity, of futile and therefore truly aesthetic elegance. The popular conception of the eighteenth century at the present day is a mixture of Beardsley's and Voltaire's. We find its morals and its manners in the highest degree 'amusing'; and when we want a stick to beat the corpses of the Eminent Victorians we apply to Hume or Gibbon, to Voltaire or Helvétius, to Horace Walpole or Madame du Deffand. For the simpler-minded among us, the eighteenth century is summed up by Mr. Nigel Playfair's version of *The Beggar's Opera*. The

more sophisticated find their dix-huitième in the original French documents (judiciously selected) or in the ironic pages of Mr. Lytton Strachey.

Charming historical Utopia! A moment's thought, however, is sufficient to show how arbitrarily we have abstracted it from reality. For who, after all, were the most important, the most durable and influential men that the century produced? The names of Bach, Handel and Mozart present themselves immediately to the mind; of Swedenborg and Wesley and Blake; of Dr. Johnson, Bishop Berkeley and Kant. Of none of these can it be said that he fits very easily into the scheme of The Beggar's Opera. True, our pianists and conductors have tried, Procrustes-like, to squeeze the musicians into the dix-huitième mould. They play Bach mechanically, Handel lightly, Mozart frivolously, without feeling and therefore without sense, and call the process a 'classical' interpretation. But let that pass. The fact remains that the greatest men of the eighteenth century are not in the least what we should call dix-huitième.

It must not be imagined, however, that our particular 'eighteenth century' is completely mythical. Something like it did genuinely exist, during a couple of generations, among a small class of people in most European countries, especially France. The fact that we have chosen to recreate a whole historical epoch in the image of this intellectually free and morally licentious dix-huitième throws some light on our own problems, our own twentieth-century bugbears, our own desires. For a certain section of contemporary society the terms 'modern' and 'eighteenth century' are almost synonymous. Like our ancestors, we too are in revolt against intellectual authority and moral 'prejudices.' Perhaps the chief difference between them and us is that they believed in pure reason as well as extra-conjugal love; we Bergsonians do not.

One of the most characteristic representatives of this particular dix-huitième which we have chosen to exalt at the expense of all the other possible eighteenth centuries is Crébillon the Younger. We find in his novels all the qualities which we regard as typical of the period: elegance, frivolity, a complete absence of moral 'prejudices,' especially on the subject of love, a certain dry spirit of detachment and analysis. *Le Sopha* and *La Nuit et le Moment* are documents which, taken by themselves, completely justify our current conception of the age in which they were written. For that reason alone they deserve to be read. One should always be prepared to quote authorities in support of one's theories. Moreover, they are worth reading for their own sakes. For Crébillon was a psychologist and, in his own limited field, one of the most acute of his age.

The typically modern method of presenting character differs from that employed by the novelists of the eighteenth century. In our novels we offer the facts in a so-to-speak raw state, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions from them. The older psychologists treated the facts to a preliminary process of intellectual digestion; they gave their readers something more than the mere behaviouristic material on which psychological judgments are based; they gave them the conclusions they themselves had already drawn from the facts. Compare Constant's *Adolphe* with the *Ulysses* of James Joyce; the difference of method is manifest. Crébillon is a characteristic eighteenth-century psychologist. With the dry intellectual precision of his age, he describes and

comments on his characters, analyses their behaviour, draws conclusions, formulates generalizations. What a contemporary novelist would imply in twenty pages of description and talk, he expresses outright in two or three sentences that are an intellectual summing up of all the evidence. The novelist who employs the older method gains in definition and clarity what he loses in realism, in life, in expansive implication and suggestion. There is much to be said for both methods of presentation; most of all, perhaps, for a combination of the two.

So much for Crébillon's method of presenting character. It is time to consider the sort of people and the particular aspect of their characters which he liked to present. His heroes and heroines are the men and women of our own favourite dix-huitième — the eighteenth century whose representative man is rather Casanova than Bach, rather the Cardinal de Bernis than Wesley. They are aristocrats who fill their indefinite leisure with an amateur's interest in literature, art, and even science (see, for the scientific interests, Cléandre's story, in *La Nuit et le Moment*, of his physico-physiological argument with Julie); with talk and social intercourse, with gambling and country sports; and above all, with that most perfect of time-killers, l'amour. Crébillon's main, his almost exclusive preoccupation is with the last of these aristocratic amusements. And it is on his psychology of love — of a certain kind of love — that his claim to literary immortality must be based.

Crébillon's special province is that obscure borderland between soul and body, where physiology and psychology meet and mingle and are reciprocally complicated. It is a province of which, during the last century and in this country, at any rate, we have heard but the scantiest accounts. It was only with birth that physiology ever made its entrance into the Victorian novel, not with conception. In these matters, Crébillon's age was more scientific. The existence of physiology was frankly admitted at every stage of the reproductive process. It was mentioned in connection with every kind of love, from l'amour passion to l'amour goût. It was freely discussed, and its phenomena described, classified and explained. The relations between the senses and the imagination, between love and pleasure, between desire and the affections are methodically defined in that literature of which Crébillon's stories are representative. And it is very right that they should be so defined. For no analysis of love can claim to be complete which ignores the physiological basis and accompaniment of the passion. Love, says Donne in his nearest approach to a versified epigram,

Love's not so pure and abstract as they use

To say, who have no mistress but their Muse.

The distinction between sacred and profane, spiritual and fleshly love is an arbitrary, gratuitous and metaphysical distinction. The most spiritual love is rooted in the flesh; the most sacred is only profane love sublimated and refined. To ignore these obvious facts is foolish and slightly dishonest. And indeed, they never have been ignored except by the psychologists of the nineteenth century. The writers of every other age have always admitted them. It was in aristocratic France, however, and during the eighteenth

century, that they were most closely and accurately studied. Crébillon fils is one of the acutest, one of the most scientific of the students.

Scientific — I apply the epithet deliberately, not vaguely and at random. For Crébillon's attitude towards the phenomena of sex seems to me precisely that of the true scientific investigator. It is with a mind entirely open and unbiassed that he approaches the subject. He contrives to forget that love is a matter of the most intimate human concern, that it has been from time immemorial the subject of philosophical speculation and moral precept. Making a clean sweep of all the prejudices, he sets to work, coolly and with detachment, as though the subject of his investigations were something as remote, as utterly divorced from good and evil, as spiral nebulae, liver flukes or the aurora borealis.

Men have always tended to attribute to the objects of their intense emotions, and even to the emotions themselves, some kind of cosmical significance. Mystics and lovers, for example, have never been content to find the justification for their feelings in the feelings themselves: they have asked us to believe that these feelings possess a universal truth value as well as, for themselves, a personal behaviour value. And they have invented cosmogonies and metaphysical systems to justify and explain their emotional attitudes. The fact that all these metaphysical systems are, scientifically speaking, almost certainly untrue in no way affects the value for the individual and for whole societies of the emotions and attitudes which gave them birth. Thus, mysticism will always be a beautiful and precious thing, even though it should be conclusively proved that all the philosophical systems based upon it are nonsensical. And one can be convinced of the superiority of spiritual to carnal, of 'conjugal' to 'scortatory' love without believing a word of Plato or Swedenborg.

In a quiet and entirely unpretentious way Crébillon was an expounder of the scientific truth about love — that its basis is physiological; that the intense and beautiful emotions which it arouses cannot be philosophically justified or explained, but should be gratefully accepted for what they are: feelings significant in themselves and of the highest practical importance for those who experience them. He is no vulgar and stupid cynic who denies the existence, because he cannot accept the current metaphysical explanation, of any feelings higher than the merely physical. 'Les plaisirs gagnent toujours à être ennoblis,' says Crébillon, through the mouth of the Duke in *Le Hasard au Coin du Feu*. It is the man of science who speaks, the unprejudiced observer, the acceptor of facts. Pleasure is a fact; so is nobility. He admits the existence of both. Pleasure gains by being ennobled: that is the practical, experimental justification of all the high, aspiring, seemingly infinite emotions evoked by love. True, it may be objected that Crébillon gives too little space in his analysis of love to that which ennobles pleasure and too much to pleasure pure and simple. He would have been more truly scientific if he had reversed the balance; for that which ennobles is of more practical significance, both to individuals and to societies, than that which is ennobled. We may excuse him, perhaps, by supposing that, in the society in which he lived (the Pompadour was his patroness), his opportunities for observing the ennobling passions were scarce in comparison with

his opportunities for observing the raw physiological material on which such passions work.

But it is foolish as well as ungrateful to criticize an author for what he has failed to achieve. The reader's business is with what the writer has done, not with what he has left undone. And Crébillon, after all, did do something which, whatever its limitations, was worth doing. What writer, for example, has spoken more acutely on the somewhat scabrous, but none the less important subject of feminine 'temperament'? I cannot do better than quote a specimen of his analysis, with the generalization he draws from it. He is speaking here of a woman whose imagination is more ardent than her senses, and who, living in a society where this imagination is perpetually being fired, is for ever desperately trying to experience the pleasures of which she dreams. 'Elle a l'imagination fort vive et fort déréglée, et quoique l'inutilité des épreuves qu'elle a faites en certain genre eût dû la corriger d'en faire, elle ne veut pas se persuader qu'elle soit née plus malheureuse qu'elle croit que d'autres ne le sont, et elle se flatte toujours qu'il est réservé au dernier qu'elle prend de la rendre aussi sensible qu'elle désire de l'être. Je ne doute même pas que cette idée ne soit la source de ses dérèglements et de la peine qu'elle prend de jouer ce qu'elle ne sent pas. . . . Je dirai plus, c'est qu'aujourd'hui il est prouvé que ce sont les femmes à qui les plaisirs de l'amour sont les moins nécessaires qui les recherchent avec la plus de fureur, et que les trois quarts de celles qui se sont perdues avaient reçu de la nature tout ce qu'il leur fallait pour ne l'être pas.' Admirable description of a type not at all uncommon in all societies where love-making is regarded as the proper study of womankind! The type, I repeat, is not uncommon; but Crébillon's succinct and accurate description of it something almost unique.

Here is another passage in which he analyses the motives of a different type of cold woman — a much more dangerous type, it may be remarked: the type to which all successful adventuresses belong. 'Soit caprice, soit vanité, la chose du monde qui lui plaît le plus est d'inspirer de désirs; elle jouit du moins des transports de son amant. D'ailleurs, la froideur de ses sens n'empêche pas sa tête de s'animer, et si la nature lui a refusé ce que l'on appelle le plaisir, elle lui a en échange donné une sorte de volupté qui n'existe, à la vérité, que dans ses idées; mais qui lui fait peut-être éprouver quelque chose de plus délicat que ce qui ne part que des sens. Pour vous,' adds Clitandre, addressing his companion, 'pour vous, plus heureuse qu'elle, vous avez, si je ne me trompe, rassemblé les deux.'

It would be possible to compile out of the works of Crébillon a whole collection of such character-sketches and aphorisms. 'What every Young Don Juan ought to Know' might serve as title to this florilegium. It should be placed in the hands of all those, women as well as men, who propose to lead, professionally, the arduous and difficult life of leisure. Here are a few of the aphorisms which will deserve to find a place in this anthology of psychological wisdom.

'Une jolie femme dépend bien moins d'elle-même que des circonstances; et par malheur il s'en trouve tant, de si peu prévues, de si pressantes, qu'il n'y a point à s'étonner

si, après plusieurs aventures, elle n'a connu ni l'amour, ni son cœur. Il s'ensuit que ce qu'on croit la dernière fantaisie d'une femme est bien souvent sa première passion.'

'Les sens ont aussi leur délicatesse; à un certain point on les émeut; qu'on le passe, on les révolte.'

'L'on n'occupe pas longtemps l'imagination d'une femme sans aller jusqu'à son cœur, ou du moins sans que par les effets cela ne revienne au même.'

Of Crébillon's life there is but little to say. It was quite uneventful. The record of it, singularly scanty, contains almost no unusual or surprising element. It was precisely the life which you would expect the author of *Le Sopha* to have led: a cheerful, social, literary life in the Paris of Louis XV. Crébillon was born on St. Valentine's Day, 1707, thus achieving legitimacy by fifteen days; for his parents were only married on the thirty-first of January. His father was Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon, the tragic poet who provoked the envy and the competitive rivalry of Voltaire. I am not ashamed to say that I have never read a line of the elder Crébillon's works. Life is not so long that one can afford to spend even the briefest time in the perusal of eighteenth-century French tragedians.

The literary career of the younger Crébillon began in the theatre. In association with the actors Romagnesi, Biancolelli and Riccoboni he composed a number of satirical pieces and parodies for the Italian comedians. It was at this period that he confided to Sébastien Mercier, 'qu'il n'avait encore achevé la lecture des tragédies de son père, mais que cela viendrait. Il regardait la tragédie française comme la farce la plus complète qu'ait pu inventer l'esprit humain.'

His first successful novel, *Tanzai et Néardarné, Histoire Japonaise*, was published in 1734. It was so successful, indeed, and so Japanese, that Crébillon, accused of satirizing the Cardinal de Rohan and other important persons, was arrested and thrown into prison, from which, however, the good graces of a royal reader soon released him.

Tanzai was followed in 1736 by *Les Égaréments du Cœur et de l'Esprit*, and in 1740 by *Le Sopha*. It was the epoch of Crébillon's social triumphs. He was for some time perpetual chairman of the famous dinners of the *Caveau*, and there were many other societies of which he was, officially or unofficially, the leading light.

In 1748 he married — somewhat tardily, for he had had a child by her two years before — an English wife, Lady Mary Howard. It is said that the poor lady squinted, was very ugly, awkward in society, shy and deeply religious. Crébillon seems, none the less, to have been a model husband, while the marriage lasted; which was not very long, however, for Lady Mary died about 1756. Their only child died in infancy a short time after being legitimated.

It was in 1759 that the favour of Madame de Pompadour procured for Crébillon the post of Royal Censor of Literature. He performed his duties conscientiously and to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. On the death of his father, in 1762, he received a pension. In 1774 he became Police Censor as well as Royal Censor. In 1777 he died. For all practical purposes, however, he had been dead fifteen years or more. 'Il y a longtemps,' said his obituarist, 'très longtemps même, qu'il avait eu le chagrin de se

voir survivre à lui-même.' Melancholy fate! It caused his contemporaries to do him, towards the end, something less than justice. The most enthusiastic of his epitaphs is cool enough:

Dans ce tombeau gît Crébillon.

Qui? le fameux tragique? — Non!

Celui qui le mieux peignit l'âme

Du petit-maître et de la femme.

The praise is faint. It is meant, perhaps, to damn. But it does not succeed in damning. To have been the best painter of anybody's soul, even the fop's, even the eighteenth-century lady's, is a fine achievement. 'Je fus étonnée,' says one of Crébillon's characters, describing the charms of her lover's conversation, 'je fus étonnée de la sorte de consistance que les objets les plus frivoles semblaient prendre entre ses mains.' The whole merit of that French eighteenth century, of which Crébillon was the representative man, consisted precisely in giving 'a sort of consistency to the most frivolous objects.' To lead a life of leisure gracefully is an art, and though we can all do nothing, few of us contrive to do it well. It is scarcely possible to imagine a life more hopelessly futile than that which was led by the men and women of the old French aristocracy. Intrinsically, such a life seems ghastly in its emptiness and sterility. And yet, somehow, by sheer force of style, these frivolous creatures of the dix-huitième contrived to fill the emptiness, to coax the most charming and elegant flowers from the sterility of their existence. To the most futile of lives they gave 'a sort of consistency'; they endowed nothingness with solidity and form. Crébillon shared this power with his contemporaries. The conquests of the petit-maître, the prompt surrenders of Célie and Cidalise and Julie — these are his theme. It seems unpromising in its smallness and its triviality. But by dint of treating it seriously — with the double seriousness of the scientific observer and the literary artist — he has made out of it something which we in our turn are compelled to take seriously. Like Célie, we are astonished.

Justifications

WELL BEATEN BY the Don, Masetto lies groaning in the darkness. To him comes Zerlina, repentantly tender. Kneeling beside him, ‘Vedrai, carino,’ she promises in a melody of the most ravishing elegance,

Vedrai, carino,
se sei buonino,
che bel rimedio
ti voglio dar.
È naturale,
non da disgusto,
e lo speciale
non lo sa far.
È un certo balsamo
che porto adosso.
Dare te’l posso,
se il vuoi provar.

And after half a dozen repetitions of *tocca mi qua, qua* and twenty bars of deliciously melodious twiddles, the orchestra ends up, *pianissimo*, but how definitely and satisfyingly! with the chord of C major, and the newly married lovers retire to enjoy their bliss.

È naturale, non da disgusto . . . Da Ponte evidently spoke for himself. This is his description of the manner in which the libretto of *Don Giovanni* was composed: ‘I sat down at my writing-table and stayed there for twelve hours on end, with a little bottle of Tokay on my right hand, an inkstand in the middle, and a box of Seville tobacco on the left. A beautiful young girl of sixteen was living in my house with her mother, who looked after the household. (I should have wished to love her only as a daughter — but . . .) She came into my room whenever I rang the bell, which in truth was fairly often, and particularly when my inspiration seemed to begin to cool. She brought me now a biscuit, now a cup of coffee, or again nothing but her own lovely face, always gay, always smiling, and made precisely to inspire poetic fancy and brilliant ideas.’ It is a scene from a settecento Earthly Paradise — before the Fall of 1789. The mind is its own place, and there have always been plenty of men and women whose home was Da Ponte’s Eden. The rest of us are not so fortunate. In the world we inhabit, that certo balsamo which Zerlina and her young friends carry about with them is listed as one of the dangerous drugs. Its administration is not permitted, except under a medical certificate. In the moral pharmacopœias of all civilized countries it is official in only

one form — matrimony. Made up in this way the *bel rimedio* is ‘a remedy against sin.’ Made up in any other way, it is sin.

Those who, like Da Ponte, are untroubled in this matter by qualms of conscience, merely ignore the prescriptions of the *pharmacopœia*. If they want the balm, they take it, in whatever form and from any bootlegger who is willing to supply it. The behaviour of these drug traffickers is so straightforward, their thoughts and feelings so transparently comprehensible, that it is unnecessary to pay any further attention to them. It is just a matter of *tocca mi qua, qua*, and there’s an end of it.

But there is another class of men and women, the scrupulous, for whom this simple solution is morally impossible. They want the *certo balsamo* in forms that are not official; they feel impelled to give an unduly violent expression to their lust for power, or social position or money. Current morality condemns these wishes. It would be possible for them, by breaking the law discreetly, to get all they want without discomfort; but they are not prepared even to think of themselves as law-breakers. They reject an enjoyment which is illicit, refuse to be the furtive evaders of a rule of which their own furtiveness tacitly confirms the validity. Declining the dishonourable rôle of bootleggers, they claim to be on the right side of the law, they insist on the essential orthodoxy of their actions. Other people condemn them; they retort by inventing philosophies to prove that they are right.

Many people carry scrupulousness a stage further. There is no question of their committing an act that has been pronounced illegal or immoral. They take their *certo balsamo* as prescribed; they indulge their avarice and their lust for power only in such ways as convention regards as respectable. But all sensualities and egotisms are essentially irrational; and, along with their animal cravings, men feel a hunger and thirst for explanation, for reasonableness, for righteousness. Even a licit indulgence in the irrational can be distressing to the scrupulous. Law and the local system of morality may pronounce such indulgences to be harmless; but they feel it necessary to invent more elaborate justifications of their own.

A complete history of justifications would be, to a great extent, identical with a history of thought. Most political, ethical and even cosmological systems have been essentially justificatory. They are the work either of men in rebellion against the existing system, or of the scrupulous, or of the defenders of orthodoxy.

To be effective, justifications have to be made in terms of the philosophy which condemns the acts or thoughts that it is desired to justify. The scrupulous are concerned to prove that the irrational they so much dread is in truth rational or even divine; the rebels, that they are really, if the matter be examined with an unprejudiced eye, more Catholic than the Pope and more royalist than the King. Conversely, the supporters of an established system will try to show that they have on their side, not only tradition and divine revelation, but also logic and considerations of utility.

An elaborate system of justification often does more than it was intended to do. In justifying one set of thoughts, impulses and actions, the author finds (or his readers find) that he is logically committed to believing in the rightness of other doings and

other feelings, which he had not originally thought of justifying. Thus, a system intended originally to justify simple fornication may turn out to be logically capable of justifying murder. Those who want to commit murder will seize on the excuse offered by the system, and even those who don't will find themselves impelled by the force of logic into this course.

Philosophies are devices for making it possible to do, coolly, continuously and with a good conscience, things which otherwise one could do only in the heat of passion, spasmodically and under the threat of subsequent remorse. Unsophisticated by thought, anger soon dies down; but supply a man with a philosophy proving that he is right to be angry, and he will go on performing in cold blood the acts of malice which otherwise he could have performed only when the fit was upon him. Philosophies, which their authors devised in order to justify some relatively harmless craving, have been subsequently made the excuse for monstrous iniquities. For example, the seventeenth-century Puritans were anxious to prove that there was no incompatibility between trade and wealth on the one hand and Christian virtues on the other. The philosophy which they concocted out of the Old Testament hid much more than it was meant to do. Not only did it prove that rich nonconformist merchants were thoroughly virtuous; it also proved that workmen, peasants and, in general, all the poor were thoroughly vicious, therefore that they deserved all the miseries they suffered, and a good many more as well. The surprising thing about the industrial revolution is not that capitalists and entrepreneurs should have behaved badly; it is that they should have been so serenely convinced of their perfect goodness. For this the philosophy of the Puritans, reinforced at a later period by that of the political economists, was responsible.

In the pages which follow, I shall illustrate these general remarks on justification by a few concrete examples chosen almost at random from the illimitable literature of the subject. The choice has been determined more by the hazards of my recent reading than by anything else. My only guiding principle has been that the examples should be curious, striking and even, in certain cases, extravagant. It is by studying madness that psychologists have learnt to understand the workings of the healthy mind. Similarly, it is in the most absurd and fantastic instances that the mechanism of the essentially normal and commonplace process of justification is seen most clearly at work. If my principal examples are concerned with the *certo balsamo*, it is because the theological and philosophical devices which have been invented for the justification of sexual activity, whether licit or illicit, have generally been more fantastic and far-fetched than those by which men have sought to moralize their swindles and murders, their cruelties and rapacities, the manifestations of their vanity, pride and personal ambition.

My first examples belong to the class of justifications by religious experience. Such justifications tend to be especially extravagant where the prevailing theological system is one which postulates the reality of guidance by a personal God. For men and women brought up in such a system, it is easy to justify any action by identifying the desire to perform it with the direct prompting of the deity. In certain of these theological systems,

God is regarded as completely transcendent and of a nature utterly incommensurable with man's. This being so, He becomes capable of anything; we must not be surprised to find God guiding us to perform acts which would be judged, by merely human standards, as crimes and lunacies.

Kierkegaard wrote a whole book on this subject, choosing as his theme the story of Abraham and Isaac. The command to sacrifice Isaac was, he insists, genuinely divine. God's ways are so emphatically not ours that there is no cause for astonishment in His ordering His servant to commit a crime. Such 'temporary suspensions of the moral order' are proofs of God's omnipotence and transcendence. Kierkegaard's choice of an example is significant. His God is a justifier of cruelty, not of sensuality. The idea that there could be a temporary suspension of the laws of sexual morality is evidently repugnant to him. That God should prompt to murder is, to his mind, more easily conceivable than that He should prompt to an act of sexual indulgence. Kierkegaard's attitude is widely shared at the present day. There are plenty of pious churchmen who consider that God approves of men killing their fellows in war, but who would be horrified at the suggestion that fornication and adultery can ever be anything but detestable in His eyes. Those who invoke guidance to justify behaviour commonly regarded as immoral may be grouped in two main classes. In the first class we place those whom Dante would have consigned to the lower circles of hell — the violent and malicious; in the second we place the merely incontinent whose chief preoccupation is with the *certo balsamo* and who find themselves divinely guided towards sexual promiscuity. The two classes cannot in practice be sharply distinguished. Those who are guided towards promiscuity may also be guided, as we shall see, towards pride, fraud and violence.

In choosing the sacrifice of Isaac as his example, Kierkegaard displayed a certain timidity. For after all, this particular suspension of the moral order was not complete; the angel and that eleventh-hour ram saved Isaac from the knife. If he had really had the courage of his convictions, Kierkegaard would have chosen a case like that of Thomas Schucker, the Swiss Anabaptist who, in 1527, cut off his brother's head. 'He called together a numerous assembly and declared to the company that he perceived himself under the influence of the spirit of God. Upon which he commanded his brother to kneel down, and took a sword. His father and mother and some others demanded what he was about to do. Be satisfied, replied he, I will do nothing but what is revealed to me by our heavenly father. The company waited impatiently for the event, when they saw him draw his sword and cut off his brother's head. He was punished by the magistrates as his crime deserved; but he showed no signs of repentance, and declared upon the scaffold that he had executed the orders of God.' The most remarkable feature of this story is not that Schucker should have felt himself guided to cut off his brother's head; it is that the brother should have consented to let his head be cut off and that the numerous assembly should have looked on without a protest. Under the influence of his religion and justified by its theology, Schucker was merely taking too seriously a childish fantasy of murder. But the victim and the spectators had no

such fantasies; if they behaved in the way they did, it was because it seemed to them inherently probable that Schucker's revelation was valid.

Those who believe that God gives guidance are forced to admit that what feels like a divine command is in fact very often a prompting from some all too human source. Accordingly they advise anyone who receives what seems a guidance to confide it to others and ask their opinion upon it. A guidance that can stand up to the criticism of a group may be relied upon as being of divine origin. Thomas Schucker's guidance came through this test with flying colours. We must either believe that an act of criminal imbecility can be divinely inspired, or that the test is far from infallible. The case of Thomas Schucker is not unique; it is merely a particularly extravagant specimen of a very common type of religious aberration. A group under supposedly divine guidance is not quite so frequently the victim of absurd fantasies and disreputable desires as is an individual; but the difference is merely one of degree, not of kind. There is no dogma so queer, no behaviour so eccentric or even outrageous, but a group of people can be found to think it divinely inspired.

Here, for example, is the case, chosen from among a thousand others, of the Reverend Henry James Prince and his disciples. Prince was born in 1811 in the West Country; was articled to a doctor; then, at twenty-six, decided to take Orders. A journal which he kept at this period was published in 1859 for the edification of his followers. It is a typical specimen of evangelical literature. One opens it at random upon such entries as this, for September 20th, 1835: 'In the evening I found strength to expound John iii. with boldness to a party of Mr. M. C.'s and then to pray with them. Afterwards spoke seriously to F. H., endeavouring to convince him that he needed a new heart. At night was assaulted with a severe trial, when I found it exceedingly difficult to resist the idolatrous feeling of self-complacency on account of those doings.' A month later he 'dined at Dr. H.'s and spent a rational evening. He lent me Bickersteth's Guide to Prophecy, and gave me a book by Mr. Cunningham on the Millennium.' On May 17th, 1837, 'Jesus vouchsafed after dinner to visit my soul with His love; it was quite delicious to my poor barren soul; my heart melted over the dying Lamb, and the sight of His bleeding love was such that for a season my soul seemed quite swallowed up in the enjoyment of His dying love; I felt that I had done the bloody deed, and loathed myself; all that I could do was to sigh and weep and look and love.'

In the following spring Prince entered St. David's College, at Lampeter, to prepare for ordination. He was an exemplary student — too exemplary, indeed, for the taste of most of his fellows, who resented the zeal for self-improvement displayed by Prince and a small band of earnest companions. One of these companions, Arthur Augustus Rees, published in 1846 a pamphlet, *The Rise and Progress of the Heresy of the Rev. H. J. Prince*, which contains an account of the young man's career at Lampeter. It was, so it seems, the reading of a book called *The Life and Writings of Gerhard Tersteegen* (Tersteegen was a German pietist of the eighteenth century) that launched young Prince upon the course that was to lead him to the Agapemone. Tersteegen convinced him of the importance of living always under guidance; so much so, that 'at length he

was determined to say or do nothing without a previous intimation of the divine mind. For example, if Mr. P. were about to take a walk and there were every appearance of rain, he would not carry out his umbrella without first asking the will of God.' In due course, he came to believe that he could always discover what the will of God really was: an infallible intuition revealed it in every conjunction of life. Judged by ordinary standards, God's advice might often seem rather injudicious; but since it was God's it was right. Prince would always act upon it, even in defiance of his judgment.

The will of God had a good deal to do with Prince's two marriages. The first, contracted while still a student at Lampeter, was with a Miss Martha Freeman. This lady was old enough to be her husband's mother, but possessed by way of compensation an independent income. A friend of Prince's family, she had contributed towards the expenses of the young man's education. In return he converted her from Catholicism to Anglicanism, and had acted almost from boyhood as her spiritual adviser. Their relationship was simultaneously that of husband and wife, mother and son, spiritual father and daughter. Alas! the couple had little time to enjoy this complicated bliss; a few months only after Prince's ordination to the curacy of Charlinch, in Somerset, the poor old lady died. Whereupon, with a haste which his friends could only regard as indecent, but which he himself explained as being due to the will of God, he married Miss Julia Starky, sister of the rector of the parish.

Mr. Starky was Prince's senior by some years; but from the first his relations to his new curate were those of disciple to master. Prince, it is evident, was one of those born snake-charmers and lion-tamers who go through life effortlessly dominating their fellow-men and women. Such magnetism is a dangerous gift, which it is almost impossible not to abuse or be abused by. Prince duly succumbed to the temptations into which his own powers led him; he fascinated others into believing him a superior being; feasted his self-esteem on their adulation until it swelled to monstrous proportions; then invoked the Almighty to justify his pretensions and to moralize his sexual eccentricities.

In *The Charlinch Revival*, which he published in 1842 (in order, 'under the Divine blessing, to stir up the hearts of the Lord's people'), Prince reveals himself to us at the moment when he first discovered the full extent of his powers. Charlinch was an agricultural parish, peopled by stolid Saxon rustics, in whom the temperature of religious zeal was little, if at all, above absolute zero. The revival began in October 1841. Mr. Prince, who had for some time been 'shut up' and deprived of his ordinary power to preach a stirring sermon, found himself suddenly inspired. There was a memorable Sunday afternoon when 'the church was unusually full, but the minister felt as if he had nothing to say; he was still shut up. In the pulpit, however, the spirit of prayer came on him and he prayed for twenty minutes with considerable unction. He then told his congregation that he would read the text to them, Ephesians v. 14, and that if the Lord were pleased to speak by him He would; and if not, that he must hold his tongue, as he could not speak from himself. He had scarcely spoken these words, when the Spirit came upon him with power: certainly he did not preach, but the Holy Ghost preached by him. The word was not vehement, and far too solemn to be violent; but

it was searching like fire, heavy as a hammer, and sharper than a two-edged sword.' The congregation was overwhelmed. 'Several men and women sobbed aloud; the head of most dropped on their breast, the hearts of all were awestruck. (One boy excepted.)' Galvanized, the parish started out of its secular repose. The revival had begun.

Prince's next great victory was won in the Sunday School, where he 'had laboured fourteen months without witnessing so much as one child become even serious.' On December 10th, 1841, about fifty children were assembled in the Charlinch school. 'In a few minutes, the Holy Ghost came upon the minister with the most tremendous power. . . . About twenty of the children were pierced to the heart by it, and appeared to be in great distress; but the bigger boys continued unmoved, and some of them even seemed disposed to laugh. In a short time, however, the word reached them too, and they were smitten to the heart with a most dreadful conviction of their sin and danger. . . . In about ten minutes the spectacle presented by the schoolroom was truly awful; out of fifty children present there were not so many as ten that could stand upright. Boys and girls, great and small together, were either leaning against the wall quite overcome by their feelings of distress, or else bowed down with their faces hidden in their hands, and sobbing in the severest agony.' The triumph was complete. 'Who can possibly resist the conviction that the hand of the Lord hath done this?' Certainly not the Reverend Henry James Prince.

The revivalists were so excessively zealous that, in May 1842, the Bishop of Bath and Wells revoked Mr. Prince's licence to preach. Charlinch was becoming too hot to hold its curate. He migrated; but a similar fate overtook him in two other parishes. Finally, 'after some months waiting on God for guidance in faith and prayer,' he left the Established Church and started to preach on his own — at Brighton, where he founded an Adullam Chapel; at Weymouth, where Mr. Starky, who had also had a difference with the Bishop, was ministering to a considerable flock of Starkyites; at Spaxton, a village near Charlinch and the site of the future Agapemone.

The heroes of tragedy are torn between love and honour — in other words, between egoism and egotism, between craving and pride, between the urge to indulge oneself and the urge to dominate others. In Prince there was no conflict. The two motives presented themselves not simultaneously but in succession. He began with the pursuit of honour and, having achieved it, went on to love. His first systematic efforts at justification were made on behalf of his ambition and vanity; it was not till later that he used his theology and his religious experiences for moralizing his sensualities.

It was in the spring of 1843 that he wrote to his friend Rees to inform him that the Holy Ghost had taken up its residence within himself; and by the end of the same year he had evolved a complete system of theology, based firmly upon the foundation of unquestionable experience: the experience of his identity with the spirit of God. This theology subsequently underwent certain modifications under the pressure of his desires. As the claims of sensuality became more insistent, new theological dogmas had to be invented to justify them. In 1843 pride and vanity were in the ascendant, and the refinements of the doctrine elaborated twelve years later in *The Little Book Open* —

refinements intended to sanctify Prince's cravings for the *certo balsamo* — had not yet been invented. The fully developed doctrine will be described in due course. Meanwhile, we must see how Brother Prince, as he now called himself, was guided to deal with the important problem of finance. His methods were simplicity itself. Disciples would come down to breakfast to find a note couched in some such words as these: 'The Lord hath need of £50 to be used for a special purpose unto His glory. The spirit would have this known unto you. Amen.' So great was the faith of those to whom such communications were addressed that they would sit down at once to draw the cheque. So far so good. But it soon became clear that what the Lord really needed was capital — a good solid lump of it. And in due course the capital appeared. Here is the story of the first twenty thousand.

After being deprived of his curacy at Charlinch, Prince spent some months as curate of Stoke, in Suffolk. Here he made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Nottidge, and their four unmarried daughters. These ladies, who were no longer in their first youth, became Prince's disciples and, when he left Stoke (under orders, this time, from the Bishop of Ely), followed him to Brighton and subsequently into the west of England. In 1844, Mr. Nottidge died, leaving each of his daughters about six thousand pounds. Shortly afterwards God intimated to Brother Prince that it was His will that three of the Miss Nottidges, Agnes, Harriet and Clara, should marry three of Prince's followers, George Thomas, Lewis Price and William Cobbe, respectively. The ladies hesitated for a moment, then decided that the will of God must be obeyed, and the three marriages were celebrated simultaneously, at Swansea, on July 9th, 1845. In the following year Agnes parted from her husband — not, however, before parting with her six thousand pounds, which had been made over on her marriage to Mr. Thomas, who in his turn had made them over (for such was the will of God) to Brother Prince. The Cobbes and Prices did likewise. These gifts, to which were added a thousand pounds from Starky, and no less than ten thousand from a Mr. Malin and four Miss Malins, formed the nucleus of a considerable fortune which was afterwards invested in the purchase and maintenance of the Agapemone.

Meanwhile, the fourth Miss Nottidge (aged forty-four and called Louisa) had returned to her mother in Suffolk. Not for long, however. In December 1845 she came at Prince's invitation — or rather, at the invitation of the Holy Ghost — to Weymouth; thence, after some months, migrated to Charlinch. She was living quietly there in a cottage, with Mrs. Prince, when her brother, the Rev. Edmund Nottidge, and her brother-in-law, Frederick Ripley, drove up in a chaise and abducted her. Louisa was taken first of all to her mother's house in London; but on 'declaring that Prince was the Almighty in human form, she was, on the 12th of November 1846, upon the usual medical certificate, placed in a private lunatic asylum in Middlesex, where she continued until the 14th of May 1848, when she was discharged by the order of the Lunacy Commissioner.' From the asylum, Louisa hurried straight back to Spaxton and, within three days of her release, had transferred the whole of her property to Brother Prince. These six thousand pounds were dearly bought; for their transfer was

to lead, twelve years later, to a lawsuit which was a source of much pain to the Spaxton community. Louisa died in 1858, and in 1860 her brother, Ralph Nottidge, filed a suit against Prince in the Court of Chancery, for the return of £5728, 7s. 7d. 'In 1848,' runs the summary of the case in the Law Journal Reports, 'a person pretending that he had a divine mission obtained a gift of stock from a lady by imposing a belief on her mind that he sustained a supernatural character. The lady's relations were aware of the gift at the time it was made, and she resided with and was supported by the donee from 1848 up to her death in 1858. Upon a bill by the administrator of the lady, the Court ordered the donee to refund the stock, with interest thereon from the time of her death.' And now the point which made the decision worthy of record: 'Whether the donee really believed that he was the supernatural being he represented himself to be, was immaterial.'

At the time of Louisa's release from her asylum, Nottidge v. Prince was still in the distant future. The present was a season of triumph. Crowds came to listen to the preaching of the Two Witnesses, as Prince and Starky called themselves; the number of believers increased; money came pouring in. Brother Prince decided to found a community to be called The Agapemone, or Abode of Love. Two hundred acres of land were bought at Spaxton, a handsome mansion erected, gardens laid out. The hothouses were filled with exotic plants, the stables with magnificent horses, the cellars with the choicest Madeira and claret. There was a chapel, complete with stained-glass windows and Gothic trimmings, but a chapel that was at the same time the principal drawing-room. It was furnished with arm-chairs, a comfortable sofa and a billiard-table. To the sinless and perfected inhabitants of the Agapemone all activities were holy; a game of snooker was a sacrament like any other.

Into the Agapemone Brother Prince settled down with some sixty disciples — gentlefolk and servants. His state, in these early years, was lordly. He bought the Queen-Dowager's equipage with four white horses and drove through the countryside as though he were an emperor. In London, when he visited the Great Exhibition of 1851, his open carriage was preceded by outriders, bareheaded, as befitted men in the presence of the Lord. Letters were sent through the post addressed to 'Our Lord God, Spaxton, Somerset,' and were duly delivered. Brother Prince, or 'Beloved' as now he preferred to be called by his followers, had climbed to the pinnacle of Honour. It was time for Love.

At the beginning of the 'fifties a young lady called Miss Paterson had joined the flock. Hepworth Dixon, who visited the Agapemone some years later, has left a description of a certain fascinating 'Sister Zoe,' whom he identified (though she refused to give her mundane name) with the *ci-devant* Paterson. In a pale, romantic way, Sister Zoe was extremely beautiful. 'Guercino might have painted such a girl for one of his rapt and mounting angels.' Beloved was smitten. But a man whose soul was the residence of the Holy Ghost — who had indeed, by this time, actually become the Holy Ghost — could hardly be content with a bootlegged balsamo. His affair with Zoe had to be justified. He might, of course, have written her a little note to the effect that the Lord had need

of her for a special purpose unto His glory. But he must have felt that this would not be enough. Beloved lived in a society which honoured the Low Church mill-owner, growing rich on sweated labour, but was horrified by sexual impropriety. A man might grind the faces of the poor; but so long as he refrained from caressing his neighbours' wives and daughters, he was regarded as virtuous. In money matters Beloved had found plain guidance quite sufficient; but when it came to sensuality, more elaborate justifications were needed. These were set out in *The Little Book Open*, published in 1856. After a brief introduction, the theme of the Little Book is announced in capital letters for all to understand. The subject of Brother Prince's testimony is 'THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY.' The Gospel 'addressed itself to the soul of man. It left out the flesh.' Beloved had appeared to remedy this defect.

The cosmology and theology, in terms of which Mr. Prince rationalized his desire to have an affair with Miss Paterson, may be briefly summed up as follows. God enters periodically into covenants with man, through chosen individuals. The first covenant was at the Creation, and Adam was God's witness. The second was at the Flood, and the witness was Noah. The third was entered into after the building of the Tower of Babel; Abraham was the witness on this occasion. The fourth, with Jesus as witness, at the Redemption upon the cross. And now, at Spaxton, 'God, in Jesus Christ, has again entered into covenant with man, at the resurrection of mankind, and I am His witness. This one man, myself, has Jesus Christ selected and appointed His witness to His counsel and purpose, to conclude the day of grace and to introduce the day of judgment, to close the dispensation of the spirit and to enter into covenant with the FLESH.' How sorely the poor flesh needed this covenant! It had become God's enemy at the Fall — with an enmity that 'neither the holiness of the law could eradicate, nor the Grace of God amend. . . . Even the dying love of a crucified Redeemer never once took away the enmity of the flesh of the believer against God; but rather brought it the more to light.' The Gospel had saved only souls, not flesh. Beloved had come to save the flesh. He had already 'revealed the mind of the Lord concerning the dispensation of the spirit — the Gospel — by living it as a spiritual body.' (I neglected to remark before that Henry James Prince had for some time ceased to exist, and that what people took for the ex-curate of Charlinch was a visible manifestation of the Spirit of God.) Having lived the Gospel in a spiritual body, 'he was now to bring to light, or reveal, the mind of the Lord concerning flesh, by living it in flesh. Accordingly there was given unto him a reed like unto a rod; and the angel said, arise and measure the temple of God. He did so.'

The circumstances in which he did so were singular in the extreme. He announced to the people in the Agapemone that 'it was now God's purpose to extend His love from heaven to earth, from spirit to flesh, from soul to body. . . . Agreeably thereto He (the Holy Ghost) took flesh — a woman. He did this through Brother Prince, as flesh; yet not Brother Prince as natural flesh . . . Thus the Holy Ghost took flesh in the person of those whom He had called as flesh. Thus He did measure the temple of God; and the reed like unto a rod wherewith He did measure it was the flesh He had

taken.’ Having thus explained the meaning of his symbol, Brother Prince launches into an account of his taking of the flesh. ‘He took the flesh absolutely in His sovereign will. . . . He had no respect for any other will than His own. He was not influenced by what others would think or say. He did not even consult or in any way make known His intention to the flesh He took, until He actually did take it in the presence of others; and then He took it with power and authority, as flesh that belonged to God and was at His absolute disposal; so that in the taking of it He left it no choice of its own. He took it in free grace. It was flesh He took; flesh that knew not God, that wanted not God, that was ignorant of Him; and, like all other flesh in its nature, contrary to the spirit. He took it as it was — ignorant, indifferent, independent, at enmity against God, and having nothing to commend it to Him. He took it in love. Not because it loved Him, for it did not; but because it pleased Him to set His love upon it. And though He took it in absolute power and authority, without consulting its pleasure, or even giving it a choice, yet He took it in love; for having taken it, the manner of His life with it was such as flesh could not but know and appreciate as love.

‘Moreover, although it was natural flesh He took, and therefore flesh indifferent to and at enmity with God, He never for a moment made it sensible of this, but in everything and at all times, regarded it and treated it according to His own mind, WHICH WAS TO SEE NO EVIL IN IT; in fact, He loved it as His own flesh.

‘According to the purpose He had declared, He kept it with Him continually, by day and by night. He took it openly with Him wherever He went, not being ashamed of it; and made its life happy and agreeable by affording it the enjoyment of every simple and innocent gratification.’

Through this muddy verbiage, we divine the oddest realities. From Hepworth Dixon, who had sources of information not available at the present time, we learn that the covenant of God (in the person of Mr. Prince) with the flesh (in the person of Miss Paterson) was sealed in a public act of worship, upon the sofa in that consecrated billiard-room at Spaxton. Beloved had announced in advance that the great event was to take place on a given day and at a predetermined hour. What he did not reveal in advance was the name of the particular piece of flesh which was to be reconciled. One can reconstruct the scene: the little congregation sitting in apprehensive expectation round the billiard-table in the chapel; the solemn entry of Beloved; a few prayers offered by the two Anointed Ones, otherwise Messrs. Thomas and Starky; the singing in unison of one of those hymns composed by Beloved in his own honour; then, falling upon the vibrant religious silence, the words of Beloved, announcing the name of the chosen flesh. One can reconstruct the scene, I repeat; but when it comes to Miss Paterson’s thoughts and feelings, imagination boggles. ‘He took it in love. Not because it loved Him, for it did not; but because it pleased Him to set His love upon it.’ To set His love upon it, ‘with power and authority, and in the presence of others.’ Whether Beloved would have behaved in this extraordinary way if he had been a mere bootlegger of sexual pleasures may be doubted. But in justifying his desires for Miss Paterson, he had created a theology which made the performance in the billiard-room a sacred

duty. As plain Mr. Prince, he would never have thought of executing more than a straightforward seduction. As the divine witness of a new dispensation, he was bound to do something spectacular and uncommon. He did it, with a vengeance.

The public initiation in the billiard-room was not the last of Miss Paterson's ordeals. New trials were in store for her; in due course, she became pregnant. Now, according to the Princean theology there was to be no birth under the new dispensation, just as there was to be no death. Beloved and his followers had become immortal and at the same time divinely sterile. In spite of which, it soon became apparent that Sister Zoe was in a family way. For a moment, Beloved was at a loss to understand. Then, from on high, the explanation was vouchsafed. Doomed to annihilation, Satan was making a last despairing effort. Miss Paterson's baby was the result. How it was received when it arrived, this child of flesh by the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the Devil, is not recorded; nor how it was brought up. Sitting in the billiard-saloon-chapel, on the very sofa where the covenant had been sealed, Hepworth Dixon saw a solitary little creature playing in the garden outside. It is our only glimpse of this most unwelcome of children.

The case of *Nottidge v. Prince* was heard in 1860 — at a moment, that is to say, when the mid-nineteenth-century reaction towards rationalism was setting in. It is a significant fact that, between 1859, the year of the Irish revival, and 1873, the year of Moody's first visit to Edinburgh, we have no record of any considerable outburst of religious excitement in Great Britain. If the fortunes of the Agapemone began henceforward to decline, that was not solely due to the strictures of Vice-Chancellor Stuart; it was also and perhaps mainly due to the fact that people with money were losing their interest in Covenants and Anointed Ones. If they wanted justifications for unorthodox behaviour they looked for them elsewhere than in theology. The chosen band lived on at Spaxton, steadily shrinking as the immortals who composed it died off, steadily growing poorer as the value of money declined and the original capital was eroded away. Beloved lingered on and on, outliving all his original followers, outliving even the age of rationalism. For in the later 'eighties the tide began to turn. Intellect went out of fashion. Nietzsche was regarded as a great thinker, Bergson had written his first books, and money began to pour once more into the coffers of the Agapemone. A branch was opened at Clapton, where an Ark of the Covenant was built at a cost of nearly twenty thousand pounds. After Beloved's death in 1899, the pastor of the Ark, the Rev. T. H. Smyth Pigott, became Beloved II, and, with a punctuality that bespeaks the unchangeableness of basic human motives, proceeded to repeat all that his predecessor had done. The urge to domination had first to be satisfied and theologically justified; then the craving for the *certo balsamo*. Smyth Pigott did both — becoming God in 1902 and producing, in 1905 and 1908, two illegitimate children called respectively Glory and Power. In due course, he also died. The Agapemone still exists.

Both in doctrine and in practice, Brother Prince was wildly unorthodox. Coventry Patmore's loves were nuptial and his religion Catholic. But, for scrupulous souls, even

nuptial love is an odd, inexplicable kind of activity, requiring to be rationalized and sanctified. Patmore found what he required in the ancient doctrine which sees in the consummation of human passion a type and symbol of the union of God with souls and with the Church. The doctrine, I repeat, is old and unorthodox. Patmore's eccentricity consisted in insisting upon its truth with excessive emphasis, in taking too literally an analogy that most writers have preferred to regard as a kind of poetical metaphor. In a prose work, *Sponsa Dei*, this literalness of interpretation was pushed, indeed, so far that a clerical friend advised the book's suppression. But the published poems and, above all, the little volume of aphorisms, *The Rod, the Root and the Flower*, make it sufficiently clear what the lost book must have contained.

Patmore suffuses the whole universe, natural as well as supernatural, with sex. 'No writer, sacred or profane, ever uses the words "he" or "him" of the soul. It is always "she" or "her"; so universal is the intuitive knowledge that the soul, with regard to God who is her life, is feminine.' (A whole book could be written on the way in which thought has been affected by the accidents of grammar. The word *anima* means the principle of animal life, as opposed to *animus*, which stands for the principle of spiritual life. For some odd reason Christian theologians labelled their particular conception of the soul with the first and less appropriate of these two words. Grammatically, the Latin Christian soul was feminine; what more natural than to suppose that it was in some sort physiologically female? For Greeks the soul might be either feminine or neuter. Either *psyche* or, the word habitually used by St. Paul, *pneuma*. Brought up on *anima*, modern theologians have preferred to this non-committal neuter the personifiable feminine substantive. It is owing to a grammatical prejudice that earnest ladies call themselves psychic rather than pneumatic, and that Coventry Patmore was able to justify his connubial tastes in terms of Catholic theology.)

The soul, then, is a woman; and 'woman, according to the *Salve Regina*, is our Life, our Sweetness and our Hope. God is so only in so far as He is "made flesh" i.e. Woman. The Flesh of God is the Head of man, says St. Augustine. Thus the Last is indeed the First. "The lifting of her eyelash is my Lord." ' Again, 'Woman is the visible glory of God . . . The Word made Flesh is the Word made Woman.' 'Heaven becomes very intelligible and attractive when it is discovered to be — Woman.'

Feminine, the soul knows her God in a consummated marriage. For 'all knowledge worthy of the name is nuptial knowledge.' Even death is a form of married love — charged as it is with 'a hope intense of kisses close beyond conceit of sense.' Mysticism is essentially connubial. 'Lovers put out the candle and draw the curtains when they wish to see the god and the goddess; and, in the higher Communion, the night of thought is the light of perception.' God is discovered by touch and 'the Beatific vision is not seen by the eyes, but is a substance which is sucked as through a nipple.' 'God Himself becomes a concrete object and an intelligible joy when contemplated as the eternal felicity of a lover with the beloved, the Ante-type and very original of the Love which inspires the poet and the thrush.' Conversely, the felicity of the lover with the beloved and the inenarrable experiences of touch are foretastes of the Beatific Vision.

‘There are some who even in this life can say, “Under the Tree where my Mother was debauched, Thou has redeemed me.” ’

The most distinctive feature of Patmore’s doctrine is that which attributes to God a kind of *nostalgie de la boue* and therefore justifies the more god-like among human beings (such, of course, as Patmore himself) in seeking out and cultivating the extremes of sensual irrationality.

‘Enough,’ he makes the woman, Psyche, cry,
‘Enough, enough, ambrosial plumed Boy!
My bosom is aweary of thy breath.
Thou kissest joy to death.
Have pity of my clay-conceived birth
And maiden’s simple mood,
Which longs for ether and infinitude,
As thou, being God, crav’st littleness and earth.’

The mystery of the Incarnation provides Patmore with an analogy to marital bliss. Addressing himself to the Virgin, he writes as follows:

Life’s cradle and death’s tomb!
To lie within whose womb,
There, with divine self-will infatuate,
Love-captive to the thing He did create,
Thy God did not abhor,
No more
Than Man, in Youth’s high spousal tide,
Abhors at last to touch
The strange lips of his long-procrastinating Bride;
Nay, not the least imagined part as much!
Ora pro me!

He returns again to the same theme in other poems. In ‘The Dream,’ for example, we read:

The pride of personality,
Seeking its highest, aspires to die,
And in unspeakably profound
Humiliation, Love is crown’d!
And from his exaltation still
Into his ocean of good-will
He curiously casts the lead
To find strange depths of lowlihead.

It is, however, in *The Rod, the Root and the Flower* that the theme is treated most fully. ‘Spirit craves conjunction with and eternal captivity to that which is not spirit; and the higher the spirit, the greater the craving. God desires depths of humiliation and contrast of which man has no idea; so that the stony callousness and ignorance which we bemoan in ourselves may not impossibly be an additional cause in Him of

desire for us. . . . Human love requires to be grounded in the sensitive nature, in order to give counterpoise and reality to its spiritual heights.

‘What if the love of God demands even a deeper foundation in the unspiritual and in the junction and reconciliation of “the Highest with the Lowest”? There are obscure longings in the natural man; glimpses of felicities of an “Unknown Eros,” which it is perhaps worse than vain to endeavour to indulge; a desire for fruits of the Tree of Knowledge which seem to promise that we “shall be as Gods,” if we partake of them. Maybe, to such of us as become Gods by participation, these fruits will be found fruits of the Tree of Life, as are other fruits, which, in the eating, have only “a savour of death unto death,” until they have been refused, in obedience to a temporary prohibition, and only tasted in God’s season and with the divine appetite of Grace. Meantime, it is permitted to such as have qualified themselves for such contemplation, to meditate upon the dim glimpse we can catch of such things, as they exist in God, who, as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches, knows matter, as he knows all his creation, with love and desire.’

What lies behind the veils of this mysterious utterance? We can only obscurely guess.

Odd examples of justifications by guidance and theology could be multiplied indefinitely. There are the refined and aristocratic Muckers in East Prussia, with their ritual of exhibitionism and long-drawn sexual confessions; there are the Perfectionist Bundlers, a sect of American ladies who were guided to burst into clergymen’s bedrooms at night; there were the Revivalists, with their spiritual wives — so closely allied in practice, if not in theory, to the Mormons with their all too solid and tangible harems. Or again, one could mention the reverend gentleman who boasted that ‘he could carry a virgin in each hand without the least stir of unholy passion,’ or the ladies described by Mrs. Whitall Smith in her *Personal Experiences of Fanaticism*, who cultivated the art of giving themselves physical ‘thrills,’ under the impression that they were receiving the Baptism of the Spirit. One could mention the early Spiritualists. Here is a statement made by one of them in 1867: ‘During a year and a half I became very impressible; in fact a medium; the invisible guides impressed me with many ideas of a religious nature. Among other things I became strongly impressed with the incompatibility between myself and my wife; and, on the other hand, with the growing affinity between Mrs. Swain and myself. . . . Nine-tenths of the mediums I ever knew were in this unsettled state, either divorced or living with an affinity. The majority of spiritualists teach Swedenborg’s doctrine of one affinity, appointed by Providence, for all eternity; although they do not blame people for consorting when there is an attraction; else, how is the affinity to be found? Another class travelled from place to place, finding a great many affinities everywhere.’

It would be possible, I repeat, to multiply such instances indefinitely. Possible, but not particularly profitable. The principles of religious justification have been sufficiently illustrated by the few characteristic examples I have given. What follows is an example of philosophical justification — chosen deliberately for its revealing extravagance. The

work in question is Laurence Oliphant's *Sympneumata*, published, near the end of its author's life, in 1885. Oliphant's was an oddly variegated career. He was born at Cape Town and brought up in Ceylon. As a young man he visited Nepal and Russia, served as Lord Elgin's secretary at Washington and again, after a visit to Circassia during the Crimean War, in China. In 1861, when he was thirty-two, he was appointed first secretary in Japan; but his diplomatic career was cut short by an attack on the Legation, in which he almost lost his life. He returned to Europe, served as *Times* correspondent in Poland and Holstein, and in the intervals dined out in the best society and wrote successful novels. In 1865 he was elected to Parliament. Three years later he resigned his seat and emigrated to America, to become a member of 'the Brotherhood of the New Life,' a community founded by Thomas Harris on the shores of Lake Erie. Harris was an American Brother Prince. He possessed all Beloved's magnetic power with all Beloved's lust for domination and all his preoccupation with the *certo balsamo*. Like Beloved, he was consistently guided to relieve his followers of all their available cash and, again like Beloved, he had invented a theology proving that he was divine and justifying him in going to bed with any woman he had a mind to. The story of Oliphant's strange servitude to the Prophet of Brocton has been told in the biography written by his cousin, Margaret Oliphant, the novelist. I need not repeat it here. Suffice it to say that Oliphant, together with his mother, Lady Oliphant, and his wife, Alice Le Strange, remained under Harris's spell for thirteen years. Lady Oliphant, indeed, escaped only by death. Laurence and Alice broke away, after a long and scandalous conflict, in 1881. But it was only from the man Harris that they had parted, not from his ideas. Freed from his clutches, they proceeded at once to the Holy Land, where they set up a community of their own (suppressed in due course at the instance of the London Vigilance Association) and wrote in collaboration the work which I shall now describe.

The sub-title of *Sympneumata* is 'Evolutionary Forces now Active in Man.' The words announce unequivocally that justification, in this case, will not be in terms of theology or religious experience, but of hard-boiled secular thought. Oliphant was addressing himself to a public that ranked *The Origin of Species* above the *Apocalypse*. He wanted to behave very much as Beloved and Mr. Harris had behaved; but he felt it necessary to justify this behaviour in terms of the philosophy most highly esteemed by his contemporaries. The appeal is no longer to religion but to science. True, the science is peculiar; but that does not matter. The significant fact is that Oliphant should have found it natural to use even the ridiculous parody of science for the justification of his sexual desires.

He begins his book with an account of human evolution. Originally, it appears, man was a being composed of matter in the fluid state. At a certain moment in his history there occurred 'a catastrophe, of which the tradition survives in so many forms under the name of "the fall." ' What was the nature of this catastrophe? 'A precipitation of the period of reproduction' — whatever that may have been. The result was that the original, liquid man came to be encrusted with grosser matter.

A divine energy, the energy of love, radiates out from the core of every human individual. 'If the action of this force could be maintained in a constant projection from the centre to the circumference, it would necessarily remain absolutely pure and holy.' Unfortunately, currents flow in from the lower creation. 'Rushing like a torrent towards the centre, it (the current of lower life) meets the divine outward streaming current, and produces a shock throughout the nervous system, which is utterly foreign to the orderly and divine expression of emotion.'

But a change is at hand. During the nineteenth century Evolution has been producing new types of human beings, gifted with 'an acute sensibility for perceiving the quality of the dynamic impulsion, that plays through the nerve fluids.' This dynamic impulsion, as we have seen, is divine; and the new, nineteenth-century human beings discover 'to their astonishment that, while their emotions acquire a character of spiritualization, a delicacy and a subtle fervour, by which they can only judge them to be discarding more and more the earthliness of things earthly, they nevertheless connect themselves with the physical organism by an increasing sensational consciousness. . . . That disconnection between high and pathetic feeling and bodily sensation, which has prevailed in the human mind, ceases to be possible, and man begins to have sensational acquaintance with his interior organism, as being the seat of his loftiest and purest emotions.' That modern man should be subject to such apocalyptic sensations is not surprising; for evolution is changing his whole structure. 'Evolution's work on the superincumbent atoms, changing their constitution and bringing into the spaces tenanted by the corruptible flesh atoms developed from the inner nature of the body's form, is bringing to these same surfaces the power to endure the acute and intense sensations generated by divine heat currents.' 'The immanence of God in man, so much asserted and so little felt, becomes now a physical fact; as physical as marital affection, as the ardours of heroism, as the tremors of alarm — but more absolutely and unmistakably physical; and acting upon the surface with an intensity superior to that of any other known sensation, in the degree in which it corresponds with the more profound depth from which it has taken its rise.' The new man is 'a vessel charged with holy force.' This force cannot act freely 'unless human beings participated in the active and emotional being who is to them the sex-complement, whom we term the Sympneuma.' (We recognize Harris's Counterparts and our old friends, the Affinities and Spiritual Wives.) Thanks to Evolution (blessed *deus ex machina*!), 'the quality of the intense vitality which God presses down upon us at this hour, burns with some fuller ardour as His sex-completeness than the world could receive before.' For this reason 'the value of history, of philosophy becomes nil as a basis for the deduction of theories as to what the man of this age may feel, can know, or should do.'

There follows next a section of the book addressed primarily to the ladies. Evolution has changed woman as profoundly as it has changed man. The 'suppression of her active powers' has been succeeded by her 'surprised awakening at the embrace that steals upon her sense — as her Sympneuma's form constructs itself around and over her — presenting her at last, in those organic realms of her sub-surfaces, where she

reflected before, as on a vapoury void, the confused images of dreams and disfigured truths, with a fixed organism, constructed to take up at once the waves of her deep vibrations, and through which her contact is reopened into the whole connected world of potent manhood.' But potent manhood, it obscurely appears, is not to perform its ordinary, vulgar functions. There are to be no babies, only sympneumatous sensations. Therefore, O woman, in this age of sharp transition, there is a marvellous lesson for you to learn that has not yet been dreamt of. . . . Revive, for the airs of heaven breathe on you now to that effect, in the folded petals of your deepest nature. Body forth at last, bring forth the joy of nature's depths — man makes a new demand on you, and asks not for himself but for all people. He craves not now the commerce of the dissevered sexes, nor the production of fresh peopling in their forms, for he lives now in the expanding chambers of his own sub-surfaces, where the Sympneuma's presence pervades and satisfies sensation, and bids the old activities of exterior forms make long pause, awaiting high conditions.' That which has happened in the course of evolution is that which ought to have happened. Not only is it possible for modern woman to enjoy it, it is also her duty 'to demand of God the draughts of the supreme elixir which waits to shower into human nature.'

Not unnaturally, Oliphant regards the intellect as a danger. Its roots are too 'slightly grounded in the pregnant bowels of the moral nature' to be capable of appreciating the significance of the sympneumatous revelation. Therefore get rid of the intellect; 'let loose the powers of actual nature in you — man-woman, woman-man — that God may be incarnate! . . . Hurl right and left and far all claims of systems of thought and life that served of old their time, if they now cling upon your skirts and burden your free ascent. . . . Lo! on the little field of your frail nature is room for mightiest peace, for the full immensity of reconciliation to God's demands and man's — room for the meeting in you of heaven and earth.' Science, in the shape of Oliphant's fluid atoms and evolving sub-surfaces, brings us to the same harbour as Patmore's Catholicism and the divine guidance of the ex-evangelical parson, Brother Prince. No, not quite to the same harbour; for through the book's dark phrases one half perceives, half guesses that Oliphant liked his *certo balsamo* in some oddly refined and alembicated form. 'When he (man) has once experienced by repetition the unerring tendency of delight, intense, sensational, to visit him spontaneously, the painfully acquired enjoyments that he knew before, of body, intellect or spirit, fade and grow valueless.' This is as near as our author ever comes to lifting the veil. One closes the book, not altogether certain of his meaning, but at any rate divining enough to know that 'liberal shepherds give a grosser name' to the sympneumatous experience.

Oliphant's obscurity is lightened by the probing beam directed upon him by Mrs. Whitall Smith. A female disciple of the Oliphants told her 'that Mrs. Oliphant was doing a wonderful missionary work among the Arabs in Palestine by imparting to them what the Oliphants called "Sympneumata," which they claimed was the coming of the spiritual counterpart to the individual. She said the way Mrs. Oliphant accomplished this was by getting into bed with these Arabs, no matter how degraded and dirty

they were, and the contact of her body brought about, as she supposed, the coming of the counterpart. It was a great trial for her to do this, and she felt that she was performing a most holy mission. As she was one of the most refined and cultivated of English ladies, it is evident that nothing but a strong sense of duty could have induced her to such a course.' We have here a good example of the way in which a philosophy invented to justify one set of actions leads logically to the justification — nay, to the imposition as positive duties — of other and much stranger acts, of which the justifier originally never dreamt.

Mrs. Smith's next contact with Oliphant was through a young lady who had been engaged to one of the Sympneumatist's disciples. Introduced to Oliphant, she was deeply impressed by his appearance and manner. He gave her religious instruction, in the course of which he 'took more and more liberties with her, and at last induced her to share his bed, with the idea that the personal touch would bring about the sympneumata for which she so longed. . . . Finally, when he thought the time was ripe, he began to urge her to spread the blessing by herself enticing young men into the same relations with her as his own.' The girl was disquieted and, after taking advice, broke off her engagement. The young man remained faithful to his master. Mrs. Smith reveals the reason for this loyalty. 'Mr. Oliphant's idea was that the sexual passion was the only real spiritual life, and that in order to be spiritually alive you must continually keep that passion excited. The consequence was that he could never write anything except when his passions were aroused. His influence over the young Scotchman was so great that he had induced him to believe entirely in this theory, and he too was never happy for a single moment unless his own passions were excited.'

A favourite instrument of philosophical justification is the conception of nature. Nature, one finds, is invoked in almost every controversy about matters of conduct — not by one party only, but by both. Rebels will justify rebellion, and the orthodox their orthodoxy, in the same way — by an appeal to nature. Rebellion is in accordance with nature; therefore permissible and right. Conversely, orthodoxy is right, not only because it is divinely revealed, but also because it is in accordance with nature. Thus, we learn from St. Thomas that fornication is a sin, because, among other reasons, it is unnatural. For it is 'natural in the human species for the male to be able to know his own offspring for certain, because he has the education of that offspring; but the certainty would be destroyed if there were promiscuous intercourse.' Therefore fornication is unnatural. If nature is that which is (and there is no other legitimate definition), then such arguments as St. Thomas's are perfectly meaningless. Some men wish to know and educate their offspring; some do not. Some indulge in fornication, some refrain. Both types of behaviour occur and we have no right to say that one is natural and the other unnatural. Writers who speak of the unnaturalness of asceticism are making the same mistake as their opponents. Asceticism, like licentiousness, is an observable fact; in other words, it is natural. For scholastically minded people, nature is not that which is; the nature of a thing is practically identical with its essence, and its essence is a metaphysical entity, not susceptible of observation. The scholastic method may be

represented schematically as follows: you take a collection of beings, you set your fancy and your ingenuity to work and, out of your inner consciousness, you evolve (with the aid of such literature as you regard as authoritative) a conception of their essential character. This you call their 'nature.' When any member of the group in question behaves in a way which does not conform to your a priori conception of his essence, you say that the behaviour is unnatural. The scholastics sought to rationalize revelation by proving that revelation was in accord with nature; but what they called 'nature' was entirely home-made. All they did was to justify one metaphysical conception in terms of another metaphysical conception. Owing to the vagueness and ambiguity of language, this proceeding was and still is remarkably successful. By 'nature' the scholastically minded mean 'metaphysical essence'; but the word also connotes 'that which is.' They trade on the fact that most readers attach to 'nature' its second meaning and can therefore be induced to accept as a record of observation or a sober piece of inference any a priori absurdity which may be passed off under that reassuring name.

The thirst for rationality and righteousness is almost as insistent as the thirst for sexual pleasure and for the gratification of pride. There will always be cravings to justify and always a desire for justification. Justificatory theories are often nonsensical; but this would not greatly matter, if they justified only those desires and actions immediately responsible for their invention. The real trouble about most of these theories is that they justify and indeed logically impose upon those who accept them modes of thought and behaviour to which mere irrational cravings would never have prompted them. The cases described in the preceding pages are mainly farcical in their extravagance. It is difficult for people whose main preoccupation is sensual enjoyment to do harm on a very large scale. But where the cravings to be justified are cravings for power, glory and the like, the case is different. The tree is known by its fruits. Judged by this standard, sympneumatism, for example, is a joke; nationalism, which is a theory intrinsically almost as preposterous as poor Oliphant's, is a tragedy and a menace.

All justificatory theories are determined by the prevailing systems of philosophy and ethics. These, in their turn, are in part determined and themselves in part determine the economic and social circumstances of the age. Changes of circumstance result in changed philosophies; changed philosophies provide men with the motive power for changing circumstances. The reformer must attack simultaneously on all the fronts, from the metaphysical to the economic; if he does not, he cannot hope to achieve more than a partial success.

How can justificatory theories be made less extravagant? How can they be prevented from justifying all kinds of monstrous actions, which the original inventor of the theory never felt the impulse to perform? A complete answer to these questions would have to contain, among other things, a full-scale programme of social and economic reform and text-books — more comprehensive than any yet written — of social and individual psychology. All I can do here is to offer a few reflections on the purely intellectual aspects of the question.

All justifications in terms of science and rationalistic philosophy are ultimately utilitarian in appeal. They aim at showing that the particular action which it is desired to justify is useful, either to the individual or to the community. The science and the rationalistic argument are intended to demonstrate this utility. The cure for extravagance in these cases is knowledge. True, it is not an infallible cure. A man may know that the action he desires to perform is bad for him; but if his desire is strong enough, he will either ignore his knowledge or else manipulate it in such a way as to make it seem to justify his behaviour. The Nazi race-scientists furnish a case in point. Most of these men are highly educated; in other words, they have been given every opportunity for discovering what to the great majority of biologists outside Germany is obvious: that most of the stuff talked about Nordics and Aryans is simply rubbish. They have been given this opportunity, but they have not taken it — they have not wished to take it. Knowledge, I repeat, is not an infallible cure for extravagance in justificatory theories; but at least it sets certain obstacles in the way of extravagance. People who know the facts can never be quite so free to indulge in fantasy as those who don't.

Justification in religious terms seems to tend towards extravagance in proportion as God is thought of as personal. 'Temporary suspensions of morality' are essentially personal acts; and those who are 'guided' to suspend morality do so under the belief that they are receiving orders from a superior and inscrutable Divine Person. The historical records show that they persist in doing this even where theology lays it down that the Divine Person is absolutely good. Similarly, men persist in attributing to a personal God a special interest in their own nation, even where theology has defined Him as the Father of all. That this should be so is not surprising: it is difficult, if one thinks of God as a person, not to think of Him as similar to the only persons with whom one has direct acquaintance — oneself and one's fellows.

We must ask ourselves whether belief in the personality of God is, first, logically necessary; and, second, pragmatically valuable. It is impossible in this place to set forth the arguments for and against the personality of God. The matter has been summed up by Professor Whitehead in his *Religion in the Making*, and I cannot do better than quote his words:

'There is a large concurrence in the negative doctrine that this religious experience does not include any direct intuition of a definite person, or individual. . . .

'The evidence for the assertion of general, though not universal, concurrence in the doctrine of no direct vision of a personal God, can only be found by a consideration of the religious thought of the civilized world. . . .

'Throughout India and China religious thought, so far as it has been interpreted in precise form, disclaims the intuition of any ultimate personality substantial to the universe. This is true of Confucian philosophy, Buddhist philosophy and Hindoo philosophy. There may be personal embodiments, but the substratum is impersonal.

'Christian theology has also, in the main, adopted the position that there is no direct intuition of such an ultimate personal substratum for the world. It maintains

the doctrine of the existence of a personal God as a truth, but holds that our belief in it is based upon inference.'

In order to calculate the pragmatic value of belief in a personal God, it would be necessary to collect and carefully weigh all the available historical and psychological evidence.

From the little I know about the subject, I should guess that the results of such an investigation would be more or less as follows. Belief in a personal God tends to heighten the believer's energy and to strengthen his will. So far so good. But energy can be used to achieve undesirable as well as desirable ends; and a strong will misdirected is the source of endless trouble. A personal God, as we have already seen, tends, in spite of all theological precautions, to be thought of as similar to a human person. Thus, it comes about that the believer feels himself justified in giving rein to such all too human tendencies as pride, anger, jealousy and hatred, by the reflection that, in doing so, he is behaving like a God who is a person. The frequency with which men have identified the prompting of their own passions with the personal guidance of God who is Himself (the sacred books affirm it) subject to passion, is really appalling. Belief in a personal God has released a vast amount of energy directed towards good ends; but it has probably released an almost equal amount of energy directed towards ends which were evil. This consideration, taken in conjunction with the philosophical improbability of the dogma, should make us extremely chary of accepting belief in a personal deity.

D. H. Lawrence

‘I ALWAYS SAY, my motto is “Art for my sake.” ’ The words are from a letter written by Lawrence before the war. ‘If I want to write, I write — and if I don’t want to, I won’t. The difficulty is to find exactly the form one’s passion — work is produced by passion with me, like kisses — is it with you? — wants to take.’

‘Art for my sake.’ But even though for my sake, still art. Lawrence was always and unescapably an artist. Yes, unescapably is the word; for there were moments when he wanted to escape from his destiny. ‘I wish from the bottom of my heart that the fates had not stigmatized me “writer.” It is a sickening business.’ But against the decree of fate there is no appeal. Nor was it by any means all the time that Lawrence wanted to appeal. His complaints were only occasional, and he was provoked to make them, not by any hatred of art as such, but by hatred of the pains and humiliations incidental to practising as an artist. Writing to Edward Garnett, ‘Why, why,’ he asks, ‘should we be plagued with literature and such-like tomfoolery? Why can’t we live decent, honourable lives, without the critics in the Little Theatre fretting us?’ The publication of a work of art is always the exposure of a nakedness, the throwing of something delicate and sensitive to the ‘asses, apes and dogs.’ Mostly, however, Lawrence loved his destiny, loved the art of which he was a master — as who, that is a master, can fail to do? Besides, art, as he practised it, and as, at the bottom, every artist, even the most pharisaically ‘pure,’ practises it, was ‘art for my sake.’ It was useful to him, pragmatically helpful. ‘One sheds one’s sicknesses in books — repeats and presents again one’s emotions to be master of them.’ And, anyhow, liking or disliking were finally irrelevant in the face of the fact that Lawrence was in a real sense possessed by his creative genius. He could not help himself. ‘I am doing a novel,’ he writes in an early letter, ‘a novel which I have never grasped. Damn its eyes, there I am at and I’ve no notion what it’s about. I hate it. F. says it is good. But it’s like a novel in a foreign language I don’t know very well — I can only just make out what it’s about.’ To this strange force within him, to this power that created his works of art, there was nothing to do but submit. Lawrence submitted, completely and with reverence. ‘I often think one ought to be able to pray before one works — and then leave it to the Lord. Isn’t it hard work to come to real grips with one’s imagination — throw everything overboard. I always feel as though I stood naked for the fire of Almighty God to go through me — and it’s rather an awful feeling. One has to be so terribly religious to be an artist.’ Conversely, he might have added, one has to be terribly an artist, terribly conscious of ‘inspiration’ and the compelling force of genius, to be religious as Lawrence was religious.

It is impossible to write about Lawrence except as an artist. He was an artist first of all, and the fact of his being an artist explains a life which seems, if you forget it, inexplicably strange. In *Son of Woman*, Mr. Middleton Murry has written at great length about Lawrence — but about a Lawrence whom you would never suspect, from reading that curious essay in destructive hagiography, of being an artist. For Mr. Murry almost completely ignores the fact that his subject — his victim, I had almost said — was one whom ‘the fates had stigmatized “writer.” ’ His book is Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark — for all its metaphysical subtleties and its Freudian ingenuities, very largely irrelevant. The absurdity of his critical method becomes the more manifest when we reflect that nobody would ever have heard of a Lawrence who was not an artist.

An artist is the sort of artist he is, because he happens to possess certain gifts. And he leads the sort of life he does in fact lead, because he is an artist, and an artist with a particular kind of mental endowment. Now there are general abilities and there are special talents. A man who is born with a great share of some special talent is probably less deeply affected by nurture than one whose ability is generalized. His gift is his fate, and he follows a predestined course, from which no ordinary power can deflect him. In spite of Helvétius and Dr. Watson, it seems pretty obvious that no amount of education — including under that term everything from the Œdipus complex to the English Public School system — could have prevented Mozart from being a musician, or musicianship from being the central fact in Mozart’s life. And how would a different education have modified the expression of, say, Blake’s gift? It is, of course, impossible to answer. One can only express the unverifiable conviction that an art so profoundly individual and original, so manifestly ‘inspired,’ would have remained fundamentally the same whatever (within reasonable limits) had been the circumstances of Blake’s upbringing. Lawrence, as Mr. F. R. Leavis insists, has many affinities with Blake. ‘He had the same gift of knowing what he was interested in, the same power of distinguishing his own feelings and emotions from conventional sentiment, the same “terrifying honesty.” ’ Like Blake, like any man possessed of great special talents, he was predestined by his gifts. Explanations of him in terms of a Freudian hypothesis of nurture may be interesting, but they do not explain. That Lawrence was profoundly affected by his love for his mother and by her excessive love for him, is obvious to anyone who has read *Sons and Lovers*. None the less it is, to me at any rate, almost equally obvious that even if his mother had died when he was a child, Lawrence would still have been, essentially and fundamentally, Lawrence. Lawrence’s biography does not account for Lawrence’s achievement. On the contrary, his achievement, or rather the gift that made the achievement possible, accounts for a great deal of his biography. He lived as he lived, because he was, intrinsically and from birth, what he was. If we would write intelligibly of Lawrence, we must answer, with all their implications, two questions: first, what sort of gifts did he have? and secondly, how did the possession of these gifts affect the way he responded to experience?

Lawrence's special and characteristic gift was an extraordinary sensitiveness to what Wordsworth called 'unknown modes of being.' He was always intensely aware of the mystery of the world, and the mystery was always for him a numen, divine. Lawrence could never forget, as most of us almost continuously forget, the dark presence of the otherness that lies beyond the boundaries of man's conscious mind. This special sensibility was accompanied by a prodigious power of rendering the immediately experienced otherness in terms of literary art.

Such was Lawrence's peculiar gift. His possession of it accounts for many things. It accounts, to begin with, for his attitude towards sex. His particular experiences as a son and as a lover may have intensified his preoccupation with the subject; but they certainly did not make it. Whatever his experiences, Lawrence must have been preoccupied with sex; his gift made it inevitable. For Lawrence, the significance of the sexual experience was this: that, in it, the immediate, non-mental knowledge of divine otherness is brought, so to speak, to a focus — a focus of darkness. Parodying Matthew Arnold's famous formula, we may say that sex is something not ourselves that makes for — not righteousness, for the essence of religion is not righteousness; there is a spiritual world, as Kierkegaard insists, beyond the ethical — rather, that makes for life, for divineness, for union with the mystery. Paradoxically, this something not ourselves is yet a something lodged within us; this quintessence of otherness is yet the quintessence of our proper being. 'And God the Father, the Inscrutable, the Unknowable, we know in the flesh, in Woman. She is the door for our in-going and our out-coming. In her we go back to the Father; but like the witnesses of the transfiguration, blind and unconscious.' Yes, blind and unconscious; otherwise it is a revelation, not of divine otherness, but of very human evil. 'The embrace of love, which should bring darkness and oblivion, would with these lovers (the hero and heroine of one of Poe's tales) be a daytime thing, bringing more heightened consciousness, visions, spectrum-visions, prismatic. The evil thing that daytime love-making is, and all sex-palaver!' How Lawrence hated Eleonora and Ligeia and Roderick Usher and all such soulful Mrs. Shandies, male as well as female! What a horror, too, he had of all Don Juans, all knowing sensualists and conscious libertines! (About the time he was writing *Lady Chatterley's Lover* he read the memoirs of Casanova, and was profoundly shocked.) And how bitterly he loathed the Wilhelm-Meisterish view of love as an education, as a means to culture, a Sadow-exerciser for the soul! To use love in this way, consciously and deliberately, seemed to Lawrence wrong, almost a blasphemy. 'It seems to me queer,' he says to a fellow-writer, 'that you prefer to present men chiefly — as if you cared for women not so much for what they were in themselves as for what the men saw in them. So that after all in your work women seem not to have an existence, save they are the projections of the men. . . . It's the positivity of women you seem to deny — make them sort of instrumental.' The instrumentality of Wilhelm Meister's women shocked Lawrence profoundly.

(Here, in a parenthesis, let me remark on the fact that Lawrence's doctrine is constantly invoked by people, of whom Lawrence himself would passionately have dis-

approved, in defence of a behaviour which he would have found deplorable or even revolting. That this should have happened is by no means, of course, a condemnation of the doctrine. The same philosophy of life may be good or bad according as the person who accepts it and lives by it is intrinsically fine or base. Tartufe's doctrine was the same, after all, as Pascal's. There have been refined fetish-worshippers, and unspeakably swinish Christians. To the preacher of a new way of life the most depressing thing that can happen is, surely, success. For success permits him to see how those he has converted distort and debase and make ignoble parodies of his teaching. If Francis of Assisi had lived to be a hundred, what bitterness he would have tasted! Happily for the saint, he died at forty-five, still relatively undisillusioned, because still on the threshold of the great success of his order. Writers influence their readers, preachers their auditors — but always, at bottom, to be more themselves. If the reader's self happens to be intrinsically similar to the writer's, then the influence is what the writer would wish it to be. If he is intrinsically unlike the writer, then he will probably twist the writer's doctrine into a rationalization of beliefs, an excuse for behaviour, wholly alien to the beliefs and behaviour approved by the writer. Lawrence has suffered the fate of every man whose works have exercised an influence upon his fellows. It was inevitable and in the nature of things.)

For someone with a gift for sensing the mystery of otherness, true love must necessarily be, in Lawrence's vocabulary, nocturnal. So must true knowledge. Nocturnal and tactual — a touching in the night. Man inhabits, for his own convenience, a home-made universe within the greater alien world of external matter and his own irrationality. Out of the illimitable blackness of that world the light of his customary thinking scoops, as it were, a little illuminated cave — a tunnel of brightness, in which, from the birth of consciousness to its death, he lives, moves and has his being. For most of us this bright tunnel is the whole world. We ignore the outer darkness; or if we cannot ignore it, if it presses too insistently upon us, we disapprove, being afraid. Not so Lawrence. He had eyes that could see, beyond the walls of light, far into the darkness, sensitive fingers that kept him continually aware of the environing mystery. He could not be content with the home-made, human tunnel, could not conceive that anyone else should be content with it. Moreover — and in this he was unlike those others, to whom the world's mystery is continuously present, the great philosophers and men of science — he did not want to increase the illuminated area; he approved of the outer darkness, he felt at home in it. Most men live in a little puddle of light thrown by the gig-lamps of habit and their immediate interest; but there is also the pure and powerful illumination of the disinterested scientific intellect. To Lawrence, both lights were suspect, both seemed to falsify what was, for him, the immediately apprehended reality — the darkness of mystery. 'My great religion,' he was already saying in 1912, 'is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what the blood feels, and believes, and says, is always true.' Like Blake, who had prayed to be delivered from 'single vision and Newton's sleep': like Keats, who had drunk destruction to Newton for having explained the rain-

bow, Lawrence disapproved of too much knowledge, on the score that it diminished men's sense of wonder and blunted their sensitiveness to the great mystery. His dislike of science was passionate and expressed itself in the most fantastically unreasonable terms. 'All scientists are liars,' he would say, when I brought up some experimentally established fact, which he happened to dislike. 'Liars, liars!' It was a most convenient theory. I remember in particular one long and violent argument on evolution, in the reality of which Lawrence always passionately disbelieved. 'But look at the evidence, Lawrence,' I insisted, 'look at all the evidence.' His answer was characteristic. 'But I don't care about evidence. Evidence doesn't mean anything to me. I don't feel it here.' And he pressed his two hands on his solar plexus. I abandoned the argument and thereafter never, if I could avoid it, mentioned the hated name of science in his presence. Lawrence could give so much, and what he gave was so valuable, that it was absurd and profitless to spend one's time with him disputing about a matter in which he absolutely refused to take a rational interest. Whatever the intellectual consequences, he remained through thick and thin unshakably loyal to his own genius. The daimon which possessed him was, he felt, a divine thing, which he would never deny or explain away, never even ask to accept a compromise. This loyalty to his own self, or rather to his gift, to the strange and powerful numen which, he felt, used him as its tabernacle, is fundamental in Lawrence and accounts, as nothing else can do, for all that the world found strange in his beliefs and his behaviour. It was not an incapacity to understand that made him reject those generalizations and abstractions by means of which the philosophers and the men of science try to open a path for the human spirit through the chaos of phenomena. Not incapacity, I repeat; for Lawrence had, over and above his peculiar gift, an extremely acute intelligence. He was a clever man as well as a man of genius. (In his boyhood and adolescence he had been a great passer of examinations.) He could have understood the aim and methods of science perfectly well if he had wanted to. Indeed, he did understand them perfectly well; and it was for that very reason that he rejected them. For the methods of science and critical philosophy were incompatible with the exercise of his gift — the immediate perception and artistic rendering of divine otherness. And their aim, which is to push back the frontier of the unknown, was not to be reconciled with his aim, which was to remain as intimately as possible in contact with the surrounding darkness. And so, in spite of their enormous prestige, he rejected science and critical philosophy; he remained loyal to his gift. Exclusively loyal. He would not attempt to qualify or explain his immediate knowledge of the mystery, would not even attempt to supplement it by other, abstract knowledge. 'These terrible, conscious birds, like Poe and his Ligeia, deny the very life that is in them; they want to turn it all into talk, into knowing. And so life, which will not be known, leaves them.' Lawrence refused to know abstractly. He preferred to live; and he wanted other people to live.

No man is by nature complete and universal; he cannot have first-hand knowledge of every kind of possible human experience. Universality, therefore, can only be achieved by those who mentally simulate living experience — by the knowers, in a word, by

people like Goethe (an artist for whom Lawrence always felt the most intense repugnance).

Again, no man is by nature perfect, and none can spontaneously achieve perfection. The greatest gift is a limited gift. Perfection, whether ethical or aesthetic, must be the result of knowing and of the laborious application of knowledge. Formal aesthetics are an affair of rules and the best classical models; formal morality, of the ten commandments and the imitation of Christ.

Lawrence would have nothing to do with proceedings so 'unnatural,' so disloyal to the gift, to the resident or visiting numen. Hence his aesthetic principle, that art must be wholly spontaneous, and, like the artist, imperfect, limited and transient. Hence, too, his ethical principle, that a man's first moral duty is not to attempt to live above his human station, or beyond his inherited psychological income.

The great work of art and the monument more perennial than brass are, in their very perfection and everlastingness, inhuman — too much of a good thing. Lawrence did not approve of them. Art, he thought, should flower from an immediate impulse towards self-expression or communication, and should wither with the passing of the impulse. Of all building materials Lawrence liked adobe the best; its extreme plasticity and extreme impermanence endeared it to him. There could be no everlasting pyramids in adobe, no mathematically accurate Parthenons. Nor, thank heaven, in wood. Lawrence loved the Etruscans, among other reasons, because they built wooden temples, which have not survived. Stone oppressed him with its indestructible solidity, its capacity to take and indefinitely keep the hard uncompromising forms of pure geometry. Great buildings made him feel uncomfortable, even when they were beautiful. He felt something of the same discomfort in the presence of any highly finished work of art. In music, for example, he liked the folk-song, because it was a slight thing, born of immediate impulse. The symphony oppressed him; it was too big, too elaborate, too carefully and consciously worked out, too 'would-be' — to use a characteristic Lawrencian expression. He was quite determined that none of his writings should be 'would-be.' He allowed them to flower as they liked from the depths of his being and would never use his conscious intellect to force them into a semblance of more than human perfection, or more than human universality. It was characteristic of him that he hardly ever corrected or patched what he had written. I have often heard him say, indeed, that he was incapable of correcting. If he was dissatisfied with what he had written, he did not, as most authors do, file, clip, insert, transpose; he rewrote. In other words, he gave the daimon another chance to say what it wanted to say. There are, I believe, three complete and totally distinct manuscripts of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Nor was this by any means the only novel that he wrote more than once. He was determined that all he produced should spring direct from the mysterious, irrational source of power within him. The conscious intellect should never be allowed to come and impose, after the event, its abstract pattern of perfection.

It was the same in the sphere of ethics as in that of art. 'They want me to have form: that means, they want me to have their pernicious, ossiferous, skin-and-grief

form, and I won't.' This was written about his novels; but it is just as applicable to his life. Every man, Lawrence insisted, must be an artist in life, must create his own moral form. The art of living is harder than the art of writing. 'It is a much more delicate thing to make love, and win love, than to declare love.' All the more reason, therefore, for practising this art with the most refined and subtle sensibility; all the more reason for not accepting that 'pernicious skin-and-grief form' of morality, which they are always trying to impose on one. It is the business of the sensitive artist in life to accept his own nature as it is, not to try to force it into another shape. He must take the material given him — the weaknesses and irrationalities, as well as the sense and the virtues; the mysterious darkness and otherness no less than the light of reason and the conscious ego — must take them all and weave them together into a satisfactory pattern; his pattern, not somebody else's pattern. 'Once I said to myself: "How can I blame — why be angry?" . . . Now I say: "When anger comes with bright eyes, he may do his will. In me he will hardly shake off the hand of God. He is one of the archangels, with a fiery sword. God sent him — it is beyond my knowing." ' This was written in 1910. Even at the very beginning of his career Lawrence was envisaging man as simply the locus of a polytheism. Given his particular gifts of sensitiveness and of expression it was inevitable. Just as it was inevitable that a man of Blake's peculiar genius should formulate the very similar doctrine of the independence of states of being. All the generally accepted systems of philosophy and of ethics aim at policing man's polytheism in the name of some Jehovah of intellectual and moral consistency. For Lawrence this was an indefensible proceeding. One god had as much right to exist as another, and the dark ones were as genuinely divine as the bright. Perhaps (since Lawrence was so specially sensitive to the quality of dark godhead and so specially gifted to express it in art), perhaps even more divine. Anyhow, the polytheism was a democracy. This conception of human nature resulted in the formulation of two rather surprising doctrines, one ontological and the other ethical. The first is what I may call the Doctrine of Cosmic Pointlessness. 'There is no point. Life and Love are life and love, a bunch of violets is a bunch of violets, and to drag in the idea of a point is to ruin everything. Live and let live, love and let love, flower and fade, and follow the natural curve, which flows on, pointless.'

Ontological pointlessness has its ethical counterpart in the doctrine of insouciance. 'They simply are eaten up with caring. They are so busy caring about Fascism or Leagues of Nations or whether France is right or whether Marriage is threatened, that they never know where they are. They certainly never live on the spot where they are. They inhabit abstract space, the desert void of politics, principles, right and wrong, and so forth. They are doomed to be abstract. Talking to them is like trying to have a human relationship with the letter x in algebra.' As early as 1911 his advice to his sister was: 'Don't meddle with religion. I would leave all that alone, if I were you, and try to occupy myself fully in the present.'

Reading such passages — and they abound in every book that Lawrence wrote — I am always reminded of that section of the *Pensées* in which Pascal, speaks of the

absurd distractions with which men fill their leisure, so that there shall be no hole or cranny left for a serious thought to lodge itself in their consciousness. Lawrence also inveighs against *divertissements*, but not against the same *divertissements* as Pascal. For him, there were two great and criminal distractions. First, work, which he regarded as a mere stupeficient, like opium. ('Don't exhaust yourself too much,' he writes to an industrious friend; 'it is immoral.' Immoral, because, among other reasons, it is too easy, a shirking of man's first duty, which is to live. 'Think of the rest and peace, the positive sloth and luxury of idleness that work is.' Lawrence had a real puritan's disapproval of the vice of working. He attacked the gospel of work for the same reasons as Chrysippus attacked Aristotle's gospel of pure intellectualism — on the ground that it was, in the old Stoic's words, 'only a kind of amusement' and that real living was a more serious affair than labour or abstract speculations.) The other inexcusable distraction, in Lawrence's eyes, was 'spirituality,' that lofty musing on the ultimate nature of things which constitutes, for Pascal, 'the whole dignity and business of man.' Pascal was horrified that human beings could so far forget the infinite and the eternal as to 'dance and play the lute and sing and make verses.' Lawrence was no less appalled that they could so far forget all the delights and difficulties of immediate living as to remember eternity and infinity, to say nothing of the League of Nations and the Sanctity of Marriage. Both were great artists; and so each is able to convince us that he is at any rate partly right. Just how far each is right, this is not the place to discuss. Nor, indeed, is the question susceptible of a definite answer. 'Mental consciousness,' wrote Lawrence, 'is a purely individual affair. Some men are born to be highly and delicately conscious.' Some are not. Moreover, each of the ages of man has its suitable philosophy of life. (Lawrence's, I should say, was not a very good philosophy for old age or failing powers.) Besides, there are certain conjunctions of circumstances in which spontaneous living is the great distraction and certain others in which it is almost criminal to divert oneself with eternity or the League of Nations. Lawrence's peculiar genius was such that he insisted on spontaneous living to the exclusion of ideals and fixed principles; on intuition to the exclusion of abstract reasoning. Pascal, with a very different gift, evolved, inevitably, a very different philosophy.

Lawrence's dislike of abstract knowledge and pure spirituality made him a kind of mystical materialist. Thus, the moon affects him strongly; therefore it cannot be a 'stony cold world, like a world of our own gone cold. Nonsense. It is a globe of dynamic substance, like radium or phosphorus, coagulated upon a vivid pole of energy.' Matter must be intrinsically as lively as the mind which perceives it and is moved by the perception. Vivid and violent spiritual effects must have correspondingly vivid and violent material causes. And, conversely, any violent feeling or desire in the mind must be capable of producing violent effects upon external matter. Lawrence could not bring himself to believe that the spirit can be moved, moved even to madness, without imparting the smallest corresponding movement to the external world. He was a subjectivist as well as a materialist; in other words, he believed in the possibility, in some form or another, of magic. Lawrence's mystical materialism found characteristic

expression in the curious cosmology and physiology of his speculative essays, and in his restatement of the strange Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body. To his mind, the survival of the spirit was not enough; for the spirit is a man's conscious identity, and Lawrence did not want to be always identical to himself; he wanted to know otherness — to know it by being it, know it in the living flesh, which is always essentially other. Therefore there must be a resurrection of the body.

Loyalty to his genius left him no choice; Lawrence had to insist on those mysterious forces of otherness which are scattered without, and darkly concentrated within, the body and mind of man. He had to, even though, by doing so, he imposed upon himself, as a writer of novels, a very serious handicap. For according to his view of things most of men's activities were more or less criminal distractions from the proper business of human living. He refused to write of such distractions; that is to say, he refused to write of the main activities of the contemporary world. But as though this drastic limitation of his subject were not sufficient, he went still further and, in some of his novels, refused even to write of human personalities in the accepted sense of the term. *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* (and indeed to a lesser extent all his novels) are the practical applications of a theory, which is set forth in a very interesting and important letter to Edward Garnett, dated June 5th, 1914. 'Somehow, that which is physic — non-human in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element, which causes one to conceive a character in a certain moral scheme and make him consistent. The certain moral scheme is what I object to. In Turgenev, and in Tolstoi, and in Dostoievsky, the moral scheme into which all the characters fit — and it is nearly the same scheme — is, whatever the extraordinariness of the characters themselves, dull, old, dead. When Marinetti writes: "It is the solidity of a blade of steel that is interesting by itself, that is, the incomprehending and inhuman alliance of its molecules in resistance to, let us say, a bullet. The heat of a piece of wood or iron is in fact more passionate, for us, than the laughter or tears of a woman" — then I know what he means. He is stupid, as an artist, for contrasting the heat of the iron and the laugh of the woman. Because what is interesting in the laugh of the woman is the same as the binding of the molecules of steel or their action in heat: it is the inhuman will, call it physiology or like Marinetti, physiology of matter, that fascinates me. I don't so much care about what the woman feels — in the ordinary usage of the word. That presumes an ego to feel with. I only care about what the woman is — what she is — inhumanly, physiologically, materially — according to the use of the word. . . . You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover are states of the same single radically unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond — but I say, "Diamond, what! This is carbon." And my diamond might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.)'

The dangers and difficulties of this method are obvious. Criticizing Stendhal, Professor Saintsbury long since remarked on 'that psychological realism which is perhaps a more different thing from psychological reality than our clever ones for two generations have been willing to admit, or, perhaps, able to perceive.'

Psychological reality, like physical reality, is determined by our mental and bodily make-up. Common sense, working on the evidence supplied by our unaided senses, postulates a world in which physical reality consists of such things as solid tables and chairs, bits of coal, water, air. Carrying its investigations further, science discovers that these samples of physical reality are 'really' composed of atoms of different elements, and these atoms, in their turn, are 'really' composed of more or less numerous electrons and protons arranged in a variety of patterns. Similarly, there is a common-sense, pragmatic conception of psychological reality; and also an un-common-sense conception. For ordinary practical purposes we conceive human beings as creatures with characters. But analysis of their behaviour can be carried so far, that they cease to have characters and reveal themselves as collections of psychological atoms. Lawrence (as might have been expected of a man who could always perceive the otherness behind the most reassuringly familiar phenomenon) took the un-common-sense view of psychology. Hence the strangeness of his novels; and hence also, it must be admitted, certain qualities of violent monotony and intense indistinctness, qualities which make some of them, for all their richness and their unexpected beauty, so curiously difficult to get through. Most of us are more interested in diamonds and coal than in undifferentiated carbon, however vividly described. I have known readers whose reaction to Lawrence's books was very much the same as Lawrence's own reaction to the theory of evolution. What he wrote meant nothing to them because they 'did not feel it here' — in the solar plexus. (That Lawrence, the hater of scientific knowing, should have applied to psychology methods which he himself compared to those of chemical analysis, may seem strange. But we must remember that his analysis was done, not intellectually, but by an immediate process of intuition; that he was able, as it were, to feel the carbon in diamonds and coal, to taste the hydrogen and oxygen in his glass of water.)

Lawrence, then, possessed, or, if you care to put it the other way round, was possessed by, a gift — a gift to which he was unshakably loyal. I have tried to show how the possession and the loyalty influenced his thinking and writing. How did they affect his life? The answer shall be, as far as possible, in Lawrence's own words. To Catherine Carswell Lawrence once wrote: 'I think you are the only woman I have met who is so intrinsically detached, so essentially separate and isolated, as to be a real writer or artist or recorder. Your relations with other people are only excursions from yourself. And to want children, and common human fulfilments, is rather a falsity for you, I think. You were never made to "meet and mingle," but to remain intact, essentially, whatever your experiences may be.'

Lawrence's knowledge of 'the artist' was manifestly personal knowledge. He knew by actual experience that the 'real writer' is an essentially separate being, who must

not desire to meet and mingle and who betrays himself when he hankers too yearningly after common human fulfilments. All artists know these facts about their species, and many of them have recorded their knowledge. Recorded it, very often, with distress; being intrinsically detached is no joke. Lawrence certainly suffered his whole life from the essential solitude to which his gift condemned him. 'What ails me,' he wrote to the psychologist, Dr. Trigant Burrow, 'is the absolute frustration of my primeval societal instinct. . . . I think societal instinct much deeper than sex instinct — and societal repression much more devastating. There is no repression of the sexual individual comparable to the repression of the societal man in me, by the individual ego, my own and everybody else's. . . . Myself, I suffer badly from being so cut off. . . . At times one is forced to be essentially a hermit. I don't want to be. But anything else is either a personal tussle, or a money tussle; sickening; except, of course, just for ordinary acquaintance, which remains acquaintance. One has no real human relations — that is so devastating.' One has no real human relations: it is the complaint of every artist. The artist's first duty is to his genius, his daimon; he cannot serve two masters. Lawrence, as it happened, had an extraordinary gift for establishing an intimate relationship with almost anyone he met. 'Here' (in the Bournemouth boarding-house where he was staying after his illness, in 1912), 'I get mixed up in people's lives so — it's very interesting, sometimes a bit painful, often jolly. But I run to such close intimacy with folk, it is complicating. But I love to have myself in a bit of a tangle.' His love for his art was greater, however, than his love for a tangle; and whenever the tangle threatened to compromise his activities as an artist, it was the tangle that was sacrificed: he retired. Lawrence's only deep and abiding human relationship was with his wife. ('It is hopeless for me,' he wrote to a fellow-artist, 'to try to do anything without I have a woman at the back of me. . . . Böcklin — or somebody like him — daren't sit in a café except with his back to the wall. I daren't sit in the world without a woman behind me. . . . A woman that I love sort of keeps me in direct communication with the unknown, in which otherwise I am a bit lost.') For the rest, he was condemned by his gift to an essential separateness. Often, it is true, he blamed the world for his exile. 'And it comes to this, that the oneness of mankind is destroyed in me (by the war). I am I, and you are you, and all heaven and hell lie in the chasm between. Believe me, I am infinitely hurt by being thus torn off from the body of mankind, but so it is and it is right.' It was right because, in reality, it was not the war that had torn him from the body of mankind; it was his own talent, the strange divinity to which he owed his primary allegiance. 'I will not live any more in this time,' he wrote on another occasion. 'I know what it is. I reject it. As far as I possibly can, I will stand outside this time. I will live my life and, if possible, be happy. Though the whole world slides in horror down into the bottomless pit . . . I believe that the highest virtue is to be happy, living in the greatest truth, not submitting to the falsehood of these personal times.' The adjective is profoundly significant. Of all the possible words of disparagement which might be applied to our uneasy age 'personal' is surely about the last that would occur to most of us. To Lawrence it was the first. His gift was a gift of feeling and

rendering the unknown, the mysteriously other. To one possessed by such a gift, almost any age would have seemed unduly and dangerously personal. He had to reject and escape. But when he had escaped, he could not help deploring the absence of 'real human relationships.' Spasmodically, he tried to establish contact with the body of mankind. There were the recurrent projects for colonies in remote corners of the earth; they all fell through. There were his efforts to join existing political organizations; but somehow 'I seem to have lost touch altogether with the "Progressive" clique. In Croydon, the Socialists are so stupid and the Fabians so flat.' (Not only in Croydon, alas.) Then, during the war, there was his plan to co-operate with a few friends to take independent political action; but 'I would like to be remote, in Italy, writing my soul's words. To have to speak in the body is a violation to me.' And in the end he wouldn't violate himself; he remained aloof, remote, 'essentially separate.' 'It isn't scenery one lives by,' he wrote from Cornwall in 1916, 'but the freedom of moving about alone.' How acutely he suffered from this freedom by which he lived! Kangaroo describes a later stage of the debate between the solitary artist and the man who wanted social responsibilities and contact with the body of mankind. Lawrence, like the hero of his novel, decided against contact. He was by nature not a leader of men, but a prophet, a voice crying in the wilderness — the wilderness of his own isolation. The desert was his place, and yet he felt himself an exile in it. To Rolf Gardiner he wrote, in 1926: 'I should love to be connected with something, with some few people, in something. As far as anything matters, I have always been very much alone, and regretted it. But I can't belong to clubs, or societies, or Freemasons, or any other damn thing. So if there is, with you, an activity I can belong to, I shall thank my stars. But, of course, I shall be wary beyond words, of committing myself.' He was in fact so wary that he never committed himself, but died remote and unconnected as he had lived. The daimon would not allow it to be otherwise.

(Whether Lawrence might not have been happier if he had disobeyed his daimon and forced himself at least into mechanical and external connection with the body of mankind, I forbear to speculate. Spontaneity is not the only and infallible secret of happiness; nor is a 'would-be' existence necessarily disastrous. But this is by the way.)

It was, I think, the sense of being cut off that sent Lawrence on his restless wanderings round the earth. His travels were at once a flight and a search: a search for some society with which he could establish contact, for a world where the times were not personal and conscious knowing had not yet perverted living; a search and at the same time a flight from the miseries and evils of the society into which he had been born, and for which, in spite of his artist's detachment, he could not help feeling profoundly responsible. He felt himself 'English in the teeth of all the world, even in the teeth of England': that was why he had to go to Ceylon and Australia and Mexico. He could not have felt so intensely English in England without involving himself in corporative political action, without belonging and being attached; but to attach himself was something he could not bring himself to do, something that the artist in him felt as a violation. He was at once too English and too intensely an artist to stay at home.

‘Perhaps it is necessary for me to try these places, perhaps it is my destiny to know the world. It only excites the outside of me. The inside it leaves more isolated and stoic than ever. That’s how it is. It is all a form of running away from oneself and the great problems, all this wild west and the strange Australia. But I try to keep quite clear. One forms not the faintest inward attachment, especially here in America.’

His search was as fruitless as his flight was ineffective. He could not escape either from his homesickness or his sense of responsibility; and he never found a society to which he could belong. In a kind of despair, he plunged yet deeper into the surrounding mystery, into the dark night of that otherness whose essence and symbol is the sexual experience. In *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* Lawrence wrote the epilogue to his travels and, from his long and fruitless experience of flight and search, drew what was, for him, the inevitable moral. It is a strange and beautiful book; but inexpressibly sad. But then so, at bottom, was its author’s life.

Lawrence’s psychological isolation resulted, as we have seen, in his seeking physical isolation from the body of mankind. This physical isolation reacted upon his thoughts. ‘Don’t mind if I am impertinent,’ he wrote to one of his correspondents at the end of a rather dogmatic letter. ‘Living here alone one gets so different — sort of ex-cathedra.’ To live in isolation, above the medley, has its advantages; but it also imposes certain penalties. Those who take a bird’s-eye view of the world often see clearly and comprehensively; but they tend to ignore all tiresome details, all the difficulties of social life and, ignoring, to judge too sweepingly and to condemn too lightly. Nietzsche spent his most fruitful years perched on the tops of mountains, or plunged in the yet more abysmal solitude of boarding-houses by the Mediterranean. That was why, a delicate and sensitive man, he could be so bloodthirstily censorious — so wrong, for all his gifts, as well as so right. From the deserts of New Mexico, from rustic Tuscany or Sicily, from the Australian bush, Lawrence observed and judged and advised the distant world of men. The judgments, as might be expected, were often sweeping and violent; the advice, though admirable as far as it went, inadequate. Political advice from even the most greatly gifted of religious innovators is always inadequate; for it is never, at bottom, advice about politics, but always about something else. Differences in quantity, if sufficiently great, produce differences of quality. This sheet of paper, for example, is qualitatively different from the electrons of which it is composed. An analogous difference divides the politician’s world from the world of the artist, or the moralist, or the religious teacher. ‘It is the business of the artist,’ writes Lawrence, ‘to follow it (the war) to the heart of the individual fighters — not to talk in armies and nations and numbers — but to track it home — home — their war — and it’s at the bottom of almost every Englishman’s heart — the war — the desire of war — the will to war — and at the bottom of every German heart.’ But an appeal to the individual heart can have very little effect on politics, which is a science of averages. An actuary can tell you how many people are likely to commit suicide next year; and no artist or moralist or Messiah can, by an appeal to the individual heart, prevent his forecast from being remarkably correct. If the things which are Caesar’s differ from the things

which are God's, it is because Caesar's things are numbered by the thousands and millions, whereas God's things are single individual souls. The things of Lawrence's Dark God were not even individual souls; they were the psychological atoms whose patterned coming together constitutes a soul. When Lawrence offers political advice, it refers to matters which are not really political at all. The political world of enormous numbers was to him a nightmare, and he fled from it. Primitive communities are so small that their politics are essentially unpolitical; that, for Lawrence, was one of their greatest charms. Looking back from some far-away and underpopulated vantage-point at the enormous, innumerable modern world, he was appalled by what he saw. He condemned, he advised, but at bottom and finally he felt himself impotent to deal with Caesar's alien and inhuman problems. 'I wish there were miracles,' was his final despairing comment. 'I am tired of the old laborious way of working things to their conclusions.' But, alas, there are no miracles, and faith, even the faith of a man of genius, moves no mountains.

Enough of explanation and interpretation. To those who knew Lawrence, not why, but that he was what he happened to be, is the important fact. I remember very clearly my first meeting with him. The place was London, the time 1915. But Lawrence's passionate talk was of the geographically remote and of the personally very near. Of the horrors in the middle distance — war, winter, the town — he would not speak. For he was on the point, so he imagined, of setting off to Florida — to Florida, where he was going to plant that colony of escape, of which up to the last he never ceased to dream. Sometimes the name and site of this seed of a happier and different world were purely fanciful. It was called Rananim, for example, and was an island like Prospero's. Sometimes it had its place on the map and its name was Florida, Cornwall, Sicily, Mexico and again, for a time, the English countryside. That wintry afternoon in 1915 it was Florida. Before tea was over he asked me if I would join the colony, and though I was an intellectually cautious young man, not at all inclined to enthusiasms, though Lawrence had startled and embarrassed me with sincerities of a kind to which my upbringing had not accustomed me, I answered yes.

Fortunately, no doubt, the Florida scheme fell through. Cities of God have always crumbled; and Lawrence's city — his village, rather, for he hated cities — his Village of the Dark God would doubtless have disintegrated like all the rest. It was better that it should have remained, as it was always to remain, a project and a hope. And I knew this even as I said I would join the colony. But there was something about Lawrence which made such knowledge, when one was in his presence, curiously irrelevant. He might propose impracticable schemes, he might say or write things that were demonstrably incorrect or even, on occasion (as when he talked about science), absurd. But to a very considerable extent it didn't matter. What mattered was always Lawrence himself, was the fire that burned within him, that glowed with so strange and marvellous a radiance in almost all he wrote.

My second meeting with Lawrence took place some years later, during one of his brief revisittings of that after-war England, which he had come so much to dread and

to dislike. Then in 1925, while in India, I received a letter from Spotorno. He had read some essays I had written on Italian travel; said he liked them; suggested a meeting. The next year we were in Florence and so was he. From that time, till his death, we were often together — at Florence, at Forte dei Marmi, for a whole winter at Diablerets, at Bandol, in Paris, at Chexbres, at Forte again, and finally at Vence where he died.

In a spasmodically kept diary I find this entry under the date of December 27th, 1927: 'Lunched and spent the p.m. with the Lawrences. D. H. L. in admirable form, talking wonderfully. He is one of the few people I feel real respect and admiration for. Of most other eminent people I have met I feel that at any rate I belong to the same species as they do. But this man has something different and superior in kind, not degree.'

'Different and superior in kind.' I think almost everyone who knew him well must have felt that Lawrence was this. A being, somehow, of another order, more sensitive, more highly conscious, more capable of feeling than even the most gifted of common men. He had, of course, his weaknesses and defects; he had his intellectual limitations — limitations which he seemed to have deliberately imposed upon himself. But these weaknesses and defects and limitations did not affect the fact of his superior otherness. They diminished him quantitatively, so to speak; whereas the otherness was qualitative. Spill half your glass of wine and what remains is still wine. Water, however full the glass may be, is always tasteless and without colour.

To be with Lawrence was a kind of adventure, a voyage of discovery into newness and otherness. For, being himself of a different order, he inhabited a different universe from that of common men — a brighter and intenser world, of which, while he spoke, he would make you free. He looked at things with the eyes, so it seemed, of a man who had been at the brink of death and to whom, as he emerges from the darkness, the world reveals itself as unfathomably beautiful and mysterious. For Lawrence, existence was one continuous convalescence; it was as though he were newly reborn from a mortal illness every day of his life. What these convalescent eyes saw, his most casual speech would reveal. A walk with him in the country was a walk through that marvellously rich and significant landscape which is at once the background and the principal personage of all his novels. He seemed to know, by personal experience, what it was like to be a tree or a daisy or a breaking wave or even the mysterious moon itself. He could get inside the skin of an animal and tell you in the most convincing detail how it felt and how, dimly, inhumanly, it thought. Of Black-Eyed Susan, for example, the cow at his New Mexican ranch, he was never tired of speaking, nor was I ever tired of listening to his account of her character and her bovine philosophy.

'He sees,' Vernon Lee once said to me, 'more than a human being ought to see. Perhaps,' she added, 'that's why he hates humanity so much.' Why also he loved it so much. And not only humanity: nature too, and even the supernatural. For wherever he looked, he saw more than a human being ought to see; saw more and therefore loved and hated more. To be with him was to find oneself transported to one of the

frontiers of human consciousness. For an inhabitant of the safe metropolis of thought and feeling it was a most exciting experience.

One of the great charms of Lawrence as a companion was that he could never be bored and so could never be boring. He was able to absorb himself completely in what he was doing at the moment; and he regarded no task as too humble for him to undertake, nor so trivial that it was not worth his while to do it well. He could cook, he could sew, he could darn a stocking and milk a cow, he was an efficient wood-cutter and a good hand at embroidery, fires always burned when he had laid them, and a floor, after Lawrence had scrubbed it, was thoroughly clean. Moreover, he possessed what is, for a highly strung and highly intelligent man, an even more remarkable accomplishment: he knew how to do nothing. He could just sit and be perfectly content. And his contentment, while one remained in his company, was infectious.

As infectious as Lawrence's contented placidity were his high spirits and his laughter. Even in the last years of his life, when his illness had got the upper hand and was killing him inch-meal, Lawrence could still laugh, on occasion, with something of the old and exuberant gaiety. Often, alas, towards the end, the laughter was bitter, and the high spirits almost terrifyingly savage. I have heard him sometimes speak of men and their ways with a kind of demoniac mockery, to which it was painful, for all the extraordinary brilliance and profundity of what he said, to listen. The secret consciousness of his dissolution filled the last years of his life with an overpowering sadness. (How tragically the splendid curve of the letters droops, at the end, towards the darkness!) It was, however, in terms of anger that he chose to express this sadness. Emotional indecency always shocked him profoundly, and, since anger seemed to him less indecent as an emotion than a resigned or complaining melancholy, he preferred to be angry. He took his revenge on the fate that had made him sad by fiercely deriding everything. And because the sadness of the slowly dying man was so unspeakably deep, his mockery was frighteningly savage. The laughter of the earlier Lawrence and, on occasion, as I have said, even the later Lawrence was without bitterness and wholly delightful.

Vitality has the attractiveness of beauty, and in Lawrence there was a continuously springing fountain of vitality. It went on welling up in him, leaping, now and then, into a great explosion of bright foam and iridescence, long after the time when, by all the rules of medicine, he should have been dead. For the last two years he was like a flame burning on in miraculous disregard of the fact that there was no more fuel to justify its existence. One grew, in spite of constantly renewed alarms, so well accustomed to seeing the flame blazing away, self-fed, in its broken and empty lamp that one almost came to believe that the miracle would be prolonged indefinitely. But it could not be. When, after several months of separation, I saw him again at Venice in the early spring of 1930, the miracle was at an end, the flame guttering to extinction. A few days later it was quenched.

Beautiful and absorbingly interesting in themselves, his letters are also of the highest importance as biographical documents. In them, Lawrence has written his life and painted his own portrait. Few men have given more of themselves in their letters.

Lawrence is there almost in his entirety. Almost, for he obeyed both of Robert Burns's injunctions:

Aye free, aff han' your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel'
Ye scarcely tell to ony.

The letters show us Lawrence as he was in his daily living. We see him in all his moods. (And it is curious and amusing to note how his mood will change according to his correspondent. 'My kindliness makes me sometimes a bit false,' he says of himself severely. In other words, he knew how to adapt himself. To one correspondent he is gay, at moments even larky — because larkiness is expected of him. To another he is gravely reflective. To a third he speaks the language of prophesying and revelation.) We follow him from one vividly seen and recorded landscape to another. We watch him during the war, a subjectivist and a solitary artist, desperately fighting his battle against the nightmare of objective facts and all the inhumanly numerous things that are Caesar's. Fighting and, inevitably, losing. And after the war we accompany him round the world, as he seeks, now in one continent now in another, some external desert to match the inner wilderness from which he utters his prophetic cry, or some community of which he can feel himself a member. We see him being drawn towards his fellows and then repelled again, making up his mind to force himself into some relation with society and then suddenly changing it again, and letting himself drift once more on the current of circumstances and his own inclinations. And finally, as his illness begins to get the better of him, we see him obscured by a dark cloud of sadness — the terrible sadness, out of which, in one mood, he wrote his savage *Nettles*, in another, *The Man Who Died*, that lovely and profoundly moving story of the miracle for which somewhere in his mind he still hoped — still hoped, against the certain knowledge that it could never happen.

In the earlier part of his career especially, and again towards the end, Lawrence was a most prolific correspondent. There was, however, an intermediate period during his time of wandering, when he seems to have written very little. Of letters with the date of these after-war years, not more than a dozen or two have so far turned up; and there seems to be no reason to believe that further inquiries will reveal the existence of many more. It is not because they have been destroyed or are being withheld that Lawrence's letters of this period are so scarce; it is because, for one reason or another, he did not then care to write letters, that he did not want to feel himself in relationship with anyone. After a time, the stream begins again. But the later letters, though plentiful and good, are neither so numerous nor so richly and variously delightful as the earlier. One feels that Lawrence no longer wanted to give of himself so fully to his correspondents as in the past.

B. R. HAYDON

TWO LIKENESSES OF Haydon hang in the National Portrait Gallery. One, by Miss Zornlin, is a full face, and might be a prophetic portrait of Mussolini. That vast and noble brow, enlarged and ennobled by incipient baldness beyond the limits of verisimilitude; those flashing eyes; that square strong jaw; that wide mouth with its full, floridly sculptured lips; that powerful neck — are not these Il Duce's very features? But Miss Zornlin was not a very good painter. A competent portraitist knows how to imply the profile in the full face. Miss Zornlin's implications are entirely misleading, and if it were not for Haydon's own self-portrait in the National Gallery, and the drawing of him as a youth in the possession of Sir Robert Witt, we should never have guessed that this truculent dictator was the possessor of a very large yet delicately modelled and somehow frail-looking aquiline nose, and a chin which, while not exactly weak, was not so formidably protuberant as one might have expected. It is as though Mussolini had been strangely blended with Cardinal Newman.

From whatever angle one looks at it, the face is remarkable. One would notice it in a crowd; one would know at once that it belonged to some unusual spirit. It is a face that bears the stigmata almost of genius. Haydon had only to look in the glass to realize that he was a great man.

Nor was a grand appearance Nature's only gift to him. The other attributes of genius — a little tinged, it is true, with vulgarity — were not lacking. He was endowed with a sharp and comprehensive intelligence; an excellent judgment (except where his own productions were concerned); a daemonic vitality; the proverbial 'infinite capacity for taking pains'; a mystical sense of inspiration, and a boundless belief in his own powers. His special gifts were literary and discursive. His brain teemed with general ideas. He was an acute observer of character; he could talk, and he could write. He had a gift of expression, even a literary style. Never was anyone more clearly cut out to be an author. Or, if the outlet of literature had been denied him, he would have made a good politician, a first-rate soldier ('I did not command bayonets and cannons. Would to God,' he says himself, 'I had!'); he might even — if we may judge from his laborious studies in anatomy and his facility in the propounding of theories — have been a tolerably efficient man of science. The one gift which Nature had quite obviously denied him was the gift of expressing himself in form and colour. One has only to glance at one of Haydon's drawings to perceive that the man had absolutely no artistic talent. The lines are hard, heavy, uncertain and utterly insensitive. He fumbles painfully and blunderingly after likeness to nature, and when he cannot achieve realism falls back on the cheapest art-student tricks. The paintings — such of them, at any rate, as I

have seen in the original or in reproductions — are entirely without composition. They abound in bad drawing and disproportions. The colour is crude and inharmonious. In his enormous *Agony in the Garden*, which now reposes in the cellars of the Victoria and Albert Museum, a shapeless Saviour (straight from the studio and illumined by a strong North light) kneels in the right foreground. Behind Him lies a Rembrandtesque night, full of torch flames, of ruddily illuminated faces and portentous chiaroscuro. The ground is apparently meant to slope up from the place where the Saviour is kneeling. But it slopes in such a curious way that the background seems to be on a level with, if not actually in front of, the figure in the foreground. One is forced to imagine a Mount of Olives constructed like those Tudor houses, in which each storey projects a little farther forward than the one below. The painting is broad, dashing, and amateurishly uncertain. In the draperies, and in what is visible of the landscape, one notices great swishing brush strokes entirely devoid of meaning, whole passages daubed in for the sole reason that every inch of the canvas has got to be covered with paint. The thing is ludicrous. The *Agony in the Garden* is admittedly one of the least successful of Haydon's pictures. I regret that I have never seen his best — *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*, and *The Raising of Lazarus*. The former is at Cincinnati; to judge by the photographs it bears a certain very distant resemblance to a picture. Where the latter is, I do not know; nor have I ever seen it reproduced. But after having looked at the *Agony in the Garden*, the portraits at the National Portrait Gallery, and the various reproductions in Sir Robert Witt's library, I feel quite justified in saying that it must be entirely worthless.

Most children are geniuses, and perhaps there may have been some excuse for admiring the scribblings of the infant Haydon. Half the five-year-olds in any country are Raphaels; one in a hundred retains his genius at the age of ten. One in a million of these childish talents survives puberty. Some Imp of the Perverse must have suggested to young Haydon that he was destined to preserve his baby gift and become a painter. Outraged nature protested. The boy was afflicted with a disease of the eyes that permanently weakened his sight. To a natural incapacity to draw or paint was now added an inability to see. It was a broad hint. But the Imp of the Perverse and Haydon's will were very strong. Illness only reinforced the boy's decision to become a painter. All his exuberant energy, which a piece of judicious advice or a happy accident might have harnessed to some congenial labour, was now directed to painting. His self-confidence became a confidence in his powers as an artist. His heavenly muse breathed artistic inspirations. He had, as he tells us, 'perpetual and irresistible urgings of future greatness.' And again, 'I have been like a man with air balloons under his armpits and ether in his soul. While I was painting, walking or thinking, beaming flashes of energy followed and impressed me.' To have refused, in such circumstances, to devote oneself body and soul to painting would have been the sin against the Holy Ghost. On another occasion, after having conceived my background stronger than ever, I strode about the room imitating the blast of a trumpet — my cheeks full of blood, my heart beating with a glorious heat. Oh, who would exchange these moments for a

throne?’ These ecstatic moments came to him whenever his mind was occupied with something that specially interested it. He would spend a whole evening ‘in a torrent of feeling about Homer.’ On the day after the news of Waterloo had come through to London, he ‘got up in a steam of feeling and read all the papers till he was faint.’ Since he had elected painting as the chief concern of his life, it was natural that these delicious and inspiring moments came oftenest while he was at work on a picture. They justified his belief in his own powers, in the same way as the raptures of the mystic justify his belief in a personal God. An emotion so intense must, it is felt, have some adequate external cause. Similarly, the sentiments of a lover are so enormous that it seems impossible that they should have been aroused by plain Miss Jones or plainer Mr. Brown. Something cosmic, something divine must have crept in somewhere. Nothing short of the Absolute could account for such ecstasies. A whole literature of platonizing love-poems has arisen, in order that Mr. Robinson’s feelings for Miss Smith might be satisfactorily accounted for. Something analogous took place in Haydon’s case. Full-blooded, emotional, a sort of Gargantua turned idealistic and romantic, he was easily excited and, when excited, felt profoundly. He could not believe that such prodigious emotions as his were not due to some proportionate cause. If he felt grandly about his painting, that was because his painting was grand, and because to paint was his mission in life, his divinely ordained duty. Of the divine approbation he was, indeed, directly convinced. We find references in the Autobiography and Journals to voices which commanded him to embark, even in the midst of financial ruin, on vast and unsaleable works. To his prayers for guidance (and Haydon was always praying) were vouchsafed, so he believed, encouraging replies. And every small success, every happy coincidence — the opportune arrival, for example, of a cheque or a commission — was interpreted by him as a friendly message from the Almighty. It is not to be wondered at if, in the teeth of failure and of hostile criticism, he should have gone on believing in himself. What matter the sneers of human connoisseurs when one knows, one is certain that the Heavenly Critic approves?

And then there was Haydon’s pride, there was Haydon’s ambition. Right or wrong, he had embarked on a painter’s career. He was too proud to admit failure and withdraw. And his ambition to excel was inordinate, his vanity was without bounds. He admits (and his frankness is engaging, his perspicacity even in the midst of so much self-deception is remarkable) that he was ‘always panting for distinction, even at a funeral (for I felt angry at Opie’s that I wasn’t in the first coach).’ He wanted to be in the first coach at the christening of a new school of English painting. Portrait making, the sham beau idéal, petty genre painting were to be ousted from their pre-eminence and historical painting on a colossal scale was to take their place. Haydon was to be the father of the new school. ‘The production of this picture (Dentatus) must and will be considered an epoch in British Art.’ And towards the end of his life he records: ‘I thought once of putting up a brass plate (on his old house in Lisson Grove), Here Haydon Painted His Solomon, 1813.’

Sanguine and very susceptible to flattery, Haydon was always ready to believe that the smallest stroke of good fortune must be the herald of complete success, that a word of praise was the first note in that chorus of universal commendation for which he was always anxiously listening. When a 'lady of the highest rank' remarked (with that charming and entirely meaningless politeness of which only ladies of the highest rank know the secret): 'We look to you, Mr. Haydon, to revive the Art,' poor Haydon 'anticipated all sorts of glory, greatness and fame.' He was a man who dramatized his own life, who saw himself acting his own part, not merely as he was playing it at the moment, but in the future too. 'I walked about the room, looked into the glass, anticipated what the foreign ambassadors would say, studied my French for a good accent, believed that all the Sovereigns of Europe would hail an English youth who could paint a heroic picture.'

The 'Sovereigns of Europe,' it may be remarked parenthetically, played a great part in Haydon's imaginative life. Of burgess origin, and endowed with a romantic temperament, Haydon was — fatally and inevitably — a snob. The prestige of great names and titles impressed him profoundly. The picturesqueness of traditional aristocracy and the splendours of wealth went violently to his romantic head, just as they went to Balzac's. We have seen how absurdly elated he felt when the 'lady of the highest rank' looked to him to 'revive the Art.' He was as much delighted when Sir George Beaumont and his family 'allowed that nothing could exceed the eye of my horse.' Even the approbation of a noble savage (if only sufficiently noble) was intoxicating to Haydon, who records complacently that the Persian Ambassador remarked of his Jerusalem 'in good English and in a loud voice, "I like the elbow of soldier."' But bitter experience soon taught him that lordly patrons are fickle and their favour not to be relied on. He realized that he had taken their praises of his historical pictures too seriously. 'I forgot,' he sadly remarks, 'that the same praise would have been applied to the portrait of a racehorse or of a favourite pug.' He discovered to his cost that lords and ladies 'are ambitious of the éclat of discovering genius, but their hearts are seldom engaged for it.' And — yet more painful discovery for a man of Haydon's intelligence and acquirements — 'I find the artists most favoured by the great are those of no education, or those who conceal what they have. The love of power and superiority is not trod on if a man of genius is ignorant when a gentleman is informed. "Great folks," said Johnson, "don't like to have their mouths stopped."' Haydon was rash enough to be right about the Elgin Marbles. The great were all on the side of Payne Knight and grotesquely wrong. They did not enjoy being told so. But though he early discovered the truth about aristocratic art patrons — namely, that they regard artists as mere court fools existing for the entertainment of their endless leisure, that they take no genuine interest in art, and are, for the most part, bottomlessly frivolous — though he knew all this, he yet retained an extraordinary affection and respect for lords. How excessively and abjectly he enjoys his week-end with Lord Egremont at Petworth! 'The very flies at Petworth seem to know that there is room for their existence, that the windows are theirs. Dogs, horses,

cows, deer and pigs, peasantry and servants, guests and family, children and parents, all share alike his (Lord Egremont's) bounty and opulence and luxury.'

He dramatized himself in misfortune no less than in success. It is a fallen Titan who goes to the Debtor's Prison and haggles with creditors. And in spite of everything, how much he enjoys his grandly and dramatically unhappy position at the time when his reforming zeal had made him, in 1832, the official painter of the radical party! At half-past nine he would be in the pawnshop raising money on the silver coffee-pot; at ten he would be sitting in the palace of some peer of the realm, sketching the grand patrician profile and discussing high politics. The afternoon would be spent imploring attorneys to give him time; the evening at some luscious rout where 'the beauty of the women, the exquisite, fresh, nosegay sweetness of their looks, the rich crimson velvet, and white satin, and lace, and muslin, and diamonds, with their black eyes and peachy complexions, and snowy necks, and delicate forms, and graceful motions, and sweet nothingness of conversation bewildered and distracted him.' Pauper and pampered pet of society, frequenter of drawing-rooms and pawnshops — the rôle was dramatic, picturesque, positively Shakespearean. He dwells at length, emphatically and almost with pleasure, on his own romantic misery.

Haydon was at all times very conscious of his own character. He is his own favourite hero of fiction. He realizes his own energy, genius and vitality, and describes them dramatically in a bold Homeric style. We find him in his journals constantly comparing himself to one or other of the nobler animals. He 'flies to the city to raise money, like an eagle.' He bathes at Margate 'like a bull in June.' He is constantly walking up and down his studio or furiously painting 'like a lion.' (And we know from what he says in his journal, after dissecting one, how much lions meant to Haydon. 'Spent the whole day with a lion and came home with a contempt for the human species.')

Haydon's belief in himself was infectious, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say contagious — for it was only while one was actually in the presence of the man himself that one could fully believe in his powers as an artist. In front of his pictures, even his most admiring friends must occasionally have had their doubts. But the man had such a masterful and magnetic personality, was so large, so exuberantly vital, so intelligent and plausible, such a good critic of all art but his own, so well read, such an entertaining talker, that it was impossible not to take fire at his ardour; it was difficult when he said, 'I am a great artist,' not to believe him. All those, it would be true to say, who came into personal contact with Haydon believed in him. All — from Keats (who lent him money) and Wordsworth (who addressed two admirable sonnets to him) to the poor wine merchant, of whom Haydon records 'I showed him Solomon and appealed to him whether I ought, after such an effort, to be without a glass of wine, which my medical man had recommended. "Certainly not," said he. "I'll send you a dozen." ' And he sent them, gratis. Lamb and Hazlitt and the Hunts were among his friends and admirers. His landlord, Newton, was infinitely kind to him. His colourman provided him, on indefinite credit, with canvases of unheard-of dimensions on which to paint unsaleable historical pictures. Sir Walter Scott not only admired and liked

him, but gave him money. His servant, the faithful Sammons, seems positively to have worshipped him. There was a magic about the man, a magic which began to evaporate as the years passed and a generation arose which had not known him in his dazzling prime, and the man himself grew old and querulous and hysterical with failure and repeated disappointment and chronic poverty. With the final pistol-shot the magic was totally dissipated. The pictures remain, deplorable monuments of a wasted life. The real, the magical Haydon can only be divined from the Autobiography.

Haydon was sixty when he committed suicide. One can only feel astonished that he did not kill himself before. A few years of the life which Haydon led for the best part of forty years would have sufficed to drive most men into suicide, or madness, or the selling of their principles. Haydon's energy, his sanguine temperament kept him struggling on, year after year, decade after decade. His later journals make the most distressing reading. In the course of his desperate and never-ending hunt for cash, what agonized anxieties, what humiliations were his daily lot! Familiarity with humiliation seems, indeed, in the long run to have blunted his sensibilities. One has the impression that, after some years of chronic misfortune, it no longer cost him much to write a begging letter or draw up for publication a pathetic statement of his accounts. He was never, even in his early days, very scrupulous about financial matters. The story of his debt to Keats is not told in the Autobiography; it must be read in Keats's own letters. It is not, assuredly, very creditable to Haydon. With his usual frankness, Haydon admitted his unscrupulousness about money. 'Too proud to do small modest things that I might obtain fair means of existence as I proceeded with my great work, I thought it no degradation to borrow.' And again, 'I have £400 at Coutts's, thought I, never thinking how I was to return it, but trusting in God for all.' Haydon trusted a great deal in God. It salved his conscience to feel that the Almighty was standing security for his I.O.U.'s. But if he was not very honest, he had his justifications. To begin with, he could not afford to be scrupulous. Strict financial honesty is easy only for those whose bank balances are long, or who draw a regular wage and are without ambition. Haydon was filled with vast ambitions, believed himself the greatest painter of his age, and had no money. He felt that the world owed him something for existing, for being the genius that he was. Loans and gifts were received on account of the world's debt to him; he had a certain divine right to them, even when they came from people who could not afford to lend or give. Still he did always honestly try to pay back, later if not sooner, the money he had borrowed. One has only to read the following passage to realize that Haydon had a nice, if peculiar, sense of honour — not to mention a financial ability amounting almost to genius. 'In one hour and a half I had ten pounds to pay on my honour and only £2, 15s. in my pocket. I drove away to Newton, paid him £2, 15s. and borrowed £10. I then drove away to my friend and paid him the ten pounds, and borrowed five pounds more, but felt relieved I had not broke my honour.'

It must not be thought that Haydon's exertions brought him nothing. First and last, he made considerable sums of money, which might have sufficed to keep a single

man in comfort. But Haydon was married. His wife, who was a widow, brought him two small children and no dowry. His own family was numerous. Once every fifty or sixty pages his journals announce a fresh confinement; another little Haydon enters the world. A few years pass, and with a regularity almost as unfailing the little Haydons shuffle off again. One stepson, it is true, reached manhood before he had a promising career in the navy cut short, in the Indian Ocean, by the bite of a sea-serpent. But his case was exceptional. Most of the children died in infancy. After a time one loses count of the births and deaths. I have an impression that about half a dozen children must have survived their father and that about as many died before they were six years old. Perhaps if one hunted among the sooty grasses of Paddington Green, in the shadow of Mrs. Siddons's monument, one might still find their little tombstones.

Haydon was a most conscientious father — rather too conscientious, considering that he could not possibly afford to educate his children as aristocratically as he did. Some of the most pressing debts of his later years were for his sons' tutorial and college dues at Oxford and Cambridge.

Towards the end of his life Haydon was no longer too proud to do 'small modest things.' His ambition was still to paint huge historical pictures; but meanwhile, to keep the pot boiling, he was prepared to stoop to a pettier kind of art. He painted portraits — that is, when he could find sitters. But he hated portrait painting. Lacking, as he did, any understanding of, or interest in, the formal side of art, he could never paint for painting's sake. He was only interested in the literature of painting; he needed a subject to stimulate his imagination. 'In portrait,' he complains, 'I lose that divine feeling of inspiration which I always had in history. I feel a common man.' What he really liked painting was something in the style of *The Plagues of Egypt*. 'A Sphinx or two, a pyramid or so, with the front groups lighted by torches, would make this a subject terrific and appalling.' There was nothing very terrific or appalling about the stout business men and their wives and ugly daughters who came to have their portraits painted at twenty-five or thirty pounds a time. Moreover, Haydon was, as he himself admits, a very bad portrait painter. He soon lost whatever patronage he had. He felt the loss as something of a relief.

More congenial, at any rate to begin with, and no less lucrative than portraits, were his fancy pictures of Napoleon musing. Haydon's first picture of Napoleon on St. Helena caught the public fancy. It represents the Emperor standing on a crag, with his back to the spectator, contemplating the Atlantic Ocean, the remains of a sunset and the crescent moon. The piece was engraved and sold well. Sir Robert Peel bought the original. Replicas were ordered in quantities. For years Haydon lived on Napoleon musing — musing, not merely on St. Helena, but at Fontainebleau, in his bedroom, on the ocean, at Marengo, in Egypt before the pyramids. He turned them out by the dozen. Haydon also painted a picture of the Duke of Wellington musing on the field of Waterloo; but the piece was much less successful. Perhaps it was felt that the picture lacked verisimilitude. French tyrants might muse; but not an English general, not a Wellesley, a Duke, a Prime Minister.

Haydon's self-confidence remained apparently unshaken to the end. Indeed, as failure was heaped upon failure, disappointment on disappointment, it expressed itself more vehemently than ever, with a kind of shrill, hysterical defiance. After the rejection of the cartoons which he had prepared for the decoration of the new Houses of Parliament — the cruellest blow of Haydon's whole unhappy career — he tried to comfort himself by insisting with an almost insane violence on his own genius. 'What magic! what fire! what unerring hand and eye! what a gift of God! I bow and am grateful.' And looking at his Solomon ('this wonderful picture') he asks himself: 'Ought I to fear comparison of it with the Duke of Sutherland's Murillo, or any other picture?' And he answers with a confidence that would be ludicrous if it were not painfully pathetic, 'Certainly not!' At this period, too, he liked to insist more strongly than ever on the altruistic, the self-sacrificingly patriotic character of his whole career. He had always claimed that he was working for the glory of British Art. By the end of his life he was saying that he 'had devoted himself without a selfish feeling to the honour of his country.' The sense that he was a martyr to a great cause gave him, no doubt, a certain comfort in his misery.

His religion was another source of comfort. His journals reveal him in close and constant communication with his Maker. There is something curiously primitive about his prayers. He asks for specific material benefits, for the providential and almost miraculous solution of particular difficulties. This is how he prepares for one of his exhibitions: 'Grant, during the exhibition, nothing may happen to dull its success, but that it may go on in one continuous stream of triumphant success to the last instant. O God, thou knowest I am in the clutches of a villain; grant me the power to get out of them, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. And subdue the evil disposition of that villain, so that I may extricate myself from his power without getting further into it.' (An only too accurate description of Haydon's ordinary method of paying off debts.) 'Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen, with all my soul.' The prayer, alas, was not answered. On the day that Haydon opened his exhibition, Barnum arrived in town with General Tom Thumb. Unconsciously cruel, he hired a room in the Egyptian Hall next to Haydon's. Standing at the door of his empty gallery, the unhappy artist could watch the crowds that surged and shoved and fought in a Gadarene scramble to see the dwarf.

But enough of misery and failure and incompetence. Haydon was something more than a bad and deservedly unsuccessful painter. He was a great personality to begin with. And in the second place he was, as I like to think, a born writer who wasted his life making absurd pictures when he might have been making excellent books. One book, however, he did contrive to make. The Autobiography reveals his powers. Reading it, one realizes the enormity of that initial mistake which sent him from his father's bookshop to the Academy schools. As a romantic novelist what might he not have achieved? Sadly one speculates.

There were times when Haydon himself seems to have speculated even as we do. 'The truth is,' he remarks near the end of his life, 'I am fonder of books than of anything

else on earth. I consider myself, and ever shall, a man of great powers, excited to an art which limits their exercise. In politics, law or literature they would have had a full and glorious swing. . . . It is a curious proof of this that I have pawned my studies, my prints, my lay figures, but have kept my darling authors.' The avowal is complete. What genuine, born painter would call painting an art which limits the exercise of great powers? Such a criticism could only come from a man to whom painting was but another and less effectual way of writing dramas, novels or history.

It is, I repeat, as a novelist that Haydon would best have exhibited his powers. I can imagine great rambling books in which absurd sublimities ('a Sphinx or two, a pyramid or so') and much rhapsodical philosophizing would have alternated in the approved Shakespearean or Faustian style, with admirable passages of well-observed, naturalistic comic relief. We should yawn over the philosophy and perhaps smile at the sublimities (as we smile and yawn even at Byron's; who can now read *Manfred*, or *Cain*?); but we should eagerly devour the comic chapters. The Autobiography permits us to imagine how good these chapters might have been.

Haydon was an acute observer, and he knew how to tell a story. How vividly, for example, he has seen this tea-party at Mrs. Siddons's, how well he has described it! 'After her first reading (from Shakespeare) the men retired to tea. While we were all eating toast and tingling cups and saucers, she began again. It was like the effect of a Mass bell at Madrid. All noise ceased, we slunk to our seats like boors, two or three of the most distinguished men of the day with the very toast in their mouths, afraid to bite. It was curious to see Lawrence in this predicament, to hear him bite by degrees and then stop, for fear of making too much crackle, his eyes full of water from the constraint; and at the same time to hear Mrs. Siddons's "eye of newt and toe of frog," and then to see Lawrence give a sly bite and then look awed and pretend to be listening. I went away highly gratified and as I stood on the landing-place to get cool, I overheard my own servant in the hall say, "What! is that the old lady making such a noise?" "Yes." "Why, she makes as much noise as ever." "Yes," was the answer, "she tunes her pipes as well as ever she did." ' There are, in the Autobiography, scores of such admirable little narratives and descriptions.

Haydon's anecdotes about the celebrated men with whom he came in contact are revealing as well as entertaining. They prove that he had more than a memory, a sense of character, an instinctive feeling for the significant detail. Most of the anecdotes are well known and have often been reprinted. But I cannot resist quoting two little stories about Wordsworth, which are less celebrated than they deserve to be. One day Haydon and Wordsworth went together to an art gallery. 'In the corner stood the group of Cupid and Psyche kissing. After looking some time, he turned round to me with an expression I shall never forget, and said, "The Dev-ils!" ' From this one anecdote a subtle psychologist might almost have divined the youthful escapade in France, the illegitimate daughter, the subsequent remorse and respectability. The other story is hardly less illuminating. 'One day Wordsworth at a large party leaned forward in a moment of silence and said: "Davy, do you know the reason I published my 'White

Doe' in quarto?" "No," said Davy, slightly blushing at the attention this awakened. "To express my own opinion of it," replied Wordsworth.'

Merely as a verbal technician Haydon was singularly gifted. When he is writing about something which deeply interests and excites him, his style takes on a florid and violent brilliance all its own. For example, this is how, at the coronation of George IV, he describes the royal entrance. 'Three or four of high rank appear from behind the throne; an interval is left; the crowd scarce breathe. Something rustles; and a being buried in satin, feathers and diamonds rolls gracefully into his seat. The room rises with a sort of feathered, silken thunder.' He knows how to use his adjectives with admirable effect. The most accomplished writer might envy his description of the Duke of Sussex's voice as 'loud, royal and asthmatic.' And how one shudders at the glance of a 'tremendous, globular and demoniacal eye!' How one loves the waitresses at the eating-house where the young and always susceptible Haydon used to dine! When they heard that he was bankrupt, these 'pretty girls eyed me with a lustrous regret.'

Haydon could argue with force and clarity. He could be witty as well as floridly brilliant. The man who could talk of Charles Lamb 'stuttering his quaintness in snatches, like the Fool in Lear, and with as much beauty,' certainly knew how to turn a phrase. He could imply a complete criticism in a dozen words; when he has said of West's classical pictures that 'the Venuses looked as though they had never been naked before,' there is nothing more to add; the last word on neo-classicism has been uttered. And what a sound, what a neatly pointed comment on English portrait painting is contained in the following brief sentences! 'Portraiture is always independent of art and has little or nothing to do with it. It is one of the staple manufactures of the Empire. Wherever the British settle, wherever they colonize, they carry, and will ever carry, trial by jury, horse-racing and portrait painting.' And let us hope they will ever carry a good supply of those indomitable madmen who have made the British Empire and English literature, English politics and English science the extraordinary things they are. Haydon was one of these glorious lunatics. An ironic fate decreed that he should waste his madness in the practice of an art for which he was not gifted. But though wasted, the insanity was genuine and of good quality. The Autobiography makes us wish that it might have been better directed.

Waterworks and Kings

IN THE CHANCELLERIES of eighteenth-century Europe nobody bothered very much about Hesse. Its hostility was not a menace, its friendship brought no positive advantages. Hesse was only one of the lesser German states — a tenth-rate Power.

Tenth-rate: and yet, on the outskirts of Kassel, which was the capital of this absurdly unimportant principality, there stands a palace large and splendid enough to house a full-blown emperor. And from the main façade of this palace there rises to the very top of the neighbouring mountain one of the most magnificent architectural gardens in the world. This garden, which is like a straight wide corridor of formal stone-work driven through the hillside forest, climbs up to a nondescript building in the grandest Roman manner, almost as large as a cathedral and surmounted by a colossal bronze statue of Hercules. Between Hercules at the top and the palace at the bottom lies an immense series of terraces, with fountains and cascades, pools, grottos, spouting tritons, dolphins, nereids and all the other mythological fauna of an eighteenth-century water-garden. The spectacle, when the waters are flowing, is magnificent. There must be the best part of two miles of neo-classic cataract and elegantly canalized foam. The waterworks at Versailles are tame and trivial in comparison.

It was Whit Sunday when I was at Kassel. With almost the entire population of the town I had climbed up to the shrine of Hercules on the hilltop. Standing there in the shadow of the god, with the waters in full splash below me and the sunshine brilliant on the green dome of the palace at the long cataract's foot, I found myself prosaically speculating about ways and means and motives. How could a mere prince of Hesse run to such imperial splendours? And why, having somehow raised the money, should he elect to spend it in so fantastically wasteful a fashion? And, finally, why did the Hessians ever put up with his extravagance? The money, after all, was theirs; seeing it all squandered on a house and a garden, why didn't they rise up against their silly, irresponsible tyrant?

The answer to these last questions was being provided, even as I asked them, by the good citizens of Kassel around me. Schön, herrlich, prachtvoll — their admiration exploded emphatically on every side. Without any doubt, they were thoroughly enjoying themselves. In six generations, humanity cannot undergo any fundamental change. There is no reason to suppose that the Hessians of 1750 were greatly different from those of 1932. Whenever the prince allowed his subjects to visit his waterworks, they came and, I have no doubt, admired and enjoyed their admiration just as much as their descendants do to-day. The psychology of revolutionaries is apt to be a trifle crude. The magnificent display of wealth does not necessarily, as they imagine, excite

a passion of envy in the hearts of the poor. Given a reasonable amount of prosperity, it excites, more often, nothing but pleasure. The Hessians did not rise up and kill their prince for having wasted so much money on his house and garden; on the contrary, they were probably grateful to him for having realized in solid stone and rainbow-flashing water their own vague day-dreams of a fairy-tale magnificence. One of the functions of royalty is to provide people with a vicarious, but none the less real, fulfilment of their wishes. Kings who make a fine show are popular; and the people not only forgive, but actually commend, extravagances which, to the good Marxian, must seem merely criminal. Wise kings always earmarked a certain percentage of their income for display. Palaces and waterworks were good publicity for kingship, just as an impressive office building is good publicity for a business corporation. Business, indeed, has inherited many of the responsibilities of royalty. It shares with the State and the municipality the important duty of providing the common people with vicarious wish-fulfilments. Kings no longer build palaces; but newspapers and insurance companies do. Popular restaurants are as richly marbled as the mausoleum of the Escorial; hotels are more splendid than Versailles. In every society there must always be some person or some organization whose task it is to realize the day-dreams of the masses. Life in a perfectly sensible, utilitarian community would be intolerably dreary. Occasional explosions of magnificent folly are as essential to human well-being as a sewage system. More so, probably. Sanitary plumbing, it is significant to note, is a very recent invention; the splendours of kingship are as old as civilization itself.

In a Tunisian Oasis

WAKING AT DAWN, I looked out of the window. We were in the desert. On either side of the railway an immense plain, flat as Holland, but tawny instead of green, stretched out interminably. On the horizon, instead of windmills, a row of camels was silhouetted against the grey sky. Mile after mile, the train rolled slowly southward.

At Tozeur, when at last we arrived, it had just finished raining — for the first time in two and a half years — and now the wind had sprung up; there was a sandstorm. A thick brown fog, whirled into eddies by the wind, gritty to the skin, abolished the landscape from before our smarting eyes. We sneezed; there was sand in our ears, in our hair, between our teeth. It was horrible. I felt depressed, but not surprised. The weather is always horrible when I travel.

Once, in a French hotel, I was accused of having brought with me the flat black bugs, of whose presence among my bed-clothes I complained to a self-righteous proprietress. I defended myself with energy against the impeachment. Bugs — no; I am innocent of bugs. But when it comes to bad weather, I have to plead guilty. Rain, frost, wind, snow, hail, fog — I bring them with me wherever I go. I bring them to places where they have never been heard of, at seasons when it is impossible that they should occur. What delightful skating there will be in the Spice Islands when I arrive! On

this particular journey I had brought with me to every place on my itinerary the most appalling meteorological calamities. At Naples, for example, it was the snow. Coming out of the theatre on the night of our arrival, we found it lying an inch deep under the palm trees in the public gardens. And Vesuvius, next morning, glittered white, like Fujiyama, against the pale spring sky. At Palermo there was a cloud-burst. 'Between the Syrtes and soft Sicily' we passed through a tempest of hail, lightning and wind. At Tunis it very nearly froze. At Sousse the wind was so violent that the stiff board-like leaves of the cactuses swayed and trembled in the air like aspens. And now, on the day of our arrival at Tozeur, it had rained for the first time in thirty months, and there was a sandstorm. No, I was not in the least surprised; but I could not help feeling a little gloomy.

Towards evening the wind somewhat abated; the sand began to drop out of the air. At midday the brown curtain had been impenetrable at fifty yards. It thinned, grew gauzier; one could see objects at a hundred, two hundred yards. From the windows of the hotel bedroom in which we had sat all day, trying — but in vain, for it came through even invisible crannies — to escape from the wind-blown sand, we could see the fringes of a dense forest of palm trees, the dome of a little mosque, houses of sun-dried brick and thin brown men in flapping night-shirts walking, with muffled faces and bent heads, against the wind, or riding, sometimes astride, sometimes sideways, on the bony rumps of patient little asses. Two very professional tourists in sun helmets — there was no sun — emerged round the corner of a street. A malicious gust of wind caught them unawares; simultaneously the two helmets shot into the air, thudded, rolled in the dust. The two professional tourists scuttled in pursuit. The spectacle cheered us a little; we descended, we ventured out of doors.

A melancholy Arab offered to show us round the town. Knowing how hard it is to find one's way in these smelly labyrinths, we accepted his offer. His knowledge of French was limited; so too, in consequence, was the information he gave us. He employed what I may call the Berlitz method. Thus, when a column of whirling sand rose up and jumped at us round the corner of a street, our guide turned to us and said, pointing: 'Poussière.' We might have guessed it ourselves.

He led us interminably through narrow, many-cornered streets, between eyeless walls, half crumbled and tottering.

'Village,' he explained. 'Très plaisant.' We did not altogether agree with him.

A walk through an Arab village is reminiscent of walks through Ostia or Pompeii. Roman remains are generally in a better state of preservation, and cleaner; that is all. One is astonished to see, among these dusty ruins, white-robed families crouching over their repasts.

Our guide patted a brown mud wall.

'Briques,' he said, and repeated the word several times, so that we might be certain what he meant.

These bricks, which are of sun-dried mud, are sometimes, on the façades of the more considerable houses, arranged in a series of simple and pleasing patterns — diamonds,

quincunxes, hexagons. A local art which nobody now takes the trouble to practise — nobody, that is, except the Europeans, who, with characteristic energy, have used and wildly abused the traditional ornamentation on the walls of the station and the principal hotel. It is a curious and characteristic fact that, whenever in Tunisia one sees a particularly Oriental piece of architecture, it is sure to have been built by the French, since 1881. The cathedral of Carthage, the law courts and schools of Tunis — these are more Moorish than the Alhambra, Moorish as only Oriental tea-rooms in Paris or London can be Moorish. In thirty years the French have produced buildings more typically and intensely Arabian than the Arabs themselves contrived to do in the course of thirteen centuries.

We passed into the market-place.

‘Viande,’ said our guide, fingering as he passed a well-thumbed collop of mutton, lying among the dust and flies on a little booth.

We nodded.

‘Très joli,’ commented our guide. ‘Très plaisant.’ Noisily he spat on the ground. The proprietor of the booth spat too. We hurried away; it needs time to grow inured to Tunisian habits. These frightful hoickings in the throat, these sibilant explosions and semi-liquid impacts are almost the national music of the country.

There are in the desert of southern Tunisia three great oases: Gabes by the sea, a little north of that island of Djerba which is, traditionally, the classical Island of the Lotus Eaters; Tozeur, to the west of it, some seventy miles inland; and Nefta, fifteen miles west of Tozeur, the starting-point of the caravans which trade between southern Tunisia and the great oases of the Algerian Sahara, Biskra and Touggourt. These oases are all of much the same size, each consisting of some six or seven thousand acres of cultivated ground, and are all three remarkable for their numerous and copious springs. In the middle of the desert, suddenly, a hundred fountains come welling out of the sand; rivers run, a network of little canals is dug. An innumerable forest of date palms springs up — a forest whose undergrowth is corn and roses, vines and apricot trees, olives and pomegranates, pepper trees, castor-oil trees, banana trees, every precious plant of the temperate and the subtropical zones. No rain falls on these little Edens — except on the days of my arrival — but the springs, fed from who knows what distant source, flow inexhaustibly and have flowed at least since Roman times. Islanded among the sands, their green luxuriance is a standing miracle. That it should have been in a desert, with here and there such islands of palm trees, that Judaism and Mohammedanism took their rise is a thing which, since I have seen an oasis, astonishes me. The religion which, in such a country, would naturally suggest itself to me would be no abstract monotheism, but the adoration of life, of the forces of green and growing nature. In an oasis, it seems to me, the worship of Pan and of the Great Mother should be celebrated with an almost desperate earnestness. The nymphs of water and of trees ought surely, here, to receive a passionate gratitude. In the desert, I should infallibly have invented the Greek mythology. The Jews and the Arabs discovered Jahweh and Allah. I find it strange.

Of the three great Tunisian oases, my favourite is Nefta. Gabes runs it close for beauty, while the proximity of the sea gives it a charm which Nefta lacks. But, on the other hand, Gabes is less fertile than Nefta and, socially, more sophisticated. There must be the best part of two hundred Europeans living at Gabes. There is dancing once a week at the hotel. Gabes is quite the little Paris. The same objection applies to Tozeur, which has a railway station and positively teems with French officials. Nefta, with fourteen thousand Arabs, has a white population of a dozen or thereabouts. A hundred Frenchmen can always make a Paris; twelve, I am happy to say, cannot. The only non-Arabian feature of Nefta is its hotel, which is clean, comfortable, French and efficient. At Nefta one may live among barbarians, in the Middle Ages, and at the same time, for thirty francs a day, enjoy the advantages of contemporary Western civilization. What could be more delightful?

We set off next morning by car, across the desert. From Tozeur the road mounts slightly to a plateau which dominates the surrounding country. The day was clear and sunny. We looked down on the green island of Tozeur — four hundred thousand palm trees among the sands. Beyond the oasis we could see the chotts, glittering in the sun. The chotts are shallow depressions in the ground, at one time, no doubt, the beds of considerable lakes. There is no water in them now; but the soil is furred with a bright saline efflorescence. At a distance, you could swear you saw the sea. For the rest, the landscape was all sand and lion-coloured rock.

We bumped on across the desert. Every now and then we passed a camel, a string of camels. Their owners walked or rode on asses beside them. The womenfolk were perched among the baggage on the hump — a testimony, most eloquent in this Mohammedan country, to the great discomfort of camel riding. Once we met a small Citroën lorry, crammed to overflowing with white-robed Arabs. In the Sahara, the automobile has begun to challenge the supremacy of the camel. Little ten-horse-power Citroëns dart about the desert. For the rougher mountainous country special six-wheeled cars are needed, and with caterpillar wheels one may even affront the soft and shifting sand of the dunes. Motor buses now ply across the desert. A line, we were told, was shortly to be inaugurated between Nefta and Touggourt, across two hundred kilometres of sand. In a few years, no doubt, we shall all have visited Lake Tchad and Timbuctoo. Should one be glad or sorry? I find it difficult to decide.

The hotel at Nefta is a long low building, occupying one whole side of the market-square. From your bedroom window you watch the Arabs living; they do it unhurriedly and with a dignified inefficiency. Endlessly haggling, they buy and sell. The vendor offers a mutton chop, slightly soiled; the buyer professes himself outraged by a price which would be exorbitant if the goods were spotlessly first-hand. It takes them half an hour to come to a compromise. On the ground white bundles doze in the sun; when the sun grows too hot, they roll a few yards and doze again in the shade. The notables of the town, the rich proprietors of palm trees, stroll past with the dignity of Roman senators. Their garments are of the finest wool; they carry walking sticks; they wear European shoes and socks, and on their bare brown calves — a little touch entirely

characteristic of the real as opposed to the literary East — pale mauve or shell-pink sock suspenders. Wild men ride in from the desert. Some of them, trusting to common sense as well as Allah to preserve them from ophthalmia, wear smoked motor goggles. With much shouting, much reverberant thumping of dusty, moth-eaten hides, a string of camels is driven in. They kneel, they are unloaded. Supercilious and haughty, they turn this way and that, like the dowagers of very aristocratic families at a plebeian evening party. Then, all at once, one of them stretches out its long neck limply along the ground and shuts its eyes. The movement is one of hopeless weariness; the grotesque animal is suddenly pathetic. And what groanings, what gurglings in the throat, what enormous sighs when their masters begin to reload them! Every additional package evokes a bubbling protest, and when at last they have to rise from their knees, they moan as though their hearts were broken. Blind beggars sit patiently awaiting the alms they never receive. Their raw eyelids black with flies, small children play contentedly in the dust. If Allah wills it, they too will be blind one day: blessed be the name of Allah.

Sitting at our window, we watch the spectacle. And at night, after a pink and yellow sunset with silhouetted palm trees and domes against the sky (for my taste, I am afraid, altogether too like the coloured plates in the illustrated Bible), at night huge stars come out in the indigo sky, the cafés are little caves of yellow light, draped figures move in the narrow streets with lanterns in their hands, and on the flat roofs of the houses one sees the prowling shadows of enormous watch-dogs. There is silence, the silence of the desert: from time to time there comes to us, very distinctly, the distant sound of spitting.

Walking among the crowds of the market-place or along the narrow labyrinthine streets, I was always agreeably surprised by the apathetically courteous aloofness of Arab manners. It had been the same in Tunis and the other larger towns. It is only by Jews and Europeanized Arabs that the tourist is pestered: through the native quarters he walks untroubled. There are beggars in plenty, of course, hawkers, guides, cab drivers; and when you pass, they faintly stir, it is true, from their impassive calm. They stretch out hands, they offer Arab antiquities of the most genuine German manufacture, they propose to take you the round of the sights, they invite you into their fly-blown vehicles. But they do all these things politely and quite uninsistently. A single refusal suffices to check their nascent importunity. You shake your head; they relapse once more into the apathy from which your appearance momentarily roused them — resignedly: nay, almost, you feel, with a sense of relief that it had not, after all, been necessary to disturb themselves. Coming from Naples, we had been particularly struck by this lethargic politeness. For in Naples the beggars claim an alms noisily and as though by right. If you refuse to ride, the cabmen of Pozzuoli follow you up the road, alternately cursing and whining, and at every hundred yards reducing their price by yet another ten per cent. The guides at Pompeii fairly insist on being taken; they cry aloud, they show their certificates, they enumerate their wives and starving children. As for the hawkers, they simply will not let you go. What, you don't want coloured

photographs of Vesuvius? Then look at these corals. No corals? But here is the last word in cigarette holders. You do not smoke? But in any case, you shave; these razor blades, now . . . You shake your head. Then toothpicks, magnifying glasses, celluloid combs. Stubbornly, you continue to refuse. The hawker plays his last card — an ace, it must be admitted, and of trumps. He comes very close to you, he blows garlic and alcohol confidentially into your face. From an inner pocket he produces an envelope; he opens it, he presses the contents into your hand. You may not want corals or razor blades, views of Vesuvius or celluloid combs; he admits it. But can you honestly say — honestly, with your hand on your heart — that you have no use for pornographic engravings? And for nothing, sir, positively for nothing. Ten francs apiece; the set of twelve for a hundred. . . .

The touts, the pimps, the mendicants of Italy are the energetic members of a conquering, progressive race. The Neapolitan cabman is a disciple of Samuel Smiles; the vendors of pornographic post cards and the sturdy beggars live their lives with a strenuousness that would have earned the commendation of a Roosevelt. Self-help and the strenuous life do not flourish on the other shore of the Mediterranean. In Tunisia the tourist walks abroad unpestered. The Arabs have no future.

And yet there were periods in the past when the Arabs were a progressing people. During the centuries which immediately followed Mohammed's apostolate, the Arabs had a future — a future and a most formidable present. Too much insistence on the fatalism inherent in their religion has reduced them to the condition of static lethargy and supine incuriousness in which they now find themselves. That they might still have a future if they changed their philosophy of life must be obvious to anyone who has watched the behaviour of Arab children, who have not yet had time to be influenced by the prevailing fatalism of Islam. Arab children are as lively, as inquisitive, as tiresome and as charming as the children of the most progressively Western people. At Nefta the adult beggars and donkey drivers might leave us, resignedly, in peace; but the children were unescapable. We could never stir abroad without finding a little troop of them frisking around us. It was in vain that we tried to drive them away; they accompanied us, whether we liked it or no, on every walk, and, when the walk was over, claimed wages for their importunate fidelity.

To provide tourists with guidance they did not need — this, we found, was the staple profession of the little boys of Nefta. But they had other and more ingenious ways of making money. Close and acute observers of tourists, they had made an important psychological discovery about this curious race of beings. Foreigners, they found out, especially elderly female foreigners, have a preposterous tenderness for animals. The little boys of Nefta have systematically exploited this discovery. Their methods, which we had frequent opportunities of observing, are simple and effective. In front of the hotel a gang of little ruffians is perpetually on the watch. A tourist shows himself, or herself, on one of the balconies: immediately the general of the troop — or perhaps it would be better to call him the director of the company, for it is obvious that the whole affair is organized on a strictly business footing — runs forward to within easy

coin-tossing distance. From somewhere about his person he produces a captive bird — generally some brightly coloured little creature not unlike a goldfinch. Smiling up at the tourist, he shows his prize. ‘Oiseau,’ he explains in his pidgin French. When the tourist has been made to understand that the bird is alive, the little boy proceeds, with the elaborate gestures of a conjurer, to pretend to wring its neck, to pull off its legs and wings, to pluck out its feathers. For a tender-hearted tourist the menacing pantomime is unbearable.

‘Lâche la bête. Je te donne dix sous.’

Released, the bird flaps ineffectually away, as well as its clipped wings will permit. The coins are duly thrown and in the twinkling of an eye picked up. And the little boys scamper off to recapture the feebly fluttering source of their income. After seeing an old English lady blackmailed out of a small fortune for the ten-times-repeated release of a single captive, we hardened our hearts whenever birds were produced for our benefit. The little boys went through the most elaborately savage mimicry. We looked on calmly. In actual fact, we observed, they never did their victims any harm. A bird, it was obvious, was far too valuable to be lightly killed; goldfinches during the tourist season laid golden eggs. Besides, they were really very nice little boys and fond of their pets. When they saw that we had seen through their trick and could not be induced to pay ransom, they grinned up at us without malice and knowingly, as though we were their accomplices, and carefully put the birds away.

The importunity of the little boys was tiresome when one wanted to be alone. But if one happened to be in the mood for it, their company was exceedingly entertaining. The exploitation of the tourists was a monopoly which the most active of the children had arrogated, by force and cunning, to themselves. There was a little gang of them who shared the loot and kept competitors at a distance. By the time we left, we had got to know them very well. When we walked abroad, small strangers tried to join our party; but they were savagely driven away with shouts and blows. We were private property; no trespassing was tolerated. It was only by threatening to stop their wages that we could persuade the captains of the Nefta tourist industry to desist from persecuting their rivals. There was one particularly charming little boy — mythically beautiful, as only Arab children can be beautiful — who was the object of their special fury. The captains of the tourist industry were ugly: they dreaded the rivalry of this lovely child. And they were right; he was irresistible. We insisted on his being permitted to accompany us.

‘But why do you send him away?’ we asked.

‘Lui méchant,’ the captains of industry replied in their rudimentary French. ‘Lui casser un touriste.’

‘He smashed a tourist?’ we repeated in some astonishment.

They nodded. Blushing, even the child himself seemed reluctantly to admit the truth of their accusations. We could get no further explanations; none of them knew enough French to give them. ‘Lui méchant. Lui casser un touriste.’ That was all we could discover. The lovely child looked at us appealingly. We decided to run the risk

of being smashed and let him come with us. I may add that we came back from all our walks quite intact.

Under the palm trees, through that labyrinth of paths and running streams, we wandered interminably with our rabble of little guides. Most often it was to that part of the oasis called the Corbeille that we went. At the bottom of a rounded valley, theatre-shaped and with smooth steep sides of sand, a score of springs suddenly gush out. There are little lakes, jade green like those pools beneath the cypresses of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli. Round their borders the palm trees go jetting up, like fountains fixed in their upward aspiring gesture, their drooping crown of leaves a green spray arrested on the point of falling. Fountains of life — and five yards away the smooth unbroken slopes of sand glare in the sun. A little river flows out from the lakes, at first between high banks, then into an open sheet of water where the children paddle and bathe, the beasts come down to drink, the women do their washing. The river is the main road in this part of the oasis. The Arabs, when they want to get from place to place, tuck up their night-shirts and wade. Shoes and stockings, not to mention the necessity for keeping up their dignified prestige, do not permit Europeans to follow their example. It is only on mule-back that Europeans use the river road. On foot, with our little guides, we had to scramble precariously on the slopes of crumbling banks, to go balancing across bridges made of a single palm stem, to overleap the mud walls of gardens. The owners of these gardens had a way of making us indirectly pay toll for our passage across their property. Politely, they asked us if we would like a drink of palm wine. It was impossible to say no; we protested that we should be delighted. With the agility of a monkey, a boy would fairly run up a palm tree, to bring down with him a little earthenware pot full of the sap which flows from an incision made for the purpose at the top of the stem, in the centre of the crown of leaves. The pot, never too scrupulously clean, was offered to us; we had to drink, or at least pretend to drink, a horribly sickly fluid tasting of sugared water slightly flavoured with the smell of fresh cabbage leaves. One was happy to pay a franc or two to be allowed to return the stuff untasted to the owner. I may add here that none of the drinks indigenous to Nefta are satisfactory. The palm juice makes one sick, the milk is rather goaty, and the water is impregnated with magnesia, has a taste of Carlsbad or Hunyadi Janos, and produces on all but hardened drinkers of it the same physiological effects as do the waters of those more celebrated springs. There is no alternative but wine. And fortunately Tunisia is rich in admirable vintages. The red wines of Carthage are really delicious, and even the smallest of vins ordinaires are very drinkable.

A fertile oasis possesses a characteristic colour scheme of its own, which is entirely unlike that of any landscape in Italy or the north. The fundamental note is struck by the palms. Their foliage, except where the stiff shiny leaves metallically reflect the light, is a rich blue-green. Beneath them, one walks in a luminous aquarium shadow, broken by innumerable vivid shafts of sunlight that scatter gold over the ground or, touching the trunks of the palm trees, make them shine a pale ashy pink through the subaqueous shadow. There is pink, too, in the glaring whiteness of the sand beyond

the fringes of the oasis. Under the palms, beside the brown or jade-coloured water, glows the bright emerald green of corn or the deciduous trees of the north, with here and there the huge yellowish leaves of a banana tree, the smoky grey of olives, or the bare bone-white and writhing form of a fig tree.

As the sun gradually sinks, the aquarium shadow beneath the palm trees grows bluer, denser; you imagine yourself descending through layer after darkening layer of water. Only the pale skeletons of the fig trees stand out distinctly; the waters gleam like eyes in the dark ground; the ghost of a little marabout or chapel shows its domed silhouette, white and strangely definite in the growing darkness, through a gap in the trees. But looking up from the depths of this submarine twilight, one sees the bright pale sky of evening, and against it, still touched by the level, rosily-golden light, gleaming as though transmuted into sheets of precious metal, the highest leaves of the palm trees.

A little wind springs up; the palm leaves rattle together; it is suddenly cold. 'En avant,' we call. Our little guides quicken their pace. We follow them through the darkening mazes of the palm forest, out into the open. The village lies high on the desert plateau above the oasis, desert-coloured, like an arid outcrop of the tawny rock. We mount to its nearest gate. Through passage-ways between blank walls, under long dark tunnels the children lead us — an obscure and tortuous way which we never succeeded in thoroughly mastering — back to the square market-place at the centre of the town. The windows of the inn glimmer invitingly. At the door we pay off the captains of industry and the little tourist-smasher; we enter. Within the hotel it is provincial France.

For longer expeditions entailing the use of mules or asses, we had to take grown-up guides. They knew almost as little French as the children, and their intelligence was wrapped impenetrably in the folds of fatalism. Talking to an Islamically educated Arab is like talking to a pious European of the fourteenth century. Every phenomenon is referred by them to its final cause — to God. About the immediate causes of things — precisely how they happen — they seem to feel not the slightest interest. Indeed, it is not even admitted that there are such things as immediate causes: God is directly responsible for everything.

'Do you think it will rain?' you ask, pointing to menacing clouds overhead.

'If God wills,' is the answer.

You pass the native hospital. 'Are the doctors good?'

'In our country,' the Arab gravely replies, in the tone of Solomon, 'we say that doctors are of no avail. If Allah wills that a man shall die, he will die. If not, he will recover.'

All of which is profoundly true, so true, indeed, that it is not worth saying. To the Arab, however, it seems the last word in human wisdom. For him, God is the perfectly adequate explanation of everything; he leaves fate to do things unassisted, in its own way — that is to say, from the human point of view, the worst way.

It is difficult for us to realize nowadays that our fathers once thought much as the Arabs do now. As late as the seventeenth century, the chemist Boyle found it necessary to protest against what I may call this Arabian view of things.

‘For to explicate a phenomenon,’ he wrote, ‘it is not enough to ascribe it to one general efficient, but we must intelligibly show the particular manner, how that general cause produces the proposed effect. He must be a very dull inquirer who, demanding an account of the phenomena of a watch, shall rest satisfied with being told that it is an engine made by a watchmaker; though nothing be declared thereby of the structure and coaptation of the spring, wheels, balance, etc., and the manner how they act on one another so as to make the needle point out the true time of the day.’

The Arabs were once the continuators of the Greek tradition; they produced men of science. They have relapsed — all except those who are educated according to Western methods — into pre-scientific fatalism, with its attendant incuriosity and apathy. They are the ‘dull inquirers who, demanding an account of the phenomena of a watch, rest satisfied with being told that it is an engine made by a watchmaker.’ The result of their satisfaction with this extremely unsatisfactory answer is that their villages look like the ruins of villages, that the blow-flies sit undisturbedly feeding on the eyelids of those whom Allah has predestined to blindness, that half their babies die, and that, politically, they are not their own masters.

The Olive Tree

THE TREE OF Life; the Bodhi Tree; Yggdrasil and the Burning Bush:
Populus Alcidae gratissima, vitis Iaccho,
formosae myrtus Veneri, sua laurea Phoebos. . . .

Everywhere and, before the world was finally laicized, at all times, trees have been worshipped. It is not to be wondered at. The tree is an intrinsically 'numinous' being. Solidified, a great fountain of life rises in the trunk, spreads in the branches, scatters in a spray of leaves and flowers and fruits. With a slow, silent ferocity the roots go burrowing down into the earth. Tender, yet irresistible, life battles with the unliving stones and has the mastery. Half hidden in the darkness, half displayed in the air of heaven, the tree stands there, magnificent, a manifest god. Even to-day we feel its majesty and beauty — feel in certain circumstances its rather fearful quality of otherness, strangeness, hostility. Trees in the mass can be almost terrible. There are devils in the great pine-woods of the North, in the swarming equatorial jungle. Alone in a forest one sometimes becomes aware of the silence — the thick, clotted, living silence of the trees; one realizes one's isolation in the midst of a vast concourse of alien presences. Herne the Hunter was something more than the ghost of a Windsor gamekeeper. He was probably a survival of Jupiter Cernunnus; a lineal descendant of the Cretan Zeus; a wood god who in some of his aspects was frightening and even malignant.

He blasts the tree, and takes the cattle,
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a chain
In a most hideous and dreadful manner.

Even in a royal forest and only twenty miles from London, the serried trees can inspire terror. Alone or in small groups, trees are benignly numinous. The alienness of the forest is so much attenuated in the park or the orchard that it changes its emotional sign and from oppressively sinister becomes delightful. Tamed and isolated, those leaping fountains of non-human life bring only refreshment to spirits parched by the dusty commerce of the world. Poetry is full of groves and shrubberies. One thinks of Milton, landscape-gardening in Eden, of Pope, at Twickenham. One remembers Coleridge's sycamore and Marvell's green thought in a green shade. Chaucer's love of trees was so great that he had to compile a whole catalogue in order to express it.

But, Lorde, so I was glad and wel begoon!
For over al, where I myn eyen caste,
Weren trees, claad with levys that ay shal laste,
Eche in his kynde, with colours fressh and grene

As emeraude, that joy was for to sene.
The bylder oke, and eke the hardy asshe,
The peler (pillar) elme, the cofre unto careyne,
The box pipe tree, holme to whippes lasshe,
The saylynge firre, the cipresse deth to pleyne,
The sheter (shooter) ewe, the aspe for shaftes pleyne,
The olyve of pes, and eke the drunken vyne
The victor palme, the laurere, to, devyne.

I like them all, but especially the olive. For what it symbolizes, first of all — peace with its leaves and joy with its golden oil. True, the crown of olive was originally worn by Roman conquerors at ovation; the peace it proclaimed was the peace of victory, the peace which is too often only the tranquillity of exhaustion or complete annihilation. Rome and its customs have passed, and we remember of the olive only the fact that it stood for peace, not the circumstances in which it did so.

Uncertainties now crown themselves assur'd,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.

We are a long way from the emperor riding in triumph through the streets of Rome.

The association of olive leaves with peace is like the association of the number seven with good luck, or the colour green with hope. It is an arbitrary and, so to say, metaphysical association. That is why it has survived in the popular imagination down to the present day. Even in countries where the olive tree does not grow, men understand what is meant by 'the olive branch' and can recognize, in a political cartoon, its pointed leaves. The association of olive oil with joy had a pragmatic reason. Applied externally, oil was supposed to have medicinal properties. In the ancient world those who could afford it were in the habit of oiling themselves at every opportunity. A shiny and well lubricated face was thought to be beautiful; it was also a sign of prosperity. To the ancient Mediterranean peoples the association of oil with joy seemed inevitable and obvious. Our habits are not those of the Romans, Greeks and Hebrews. What to them was 'natural' is to-day hardly even imaginable. Patterns of behaviour change, and ideas which are associated in virtue of the pattern existing at a given moment of history will cease to be associated when that pattern exists no more. But ideas which are associated arbitrarily, in virtue of some principle, or some absence of principle, unconnected with current behaviour patterns, will remain associated through changing circumstances. One must be something of an archaeologist to remember the old and once thoroughly reasonable association between olive oil and joy; the equally old, but quite unreasonable and arbitrary association between olive leaves and peace has survived intact into the machine age.

It is surprising, I often think, that our Protestant bibliolaters should have paid so little attention to the oil which played such an important part in the daily lives of the ancient Hebrews. All that was greasy possessed for the Jews a profound religious, social and sensuous significance. Oil was used for anointing kings, priests and sacred

edifices. On festal days men's cheeks and noses fairly shone with it; a matt-surfaced face was a sign of mourning. Then there were the animal fats. Fat meat was always a particularly welcome sacrifice. Unlike the modern child, Jehovah revelled in mutton fat. His worshippers shared this taste. 'Eat ye that which is good,' advises Isaiah, 'and let your soul delight itself in fatness.' As for the prosperously wicked, 'they have more than their heart can wish' and the proof of it is that 'their eyes stand out with fatness.' The world of the Old Testament, it is evident, was one where fats were scarce and correspondingly esteemed. One of our chief sources of edible fat, the pig, was taboo to the Israelites. Butter and lard depend on a supply of grass long enough for cows to get their tongues round. But the pastures of Palestine are thin, short and precarious. Cows there had no milk to spare, and oxen were too valuable as draught animals to be used for suet. Only the sheep and the olive remained as sources of that physiologically necessary and therefore delicious fatness in which the Hebrew soul took such delight. How intense that delight was is proved by the way in which the Psalmist describes his religious experiences. 'Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. . . . My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.' In this age of Danish bacon and unlimited margarine it would never occur to a religious writer to liken the mystical ecstasy to a good guzzle at the Savoy. If he wanted to describe it in terms of a sensuous experience, he would probably choose a sexual metaphor. Square meals are now too common to be ranked as epoch-making treats.

The 'olyve of pes' is, then, a symbol and I love it for what it stands for. I love it also for what it is in itself, aesthetically; for what it is in relation to the Mediterranean landscape in which it beautifully plays its part.

The English are Germans who have partially 'gone Latin.' But for William the Conqueror and the Angevins we should be just another nation of Teutons, speaking some uninteresting dialect of Dutch or Danish. The Normans gave us the English language, that beautifully compounded mixture of French and Saxon; and the English language moulded the English mind. By Latin out of German: such is our pedigree. We are essentially mongrels: that is the whole point of us. To be mongrels is our mission. If we would fulfil this mission adequately we must take pains to cultivate our mongrelism. Our Saxon and Celtic flesh requires to be constantly rewedded to the Latin spirit. For the most part the English have always realized this truth and acted upon it. From the time of Chaucer onwards almost all our writers have turned, by a kind of infallible instinct, like swallows, towards the South — towards the phantoms of Greece and Rome, towards the living realities of France and Italy. On the rare occasions when, losing their orientation, they have turned eastward and northward, the results have been deplorable. The works of Carlyle are there, an awful warning, to remind us of what happens when the English forget that their duty is to be mongrels and go whoring, within the bounds of consanguinity, after German gods.

The olive tree is an emblem of the Latinity towards which our migrant's instinct commands us perpetually to turn. As well as for peace and for joy, it stands for all that

makes us specifically English rather than Teutonic; for those Mediterranean influences without which Chaucer and Shakespeare could never have become what they learned from France and Italy, from Rome and Greece, to be — the most essentially native of our poets. The olive tree is, so to speak, the complement of the oak; and the bright hard-edged landscapes in which it figures are the necessary correctives of those gauzy and indeterminate lovelinesses of the English scene. Under a polished sky the olives state their aesthetic case without the qualifications of mist, of shifting lights, of atmospheric perspective, which give to English landscapes their subtle and melancholy beauty. A perfect beauty in its way; but, as of all good things, one can have too much of it. The British Constitution is a most admirable invention; but it is good to come back occasionally to fixed first principles and the firm outline of syllogistic argument.

With clarity and definition is associated a certain physical sparseness. Most of the great deciduous trees of England give one the impression, at any rate in summer, of being rather obese. In Scandinavian mythology *Embla*, the elm, was the first woman. Those who have lived much with old elm trees — and I spent a good part of my boyhood under their ponderous shade — will agree that the Scandinavians were men of insight. There is in effect something blowsily female about those vast trees that brood with all their bulging masses of foliage above the meadows of the home counties. In winter they are giant skeletons; and for a moment in the early spring a cloud of transparent emerald vapour floats in the air; but by June they have settled down to an enormous middle age.

By comparison the olive tree seems an athlete in training. It sits lightly on the earth and its foliage is never completely opaque. There is always air between the thin grey and silver leaves of the olive, always the flash of light within its shadows. By the end of summer the foliage of our northern trees is a great clot of dark unmitigated green. In the olive the lump is always leavened.

The landscape of the equator is, as the traveller discovers to his no small surprise, singularly like the landscape of the more luxuriant parts of southern England. He finds the same thick woods and, where man has cleared them, the same park-like expanses of luscious greenery. The whole is illumined by the same cloudy sky, alternately bright and dark, and wetted by precisely those showers of hot water which render yet more oppressive the sultriness of July days in the Thames valley or in Devonshire. The equator is England in summer, but raised, so to speak, to a higher power. Falmouth cubed equals Singapore. Between the equatorial and the temperate zone lies a belt of drought; even Provence is half a desert. The equator is dank, the tropics and the sub-tropics are predominantly dry. The Sahara and Arabia, the wastes of India and Central Asia and North America are a girdle round the earth of sand and naked rock. The Mediterranean lies on the fringes of this desert belt and the olive is its tree — the tree of a region of sun-lit clarity separating the damps of the equator from the damps of the North. It is the symbol of a classicism enclosed between two romanticisms.

‘And where,’ Sir George Beaumont inquired of Constable, ‘where do you put your brown tree?’ The reply was disquieting: the eccentric fellow didn’t put it anywhere.

There are no brown trees in Constable's landscapes. Breaking the tradition of more than a century, he boldly insisted on painting his trees bright green. Sir George, who had been brought up to think of English landscape in terms of raw Sienna and ochre, was bewildered. So was Chantrey. His criticism of Constable's style took a practical form. When 'Hadleigh Castle' was sent to the Academy he took a pot of bitumen and glazed the whole foreground with a coat of rich brown. Constable had to spend several hours patiently scratching it off again. To paint a bright green tree and make a successful picture of it requires genius of no uncommon order. Nature is embarrassingly brilliant and variegated; only the greatest colourists know how to deal with such a shining profusion. Doubtful of their powers, the more cautious prefer to transpose reality into another and simpler key. The key of brown, for example. The England of the eighteenth-century painters is chronically autumnal.

At all seasons of the year the olive achieves that sober neutrality of tone which the deciduous trees of the North put on only in autumn and winter. 'Where do you put your grey tree?' If you are painting in Provence, or Tuscany, you put it everywhere. At every season of the year the landscape is full of grey trees. The olive is essentially a painter's tree. It does not need to be transposed into another key, and it can be rendered completely in terms of pigment that are as old as the art of painting.

Large expanses of the Mediterranean scene are by Nature herself conceived and executed in the earth colours. Your grey tree and its background of bare bone-like hills, red-brown earth and the all but black cypresses and pines are within the range of the most ascetic palette. Derain can render Provence with half a dozen tubes of colour. How instructive to compare his olives with those of Renoir! White, black, terra verde — Derain's rendering of the grey tree is complete. But it is not the only complete rendering. Renoir was a man with a passion for bright gay colours. To this passion he added an extraordinary virtuosity in combining them. It was not in his nature to be content with a black, white and earth-green olive. His grey trees have shadows of cadmium green, and where they look towards the sun, are suffused with a glow of pink. Now, no olive has ever shown a trace of any colour warmer than the faint ochre of withering leaves and summer dusts. Nevertheless these pink trees, which in Renoir's paintings of Cagnes recall the exuberant girls of his latest, rosiest manner, are somehow quite startlingly like the cold grey olives which they apparently misrepresent. The rendering, so different from Derain's, is equally complete and satisfying.

If I could paint and had the necessary time, I should devote myself for a few years to making pictures only of olive trees. What a wealth of variations upon a single theme! Above Pietrasanta, for example, the first slopes of the Apuan Alps rise steeply from the plain in a series of terraces built up, step after step, by generations of patient cultivators. The risers of this great staircase are retaining walls of unmortared limestone; the treads, of grass. And on every terrace grow the olives. They are ancient trees; their boles are gnarled, their branches strangely elbowed. Between the sharp narrow leaves one sees the sky; and beneath them in the thin softly tempered light there are sheep grazing. Far off, on a level with the eye, lies the sea. There is one picture, one series of pictures.

But olives will grow on the plain as well as on the hillside. Between Seville and Cordoba the rolling country is covered with what is almost a forest of olive trees. It is a woodland scene. Elsewhere they are planted more sparsely. I think, for example, of that plain at the foot of the Maures in Provence. In spring, beside the road from Toulon to Fréjus, the ploughed earth is a rich Pozzuoli red. Above it hang the olives, grey, with soft black shadows and their highest leaves flashing white against the sky; and, between the olives, peach trees in blossom — burning bushes of shell-pink flame in violent and irreconcilable conflict with the red earth. A problem, there, for the most accomplished painter.

In sunlight Renoir saw a flash of madder breaking out of the grey foliage. Under a clouded sky, with rain impending, the olives glitter with an equal but very different intensity. There is no warmth in them now; the leaves shine white, as though illumined from within by a kind of lunar radiance. The soft black of the shadows is deepened to the extreme of night. In every tree there is simultaneously moonlight and darkness. Under the approaching storm the olives take on another kind of being; they become more conspicuous in the landscape, more significant. Of what? Significant of what? But to that question, when we ask it, nature always stubbornly refuses to return a clear reply. At the sight of those mysterious lunar trees, at once so dark and so brilliant beneath the clouds, we ask, as Zechariah asked of the angel: 'What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.' And that, I imagine, is about as explicit and comprehensible an answer as our Wordsworthian questionings are ever likely to receive.

Provence is a painter's paradise, and its tree, the olive, the painter's own tree. But there are disquieting signs of change. During the last few years there has been a steady destruction of olive orchards. Magnificent old trees are being cut, their wood sold for firing and the land they occupied planted with vines. Fifty years from now, it may be, the olive tree will almost have disappeared from southern France, and Provence will wear another aspect. It may be, I repeat; it is not certain. Nothing is certain nowadays except change. Even the majestic stability of agriculture has been shaken by the progress of technology. Thirty years ago, for example, the farmers of the Rhône valley grew rich on silkworms. Then came the invention of viscose. The caterpillars tried to compete with the machines and failed. The female form is now swathed in woodpulp, and between Lyons and Avignon the mulberry tree and its attendant worm are all but extinct. Vines were next planted. But North Africa was also planting vines. In a year of plenty *vin ordinaire* fetches about a penny a quart. The vines have been rooted up again, and to-day the prosperity of the Rhône valley depends on peach trees. A few years from now, no doubt, the Germans will be making synthetic peaches out of sawdust or coal tar. And then — what?

The enemy of the olive tree is the peanut. *Arachis hypogaea* grows like a weed all over the tropics and its seeds are fifty per cent. pure oil. The olive is slow-growing, capricious in its yield, requires much pruning, and the fruit must be hand picked. Peanut oil is half the price of olive oil. The Italians, who wish to keep their olive trees, have almost forbidden the use of peanut oil. The French, on the other hand, are the greatest importers of peanuts in Europe. Most of the oil they make is re-exported; but enough remains in France to imperil the olives of Provence. Will they go the way of the mulberry trees? Or will some new invention come rushing up in the nick of time with a reprieve? It seems that, suitably treated, olive oil makes an excellent lubricant, capable of standing up to high temperatures. Thirty years from now, mineral lubricants will be growing scarce. Along with the castor-oil plant, the olive tree may come again triumphantly into its own. Perhaps. Or perhaps not. The future of Provençal landscape is in the hands of the chemists. It is in their power to preserve it as it is, or to alter it out of all recognition.

It would not be the first time in the course of its history that the landscape of Provence has changed its face. The Provence that we know — terraced vineyard and olive orchard alternating with pine-woods and those deserts of limestone and prickly bushes which are locally called garrigues — is profoundly unlike the Provence of Roman and mediaeval times. It was a land, then, of great forests. The hills were covered with a splendid growth of ilex trees and Aleppo pines. The surviving Forêt du Dom allows us to guess what these woods — the last outposts towards the south of the forests of the temperate zone — were like. To-day the garrigues, those end products of a long degeneration, have taken their place. The story of Provençal vegetation is a decline and fall, that begins with the ilex wood and ends with the garrigue.

The process of destruction is a familiar one. The trees were cut for firewood and shipbuilding. (The naval arsenal at Toulon devoured the forest for miles around.) The glass industry ate its way from the plain into the mountains, carrying with it irreparable destruction. Meanwhile, the farmers and the shepherds were busy, cutting into the woods in search of more land for the plough, burning them in order to have more pasture for their beasts. The young trees sprouted again — only to be eaten by the sheep and goats. In the end they gave up the struggle and what had been forest turned at last to a blasted heath. The long process of degradation ends in the garrigue. And even this blasted heath is not quite the end. Beyond the true garrigue, with its cistus, its broom, its prickly dwarf oak, there lie a series of false garrigues, vegetably speaking worse than the true. On purpose or by accident, somebody sets fire to the scrub. In the following spring the new shoots are eaten down to the ground. A coarse grass — *baouco* in Provençal — is all that manages to spring up. The shepherd is happy; his beasts can feed, as they could not do on the garrigue. But sheep and goats are ravenous. The new pasture is soon overgrazed. The *baouco* is torn up by the roots and disappears, giving place to ferocious blue thistles and the poisonous *asphodel*. With the *asphodel* the process is complete. Degradation can go no further. The *asphodel* is sheep-proof and even, thanks to its deeply planted tubers, fire-proof. And it allows

very little else to grow in its neighbourhood. If protected long enough from fire and animals, the garrigue will gradually build itself up again into a forest. But a desert of asphodels obstinately remains itself.

Efforts are now being made to reafforest the blasted heaths of Provence. In an age of cigarette-smoking tourists the task is difficult and the interruptions by fire frequent and disheartening. One can hardly doubt, however, of the ultimate success of the undertaking. The chemists may spare the olive trees; and yet the face of Provence may still be changed. For the proper background to the olive trees is the thinly fledged limestone of the hills — pinkish and white and pale blue in the distance, like Cézanne's Mont Sainte Victoire. Reafforested, these hills will be almost black with ilex and pine. Half the painter's paradise will have gone, if the desert is brought back to life. With the cutting of the olive trees the other half will follow.

**What are You Going to Do About
it?**

THE CASE FOR CONSTRUCTIVE PEACE

Contents

- What are you going to do about it?
- I
- II
- III
- IV
- V
- VI
- VII
- VIII
- IX
- X
- XI
- XII

Introduction

FEELING, WILLING, THINKING — these are the three modes of ordinary human activity. To be complete, life must be lived simultaneously on all three planes. To concentrate on only one mode at the expense of the rest, or on two at the expense of the third, is to court immediate or postponed disaster. In any important vital situation it is never enough to feel, never enough to will, never enough merely to think. We must do all at once.

Many naturally sensitive and gentle people have an intense feeling that there should be no more war. In some of these, feeling is accompanied by a determination that there shall be no more war, a will-to-peace that is ready to translate itself into action. But feeling without will or thought is impotent and tends to degenerate into mere self-indulgence. Feeling accompanied by will may result in action; but if there is no guiding thought, it is likely that the action will be ineffective because blind and misdirected.

In this pamphlet an attempt is made to provide all those who feel that war is an abomination, all who will that it shall cease, with an intellectual justification for their attitude; to show that their feeling and willing are essentially reasonable, that what is called the utopian dream of pacifism is in fact a practical policy — indeed, the only practical, the only realistic policy that there is.

Pacifists are people who have broken with an old-established convention of thought and, like all innovators, find themselves constantly subjected, off the platform as well as on it, to a process of more or less intelligent heckling. This being so, it has seemed best to state the pacifist case in terms of a series of answers to common antipacifist objections. It is proposed to deal with these objections in order, beginning with the most general, based on considerations of biology, and proceeding to the most specific, based on a consideration of contemporary politics.

I

THE FIRST OBJECTION raised by our imaginary heckler is that “war is a law of nature.” Therefore, it is argued, we cannot get rid of it. What are the facts? They are these: conflict is certainly common in the animal kingdom. But, with very rare exceptions, conflict is between isolated individuals. “War” in the sense of conflict between armies exists among certain species of social insects. But it is significant that these insects do not make war on members of their own species, only on those of other species. Man is probably unique in making war on his own species.

Tennyson wrote of “Nature red in tooth and claw.” But an animal can be blood-thirsty without being war-like. The activities of such creatures as tigers, sharks and weasels are no more war-like than those of butchers and sportsmen. The carnivores kill members of other species either for food or else, like fox-hunters and pheasant-shooters, to amuse themselves. Conflicts between individual animals of the same species are common enough. But again they are no more war-like than duels or pothouse brawls among human beings. Like human beings, animals fight mainly for love, sometimes (as with the birds that defend their “territory”) for property, sometimes for social position. But they do not make war. War is quite definitely not a “law of nature.”

II

GENERALS WHO INSPECT the O.T.C.’s of public schools are fond of telling their youthful audiences that “man is a fighting animal.” Now, in the sense that, like stags, men quarrel for love, like white-throats, for property, and, like barn-door fowls, for position in society, this statement may be regarded as true. Like even the mildest animals — and it is probable that our pre-human ancestors were gentle creatures something like the tarsias of to-day — men have always done a good deal of “scrapping.”

In some places and at some epochs of history this “scrapping” was a violent and savage affair; at others, relatively harmless: it has been entirely a matter of convention. Thus, in Europe, three hundred years ago, “the best people” were expected to fight a duel on the slightest provocation; now they are not expected to do so. Within the lifetime of men still with us, games of rugby football ended, and were meant to end, in broken legs. On the modern football field broken legs are no longer in fashion. The rules for casual individual “scrapping” and for those organized group-contests which we call sport, have been changed, on the whole, for the better. The rules of war, on the contrary, have changed in every way for the worse. In the eighteenth century Marlborough gave a day’s notice before beginning the bombardment of a town. To-day even a formal declaration of war is coming to be regarded as unnecessary. (Italy, for example, dispensed with it completely when attacking Abyssinia.) “A declaration of war,” writes General Ludendorff, “is a waste of time and also it sometimes unfortunately, brands the nation who makes it.” Therefore, if we want to win and at the same time to avoid being stigmatized as aggressors, we should attack without warning.

To sum up, man is a fighting animal in the sense that he is a “scrapping animal.” It is for man and man alone to decide whether he shall do his “scrapping” murderously or according to rules which limit the amount of violence used or even, as in the case of non-violent resistance, abolish it altogether. Mass murder is no more a necessity than individual murder. In 1600 duelling must have seemed to many intelligent people a law of nature. But the fact remains that we have abolished duelling. There is no reason why we should not abolish war.

III

AT THIS POINT the objector appeals to Darwin. “The struggle for existence,” he insists, “goes on in the human as well as in the sub-human world. War is the method by which nature selects the fittest human beings.”

But whom or what does war select for survival? The answer is that, so far as individuals are concerned, it selects women, children and such men as are too old or infirm to bear arms. The young and the strong, who do the fighting, are eliminated; and the larger the army and the more efficient the weapons, the greater the number of young, strong men who will be killed. War selects dysgenically.

The objector now falls back on a second line of defence. War may be a clumsy way of selecting individuals; but its real value lies in its power to select the best stocks, governments and cultures. But if we look at the records of history we see that war has done its selection in a very erratic way. Sometimes, it is true, victory in war does unquestionably lead to replacement of the defeated by the victorious stock. But this can happen only when the victors exterminate their enemies or else drive them out of the territories previously occupied by them. This was the case, for example, in North America — a very thinly inhabited country. More often, however, the conquerors do

not exterminate the conquered, but settle down among them as a ruling minority. Miscegenation takes place and the victors soon lose whatever racial purity they may have possessed and become ethnically assimilated to the vanquished. A stock may lose the military, but win the biological, battle.

What is true of race is true of cultures and governments. Sometimes conquerors impose their cultures and governmental methods on the vanquished. Sometimes they fail to do so. Of the cultures by which the modern world has been most profoundly influenced, two — the Hebrew and the Greek — were the cultures of peoples who suffered final and complete military defeat at the hands of their enemies. War, we may agree, selects races, cultures and governments. But with a fine impartiality it selects those of the vanquished at least as often as it selects those of the victors.

IV

SO MUCH FOR the third objection; now for the fourth. “We may dislike war,” says the heckler, “but war has always been used as an instrument of policy and we must presume that it always will be so used. Consider the lessons of history and be resigned to the inevitable evil.”

Now, until recent years, the lessons of history lent a certain support to the militarists. Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Babylonians, Sumerians — all used war as an instrument of policy. The written records and archæological documents seemed to show that wars had been invariably correlated with civilization. Primitive peoples, like the Eskimos, might be ignorant of war and find the very idea of it inconceivable. But the civilized had always used it — and presumably would always continue to use it. Recent archæological research has shown that this correlation between war and civilization has not been invariable. The civilization of the Indus Valley was as rich and elaborate as those of Sumer and Egypt. But it was a civilization that knew nothing of war. No weapons have been found in its buried cities, nor any trace of fortification. This fact is of the highest significance. It proves that it is possible for men to enjoy the advantages of a complex urban civilization without having to pay for them by periodical mass-murders. What men have done, they can do again. History teaches us that war is not inevitable. Once again, it is for us to choose whether we use war or some other method of settling the ordinary and unavoidable conflicts between groups of men. Where there’s a will — and, along with will, feeling and intelligence — there’s a way. The nature of that way will be discussed later.

V

THE FIFTH OBJECTION comes from those who insist that the only sanction of social order is violence. “If there is to be peace or justice, it must be imposed by force.

In the case of the international community of sovereign states, this peace-securing, justice-creating force is war. Therefore there must be war.”

(i) This objection raises three points which must be dealt with separately. First, is it true that social order rests on force? When we come to look at the facts, we find that, though force plays a part in preserving order within a community, that part is extremely small. Moreover, the part played by force becomes proportionately smaller the longer peaceful methods have been used. The resolute refusal of the English to arm their police is one of the reasons why England is a law-abiding country, in which it is so seldom necessary to use force. But even in the least law-abiding of countries the real sanctions for order and justice are public opinion and the desire felt by every individual to be thought well of by his fellows. Force cannot impose permanent order on a people which is hostile to the wielders of force. There can be no stable government that is not government by consent. Even dictators realize that ruthlessness is not enough. Hence that flood of propaganda designed to make their regime popular, not only at home but also beyond their own frontiers. Even in prisons where the governor has more absolute control over his subjects than any dictator, it has been found that a man who is unpopular with the prisoners cannot rule them. Societies exist and are orderly because, in the last resort, the forces in human nature making for co-operation are stronger than those divisive forces making for anti-social conduct. Incidentally, war itself presupposes this preponderance of co-operative over divisive tendencies. An army could not be raised or, once raised, held together, if it were not for the co-operative spirit in each of its members. Once more, the choice is ours: we may either arbitrarily limit the co-operative spirit within the boundaries of a clan or nation; or we may allow it to have free play over the whole world. To love one’s neighbour as oneself may mean much or little, according to our interpretation of the word “neighbour.” It is left to us to decide whether that interpretation shall be narrow or broad.

(ii) Now for the second point: Can the force employed by the police within a national community be assimilated to the forces used by armies in settling disputes between such communities? Certainly not. Except in times of revolutions, civil war or political anarchy, the amount of force employed within the national community is strictly limited by law and by public opinion. (In England policemen are unarmed, and their power to use force is thus physically reduced to a minimum.) Modern war, on the contrary, is the deliberate use of practically unlimited violence and fraud. A difference in degree, if sufficiently great, turns into a difference in kind. Moreover the aim of war is radically different from the aim of police action. War aims at destruction. Police action does not. From the social point of view the “force” that is war is something quite different from the “force” that is police action. The end of war is destruction, and it employs unrestricted violence as its means. The end of police action is restraint, and its methods are to a great extent non-violent.

(iii) The third point to be considered is this. Even the most ruthless militarists have generally proclaimed that the end they were pursuing was peace. Theologians and philosophers have often justified war on the same grounds: war is permissible

because it is a method for securing peace and justice. But, in point of fact, have peace and justice ever been secured by war? Is it possible, in the nature of things, that they can be secured by war? In so far as we are scientists, technicians, or artists, we all admit that the means employed determine the ends achieved. For example, a village blacksmith may be earnestly and sincerely desirous of making a Rolls-Royce engine. But the means at his disposal fatally determine his ends and the thing which finally emerges from the smithy will be very different from the instrument of precision that he intended to make. What is so obviously true of technology and science is no less true of all human activities. The man who uses violence as a means for securing the love of his family will certainly achieve quite another end. The state which makes war on a neighbour will create, not peace, but the makings of a war of revenge. The means determine the ends; and however excellent intentions may be, bad or merely unsuitable means must inevitably produce results quite unlike the good ends originally proposed. The heckler who adjures us to consider the lessons of history is in fact adjuring us to realize that once war has been adopted as a regular instrument of policy, once the idea that violence is the proper way of getting things done has become established as a truism, there can be no secure and lasting peace, only a series of truces between wars. For war, however "just" it may seem, cannot be waged without the commission of frightful injustices; frightful injustices cannot be committed without arousing the resentment and hatred of those on whom they are committed, or on their friends or successors; and resentment and hatred cannot be satisfied except by revenge. But how can military defeat be avenged except by a military victory? The successive wars to which the historian points are the strongest possible argument against war as a method of securing peace and justice. The means determine the ends, and the end achieved by war is not peace, but more war.

In the past, very fortunately, the means for making war were inadequate. To-day they are so effective that, for the first time in history, indiscriminate and even unintentional massacre has become not only possible but even inevitable. There was a time when civil populations were not slaughtered except by the deliberate order of the conqueror. From this time forward, however humane the commanders of the opposing armies, civil populations can hardly fail to be massacred. Planes, gas, thermite make it all but inevitable. The means of destruction have become so efficient that destruction will be more complete and more indiscriminate than ever before. In clinging to war as an instrument of policy, we are running risks which our ancestors never ran.

VI

THE SIXTH OBJECTION to pacifism is based on moral grounds. "War," we are told, "is a school of virtues; peace, a school of effeminacy, degeneracy and vice."

In his *Philosophy of War* Steinmetz went much further than this and affirmed that war was not merely a school of virtues, but actually the source of all the virtues, even

the most unwarlike. How did early men learn to co-operate with one another? By making war on their fellows. Where did love and mutual aid originate? On the battlefield, among brothers in arms. And so on. Steinmetz's views are so manifestly absurd that it is unnecessary to discuss them. But our theoretical heckler's more modest attempt to justify war on moral grounds deserves to be treated seriously. For that war is a school of virtues is in fact true. Courage, self-control, endurance, a spirit of comradeship, a readiness to make the sacrifice of life itself — these are the qualities without which men cannot become good soldiers, or at any rate good subordinate soldiers; for history shows that a man may become a brilliant commander and yet be almost a moral imbecile. The two greatest military geniuses of modern times, Marlborough and Napoleon, were despicable human beings. There was something almost diabolic in the character of Frederick the Great. At the end of the world war almost the only member of the German High Command who displayed the military virtues was Hindenburg. The others disguised themselves and hurried across the frontier into the safety of a neutral country. Such examples could be multiplied. "Great soldiers" have often lacked all the good qualities which we associate with the military profession.

To return to the virtues of the subordinate soldier: these are intrinsically admirable. But do they justify war? This question cannot be answered unless we know, first, what is the price of these virtues in terms of individual vice and social ruin, and, second, whether war is the only school in which they can be learnt.

Now, it is obvious that the soldier's characteristic virtues are accompanied by equally characteristic vices. The efficient soldier must hate and be angry, must know how to be inhuman, must be troubled, where his enemies are concerned, with no scruples or sensibilities. Moreover, his way of life tends to encourage in him a certain recklessness. He doesn't care for anything or anyone except his fellows and the traditions of his corps. Recklessness is a soil from which some good and much evil may spring — acts of uncommon generosity, but also acts of uncommon brutality.

Nor is this all. Military discipline demands unquestioning obedience. The subordinate soldier is a man who has handed over his reason and his conscience into the keeping of another. But a man who has given up reason and conscience is a man who has given up the most typically human characteristics of human beings. The government of an army is a special and extreme case of that most soul-destroying of all forms of government, a tyranny or, as we now prefer to call it, a dictatorship.

War, then, exacts a gigantic price for the military virtues. Vice and crime are the conditions of their very existence. Can it be right to cultivate virtue by means of wickedness? Those who believe that there exists, apart from self-interest and social convention, a real and absolute goodness, will answer at once that it cannot be right. No man is justified in doing an evil thing that good, as he believes, may come of it.

This view of what ought to be is confirmed by our investigations into what is. For we find that the military virtues can and do exist in individuals devoted not to war, but to the furtherance of peace. The causes of religion and humanitarianism have had their noble soldiers — soldiers whose courage, endurance and self-control were not set

off by any personal vice, any crime against society. War is only one, and that the worst, of schools in which men can learn the military virtues.

VII

“YOU HAVE MADE a good case against war,” says the objector; “but you have failed to show what is the practical alternative to war. Indeed, you can’t do so, because there is no practical alternative. Pacifism doesn’t work.”

The answer to this is a flat contradiction. Pacifism does work. True, there is no pacifist technique for arresting shells in mid-trajectory or even for persuading the airmen circling above a city to refrain from dropping their bombs. Pacifism is in the main preventive. If the principles of Pacifism are consistently put into practice the big guns will never be let off and the airmen will never be ordered to drop their bombs. The best way of dealing with typhoid is not to cure it, but to prevent its breaking out. Pacifism is to war what clean water and clean milk are to typhoid; it makes the outbreak of war impossible. But though mainly preventive, pacifism is also, as we shall see, a technique of conflict — a way of fighting without the use of violence.

If you treat other people well, other people will generally treat you well. It is possible to go further and to say that, if you have the opportunity of going on treating them well, they will at last invariably reciprocate your treatment. Suspicious people may start by reacting badly; but in the long run, trust, affection and disinterestedness will always be answered by trust, affection and disinterestedness. This fact, the truth of which we have all had occasion to demonstrate in our relations with our fellows, is the sure foundation upon which the theory and technique of pacifism are based.

The theory and technique of militarism are based on a psychological assumption that is self-evidently absurd. The militarist sets out to secure other people’s good will by making war on them — that is to say by treating them as badly as he possibly can. But it is a matter of everyday experience that if you treat other people badly they will answer (unless, of course, they happen to be saints or trained pacifists) either by treating you badly at once, or, if the power to return evil for evil is lacking, by waiting in fear, anger and hatred for an opportunity to treat you badly later on. Unless followed by an act of reparation, war will always be answered by war. Hate breeds hate, and violence, violence.

In our relations with other human beings we have all of us, at some time or another, made use of the pacifist technique. By treating people well, we have prevented them from treating us badly or have persuaded them to change their malevolence into kindness. More consciously and consistently, preventive pacifism is employed by doctors when they treat lunatics, by anthropologists when they approach suspicious and unfriendly savages, by naturalists in their dealings with wild animals. On a large scale the methods, not only of preventive, but also of what may be called combative, pacifism were successfully practised by the early Christians in their conflict with the author-

ities of the Roman Empire; by William Penn and the first settlers of Pennsylvania towards the Redskins; by practically the whole Hungarian nation when, in the sixties of last century, the Emperor Francis Joseph was trying to subordinate that country to Austria in violation of the existing treaty of union; by Gandhi and his followers, first in South Africa and then in India. Furthermore, large numbers of industrial strikes have been conducted on strictly pacifist lines, often with remarkable success. There is enough historical evidence to show that the pacifist technique is unquestionably effective. Why, then, has it not been more widely used as an instrument of policy, a method for preventing the outbreak of disputes between individuals and groups or (once the conflict has begun) for conducting the struggle in a non-violent way? Once more it is a question, not of impossibilities, not of obstacles existing in the nature of things, but of our own free will. If pacifism has been used less frequently than war, the reason is simple. We have refused to take the trouble to anticipate impending evil, and so prevent its coming to pass; when the conflict has broken out, we have refused to control our passions of anger, hatred and malice, and have allowed them full rein in acts of violence. It is in our power to make a different choice.

In the following paragraphs we shall try to describe two kinds of pacifism, combative and preventive. Combative pacifism may be defined as the strategy and tactics of non-violent resistance to violence. Non-violent resistance is a technique which relies on the fact that it is impossible to display the virtues of courage, patience, devotion and disinterestedness without evoking sooner or later a response from even the most ardent and highly trained practitioners of the militaristic technique.

It takes two to make a quarrel. Most men find that they can be violent only towards people who show the appropriate reactions — fear, rage, or a mixture of the two. One can use violence on a man who angrily resists and one can use it on a man who shows terror. But when someone turns up who reacts to violence without anger and without fear, it becomes very difficult to go on using the violence. The non-violent resister is a man who refuses to play the part assigned to him by the rules of the game; the result is that the other player finds it difficult and at last impossible to go on playing his part. In mass movements of non-violent resistance, detachments of volunteers present themselves without fear and without anger to the forces sent against them. As one falls, another takes his place, until at last even highly disciplined soldiers or policemen find it impossible to go on using the militaristic technique in which they have been trained.

Meanwhile the spectacle of suffering voluntarily accepted creates in the minds of all who witness the scene or who read of it, a feeling of sympathy for the non-violent and indignation against the violent. Nor is that all. In the end it evokes from the violent themselves a reluctant feeling of respect and admiration for their victims. A situation arises in which it becomes relatively easy for violent attackers and non-violent resisters to negotiate an honourable settlement, reasonably satisfactory to both parties. All those who use violence instinctively recognize the peculiar power of non-violent resistance and do their best to prevent it from being used by their opponents. Faced

by determined but peaceful strikers, industrialists have frequently made use of agents provocateurs, to foment a spirit of violence. They want to have their windows broken; they want stones to be thrown at the police. Why? Because they know that, once the strikers take to violence, their fate is sealed. They can be coerced, and public opinion will be on the side of the coercers.

A display of non-violent resistance has the effect of emphasizing among all concerned the great truth of human solidarity. The fact that noble behaviour should have power to evoke a response, even among the enemies of those who are so behaving, is a most reassuring reminder that all men are at one in a profound spiritual unity.

Non-violent resistance can be successfully undertaken only by trained troops. In a later paragraph the nature of the training required and the functions of these soldiers of peace will be discussed.

From this description of non-violence it must be fairly obvious that non-violent resistance cannot be used to any considerable extent in modern war, which is waged almost exclusively by means of long-range weapons inflicting indiscriminate destruction. Once war has broken out, pacifists are almost helpless. Therefore it must be prevented from breaking out. But it can only be prevented from breaking out if at least one government of an important sovereign state chooses to act pacifistically towards its neighbours. The practical task before pacifists in this country is to persuade the government to act pacifistically towards other governments. In later sections we shall discuss, first, the sort of policy that a government determined to prevent an outbreak of war should pursue (section X); second, the means by which individual pacifists should seek to induce their government to adopt such a policy (section XII).

VIII

“THE CHURCH DOES not condemn war,” says an orthodox heckler. “Why am I expected to be more pacifist than the bishops?”

The Church does not condemn war; but Jesus did condemn it. Moreover, the Christians who lived during the first three centuries of our era not only believed that Jesus had condemned war, but themselves repeated the condemnation in more specific terms. Here it is possible to give only the briefest summary of the historical evidence. Those who wish to study this subject in detail should consult the articles on war in Hastings’ *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* and in *The Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*. A fuller account is given by C. J. Cadoux, D.D., in his book *The Early Christian Attitude to War*.

Among the Early Fathers, Justin Martyr and Tatian in the second century, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian and Hippolytus in the third, Arnobius, Eusebius and Lactantius in the fourth, all regarded war as organized iniquity. Here are a few characteristic quotations from their writings on the subject.

The first two are from the *Divinæ Institutiones* of Lactantius. "When God prohibits killing, He not only forbids us to commit brigandage, which is not allowed even by the public laws; but He warns us that not even those things which are regarded as legal among men are to be done. And so it will not be lawful for a just man to serve as a soldier . . . nor to accuse anyone of a capital offence, since it makes no difference whether thou killest with a sword or with a word, since killing itself is forbidden. And so in this commandment of God no exception at all ought to be made that it is always wrong to kill a man."

"How can he be just who injures, hates, despoils, kills? And those who strive to be of advantage to their own country (in war) do all these things."

Tertullian remarks that truth, gentleness and justice cannot be obtained by means of war. "Who shall produce these results with the sword and not rather those which are the contrary of gentleness and justice, namely deceit and harshness and injustice, which are of course the proper business of battles?" (An excellent statement of the almost invariably neglected truth that means determine ends and that good ends cannot be achieved by bad or even inappropriate means.)

Origen writes of his co-religionists that "we no longer take 'sword' against a 'nation,' nor do we learn 'any more to make war,' having become sons of peace for the sake of Jesus who is our leader, instead of following the ancestral customs in which we were strangers to the covenants."

In the *Canons* of Hippolytus we read that a soldier who professes Christianity is to be excluded from the sacrament, until such time as he has done penance for the blood he has shed.

In the early part of the fourth century Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The Cross was used as a military standard and the pious Constantine had the nails with which Jesus had been crucified converted into a helmet for himself and bits for his war-horse. The act was profoundly symbolical. In the words of Dean Milman, "the meek and peaceful Jesus had become a God of battle."

The new political situation soon found reflection in Christian theory. Already in the middle years of the fourth century, Athanasius, the father of orthodoxy, is saying that "to destroy opponents in war is lawful and worthy of praise." St. Ambrose thirty years later and St. Augustine at the beginning of the fifth century repeat and elaborate this argument. We find Augustine saying that "many things have to be done in which we have to pay regard, not to our own kindly inclinations, but to the real interests of others, and their interests may require that they should be treated, much as they may dislike it, with a certain benignant asperity." It is a justification in advance of the Inquisition and the wars of religion — indeed of war of every kind; for now that infallibility has been claimed by sovereign states, the rulers of each nation know exactly what is best for all other nations and feel it their duty, merely in the highest interests of their neighbours, to use a "certain benignant asperity" towards them.

Modern Christians have used a number of arguments to justify their complete disregard of the precepts of Jesus in regard to war. Of the two most commonly employed,

the first is the argument which asserts that Jesus meant his followers to accept the “spirit” of his teachings, without being bound by the “letter.” In other words, that he meant them to ignore his words completely and go on behaving, in all the practical details of life, as though they had never been uttered. The Pauline distinction between “letter” and “spirit” has been made the justification for every kind of iniquity.

The second argument is that Jesus meant his ethical system to apply only to relations obtaining between persons, not to those obtaining between nations. This is to imply that Jesus sanctioned mass murder between any two groups which at any given moment of history happen to regard themselves as autonomous and sovereign. It is hardly necessary to say that there is nothing in the gospels to substantiate such an interpretation of Christ’s teaching.

IX

“THE CAUSES OF war are economic and can be eliminated only by a change in the economic system.”

First of all, the causes of war are not exclusively economic. There have been wars of religion, wars of prestige, even wars for the sake of destruction. In the second place, even in those cases where the immediate cause of conflict between nations have been economic in character the fact that nations exist and act as war-making units cannot be explained in economic terms. Wars, we are told, are made by capitalists and armament makers for their own private interests. But capitalists and armament makers need troops to do the fighting, an electorate to back their policy. They get their troops and their electorate because the violent divisive passions of nationalistic pride, vanity and hatred are present in the masses of their countrymen. Hence the need for pacifist organizations pledged to the realization of human unity through non-violence.

Wars, then, are not exclusively economic in origin. Let us, however, admit for the sake of argument that the factors which make for war are mainly economic and that a suitable change in the existing economic system would eliminate those causes. We are still faced by the all-important question: How do you propose to change the existing system? By violence, say the revolutionaries. But if violence is used as the means, the end achieved will inevitably be different from the end proposed. In Russia, the end proposed was Communism. Ruthless and prolonged violence was used to achieve that end. With what result? That contemporary Russian society is not communistic; it is an elaborately hierarchical society, ruled by a small group of men who are ready to employ the extremes of physical and economical coercion against those who disagree with their views; a society in which, according to reliable observers, the exclusive and ultimately bellicose spirit nationalism is growing in intensity; a society in which the principle of authority is accepted without question, and violence is taken for granted. Within Russian society the economic system has been changed to this extent, that individuals cannot own the means of production and are therefore unable, as owners, to coerce

their fellow human beings. But though individuals cannot coerce as owners, they can coerce as representatives of the State. (Let us remember, incidentally, that “the State” is merely a name for certain individuals using power either lawlessly or else according to certain rules.) The principle of coercion has survived the revolution and is in fact still ruthlessly applied. As the revolution was violent and coercive, it could not be otherwise. The violent means so conditioned the end proposed that it was impossible for that end to be what the revolutionaries had intended it to be — that is, Communism within the country and international co-operation without its borders. True, other countries have not done anything to make such co-operation easy; but the fact remains that Russia possesses the largest army in the world and that pride in this army is inculcated in Russian citizens from their tenderest years. Countries which possess and are proud of large armies almost invariably end, as history shows, by making use of them against their neighbours. To sum up, the economic system has been changed in Russia; but it was changed with violence; therefore it has remained natural for Russians to regard the use of violence, both within the country and without, as normal and inevitable. International war and coercion at home will continue to exist for just so long as people regard these things as suitable, as even conceivable, instruments of policy. The pacifist does not object to the ends originally proposed by the revolutionaries; on the contrary, he regards such ends as being intrinsically desirable. What he rejects is the means by which the revolutionaries set out to realize these ends. And he rejects them for two reasons; first, because he believes that an evil act is always evil, whatever the reason given for its performance; and, second, because he sees that, as a matter of fact, bad means make the good ends unrealizable. If Communism is to be achieved it can only be by non-violent means.

The pacifist differs from the Marxian revolutionary on another important issue. While the Marxian puts the whole blame for the present state of the world on the existing economic system and on those who profit by that system, the pacifist is prepared to admit that he also may be to some extent responsible. The pacifist does not believe that the Kingdom of God can be imposed on mankind from without, by means of a change of organization. He believes that, if the Kingdom is to be realized, he himself must work for it, and work for it not only as a public figure, but also in his private life.

“It is not the munition makers but the masses, who by their votes elect and support governments and administrations committed to the pursuit of policies of economic nationalism, who are the real ‘merchants of death.’ Italian Fascists, German National Socialists and Japanese Imperialists, despite their common doctrine of violence, have done no more to make future wars inevitable than has the American Democracy by means of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff, the war debt policy and its performance at the London Economic Conference. It is, to be sure, unmistakable that a country as richly endowed materially as is the United States can, at least temporarily, achieve domestic prosperity by means of purely monopolistic economic policies. But it should be equally evident that a people which permits and encourages its government to pursue such

politics, deliberately bolts and bars the door to world peace.” These words are taken from the concluding chapter of *The Price of Peace*, a book published in 1935 by two American economists, Frank H. Simonds and Brooks Emeny. They are writing of the American Democracy; but every word of what they say applies *mutatis mutandis* to the British Democracy. In a later paragraph the authors specifically mention our country. The British and American people, they say, have resolved “to combine the profits of exclusive nationalism with the benefits of internationalism. . . . They have invited all peoples to join them in a partnership to preserve peace, but have reserved to themselves the profits of such peace, while leaving to the others the privilege of paying the costs.” Not unnaturally the others are declining the invitation. The pacifist insists that if we want other people to make sacrifices we must begin by making sacrifices ourselves; that it is only by being generous (even at our own expense) and by telling the truth (even though that truth be to our own discredit) that we shall elicit generosity and truth from others.

X

“GENERAL PRINCIPLES,” SAYS the objector, “are all very fine; but we live in a world of particular and specific realities. How do you expect your pacifism to work in the circumstances of the present moment? What about Italy and Abyssinia, for example? What about sanctions? What about Germany? What about Japan?”

The pacifist solution to these pressing contemporary problems can be outlined quite briefly. Let us begin by describing the historical antecedents which have led up to the present situation. Germany, Italy and Japan are three countries whose position in the post-war world is fundamentally similar. All suffer from a sense of grievance — of grievance, moreover, which the existing circumstances of the world very largely justify. Germany suffered military defeat and prolonged humiliation at the hands of her conquerors. During the boom years, she was helped, for purely commercial motives, by Allied and American capitalists, who helped to earn large profits by financing German industry; then came the slump; as much foreign capital as could be withdrawn was withdrawn, tariff barriers were everywhere set up or, if they already existed, raised still higher. It became more and more difficult for German industrialists either to sell what they had manufactured or, owing to monetary difficulties and the absence of colonies, to procure raw materials. The Nazis have promised to extricate Germany from this intolerable situation by force of arms, if necessary.

Italy emerged from the War nominally a victor, but in fact little the better off for her espousal of the Allied cause. The clauses of the disgraceful Secret Treaties were not, because they could not be, fulfilled, and the Italians received no colonial mandates. Emigration of Italians was progressively restricted until during the slump it fell almost to zero. For more than thirteen years the Fascists have been promising to make Italy

great and prosperous. Since October, 1935 they have been attempting to keep that promise at the expense of Abyssinia.

At the Versailles Peace Conference, the Japanese were collectively insulted by President Wilson, who insisted that a nation of yellow men could not be treated on the same terms as a nation of white men. During the succeeding years tariff barriers have everywhere been raised against cheap Japanese goods, while America and the British Dominions have completely prohibited the immigration of Japanese citizens. Meanwhile, in Japan, population has rapidly increased. In Japan the army has done what the Nazis and the Fascists did in Germany and Italy; it has promised to rescue the country from its present plight by force of arms. What is more, it has begun to fulfil this promise — at the expense of China. What the Japanese have done in Manchuria, the Italians are at present trying to do in Abyssinia and the Germans are hoping to do in Middle Europe and possibly Russia.

Over against these three hungry and thwarted powers stand four satiated powers, possessing between them the greater part of the world's surface and most of the raw materials indispensable to modern industry. These four powers are the British Empire, the United States, France and Russia. To these must be added Holland, Belgium and Portugal — three small powers whose considerable colonial possessions are guaranteed (for as long as it suits them to do so) by England and France. The satisfied powers enjoy their present privileged position in regard to materials, land and markets, partly as a result of historical accident, partly in virtue of a policy of conquest pursued above all during the nineteenth century. So long as these four powers remain possessed of what they now own and so long as they persist in their present monopolistic policies, the three great unsatisfied powers must of necessity remain unsatisfied. Objectively, this means that the standard of living among the unsatisfied must continue steadily to decline; subjectively, it means that they will cherish a feeling of intense resentment against the satisfied, together with a passionate conviction that they have been given less than justice.

The re-distribution of territory after the Napoleonic wars was ethnically unsound. Ruled by alien governments, large bodies of men and women — Italians, Greeks, Poles and many others — felt that they were being treated unjustly; and this sense of injustice was so intense that people preferred the risks and horrors of war to a peace which they felt to be humiliating. The peace of Versailles was, ethnically speaking, a tolerably good peace. Economically, however, it was a thoroughly bad peace. The peoples of three great countries (as well as of numerous small countries) feel that they have been and are being treated unjustly. And so intense is this feeling, so painful is the process of gradual and steady impoverishment to which they are being subjected, that for great masses of these people war — even modern war — seems preferable to peace, as they know it to-day.

That the existence of unsatisfied powers represents a source of constant danger to world peace is clearly recognized. To guard against this danger the monopolistic powers spend ever-increasing sums on armaments. They hope by this threatening display of

force to frighten the unsatisfied powers into renouncing their claims for justice. In the event of the unsatisfied powers refusing to renounce these claims and going to war, the monopolistic powers expect to be able to win.

Militarists are incurably romantic, constitutionally incapable of facing facts. To the realistic pacifist it is obvious that the present policy of the monopolistic states is hopelessly chimerical. For, first of all, the peoples of the unsatisfied countries are so desperate that threats will not deter them from resorting to a war which to them may seem actually preferable to peace, as they know it at present. And, secondly, once war is made, it is quite impossible to predict what will happen. The monopolistic powers may emerge victorious — that is if anyone emerges at all. Or they may not. And even if they win, victory may be obtained at a cost too great for men to pay. Up till now militarism has been a policy, bad indeed, but, thanks to the inefficiency of armaments, not so destructive as many conquerors would doubtless have liked it to be. One war, it is true, inevitably led to another; but in the interval the warring countries and their cultures managed to survive. Where societies are highly complex and weapons extremely destructive, militarism ceases to be a policy of anything but mass suicide.

The pacifist's alternative to militarism is a policy that has the double merit of being not only morally right, but also strictly practical and business-like. Guided by the moral intuition that it can never in any circumstances be right to do evil and by the two empirically verified generalizations, first, that means determine ends and, second, that by behaving well to other people you can always, in the long run, induce other people to behave well to you, he lays it down that the only right and practical policy is a policy based on truth and generosity. How shall such a policy of truth and generosity be applied to the particular circumstance of the present time? The answer is clear. The great monopolistic powers should immediately summon a conference at which the unsatisfied powers, great and small, should be invited to state their grievance and claims. When this has been done it would be possible, given intelligence and good will, to work out a scheme of territorial, economic and monetary readjustments for the benefit of all. That certain immediate sacrifices would have to be made by the monopolistic powers is inevitable. These sacrifices would be in part sacrifices of economic advantages, in part, perhaps mainly, of prestige — which is the polite and diplomatic word for pride and vanity. It is unnecessary to go into details here. Suffice it to say that there would have to be agreement as to the supply of tropical raw materials; an agreement on monetary policy; an agreement with regard to industrial production and markets; an agreement on tariffs; an agreement on migration.

The calling of such a conference as has been described above constitutes the only practical solution of the difficult problem of sanctions against Italy. People of good will are painfully perplexed because it seems to them that sanctionist countries are on the horns of a dilemma. Either sanctions must be intensified, in which case it is probable that Italy will in desperation, precipitate a European war; or else Abyssinia must be sacrificed, in which case a wanton act of aggression will have been rewarded at the expense of the victim. In fact there is a third and better alternative, a more excellent

way between the horns of the dilemma. A world conference can be called immediately for the permanent settling of the justifiable claims, not only of Italy, but of all the other dissatisfied powers. The immediate application of pacifist principles offers the hope of the solution of problems which, if they are left to complicate themselves, may become almost insoluble.

To reach any kind of international agreement is difficult, for the simple reason that nations are regarded by their representatives as wholly immoral beings, insanely proud, touchy, fierce and rapacious. In spite, however, of this monstrous conception of sovereignty, agreements do in fact get made and, what is more remarkable, are often observed, at any rate for a time, quite honourably. What can be and has been done piece-meal and on a small scale can be done, if we so desire, on a large scale and consistently.

The greatest immediate sacrifices, as has been said before, will have to come from those who possess the most. These sacrifices, however, will be negligible in comparison with the sacrifices which will be demanded from us by another war. Negligible in comparison even with those which are at present being demanded by the mere preparation for another war.

What of the League of Nations? There is, unhappily, much truth in the Italian contention that the League in its present form is an instrument for preserving the status quo. The League is in fact controlled by the two great monopolistic nations of Western Europe, England and France. These nations are unwilling to sacrifice their present superiority and, though this superiority was won by the use of violence in the past, they prefer to seem righteously indignant (and in fact since successful nations always have short memories, are righteously indignant) at the use of violence by unsatisfied countries at the present time. To be of value, the League must continue permanently the work begun by our proposed conference and become an instrument for securing equality of opportunity for all nations through the international control of raw materials, markets, production and currency.

XI

“TALKING ABOUT LEAGUES and Conferences in the present crisis,” objects the heckler, “is like fiddling while Rome burns. Our civilization is in danger; our political system, one of the few democracies left in the world, is menaced. We must be prepared to fight for their preservation and, in order to fight, we must be well armed. Ours is a sacred trust, and we therefore have no right to take the risks of pacifism.”

That time presses is, alas, only too true. Pacifists must act quickly. The sooner they can persuade their government to summon a conference of the kind described above, the better its chances will be. During recent months official spokesmen have several times stated the government’s intention of some day summoning a preventive conference of all the nations. Unhappily they have always gone on to make nonsense of

this profession of good intentions by insisting that the moment for putting them into practice had not yet arrived. The government's peace policy may be briefly stated as follows: "We agree that a preventive conference should be summoned; but we think that the international situation is not at present auspicious. Therefore we shall not summon the conference now. Meanwhile we propose to treble our air force, strengthen our navy and increase our military effectives." But if, in existing circumstances, international feeling is too bad for it to be possible to call a conference, what will it be after we have increased our armaments? Incomparably worse; for the unsatisfied powers will see in our military preparations only another threat to themselves, an attempt to perpetuate by force of arms the present injustices. Many people who genuinely desire peace believe that large-scale rearmament will bring peace nearer. The theory is that potential peace-breakers will be frightened by our display of force into good behaviour. Such belief is wholly at variance with the facts of history. Accumulation of armaments by one power has always led, first, to accumulation of armaments by other powers and then, when the financial strain became unbearable, to war. As usual, it is a matter of relating means to ends. Armaments, as history shows, are not appropriate means for achieving peace.

Let us consider the other objections made by our heckler. Pacifism certainly has its risks. But so has militarism; and the risks of militarism are far greater than those of pacifism. Militarism cannot fail to lead us into war, whereas pacifism has a very good chance of preventing war from breaking out.

The nations of the world live within a malevolently charmed circle of suspicion, hatred and fear. By pursuing a policy of pacifism, and only by pursuing a policy of pacifism, we can break out of the circle. One generous gesture on the part of a great nation might be enough to set the whole world free. More than any other nation, Britain is in a position to make that gesture. "To make it," protests the militarists, "is to court disaster." But to go on preparing for war and thereby rendering war inevitable is also to court disaster — disaster more certain and more complete.

Which is better, to take a risk for a good cause, or to march to certain perdition for a bad one?

XII

THIS TIME THE questioner is not hostile. "I am a convinced pacifist," he begins, "I have signed a pledge that I will take no part in another war. But war is still in the future, I want to do something now — something that will prevent the war from breaking out. What can I do?"

Let us try to answer this as briefly as possible. To sign a pledge refusing to take any part in another war is commendable. But it is not enough. Prevention is always better than cure; and where modern war is concerned it is in fact the only course open. For the next European war will begin without warning, will be waged at long range by

scientific weapons capable of spreading indiscriminate destruction. Pacifists may have the best will in the world; but in these circumstances they will be able to do very little to cure the disease once it has broken out. Therefore, while there is yet time, they must do all in their power to prevent the disease from breaking out.

In a vague way practically everyone is now a pacifist. But the number of those who are prepared to put themselves to inconvenience for their opinions is always small. Most pacifists will go to the trouble of voting for peace; for the rest, they will be what the pun upon their name implies — merely passive. Active or Constructive Pacifists are, and must be content to remain, a minority. How is this minority to make itself effective? By uniting, first of all. But there are unions and unions. The formation of yet another subscription-collecting, literature-distributing and possibly pledge-signing society is not enough. The Constructive Peace Movement must be all these things; but it must be something else as well. It must be a kind of religious order, membership of which involves the acceptance of a certain way of life, and entails devoted and unremitting personal service for the cause.

What is the best form for such an organization to take? History leaves us in no doubt. The Early Christians, the founders of the monastic and mendicant orders, the Quakers, the Wesleyans, the Communists (to mention but a few of those responsible for important social movements) — all used fundamentally the same type of organization: an affiliation of small groups. Here are a few tentative suggestions for the organization of the Constructive Peace Movement. The local unit is a small team of not less than five or more than ten members. These teams meet at least once a week for discussion, for mutual help and criticism, for mutual strengthening in the common faith, for the performance in common of spiritual exercises. In any district where a number of teams exist, particular tasks may be assigned to each. Some teams should undertake propaganda; others should form themselves into study circles to investigate particular aspects — whether personal, social or international — of the general problem of peace. All should attempt to put the principles of Constructive Peace into regular practice. Thus, every group should be an unlimited liability company, in which each member assumes responsibility for all the rest. In some cases groups may feel inclined to assume special social responsibilities, as for example, towards a particular destitute family or a certain category of people, such as released prisoners, patients in a local hospital and the like. At monthly intervals all the groups of the district should meet to pool information and experience. Larger meetings and demonstrations would be organized from time to time by a central office.

At the present time Constructive Pacifists have one immediate task to which they should devote a good part of their energies. This immediate task is to persuade the government of this country to apply the obvious principles of preventive pacifism to the present international situation. This it can do by calling at the earliest possible date a conference for the discussion of the economic and political causes of war and the elaboration of a world-wide scheme for eliminating those causes. Constructive Pacifists must try to get the eleven millions of well-meaning but passive pacifists who voted for

the Peace Ballot to implement their rather vague aspirations by a signature in favour of this particular policy — the only policy that is in the least likely to give them the peace for which they expressed their desire last year. Time will show what other tasks must be undertaken; but for the moment this is certainly the most important.

So much for the organization and immediate policy. In these concluding paragraphs we shall offer a few haphazard remarks of a more general nature.

The philosophy which underlies Constructive Pacifism has been described by implication in an earlier paragraph. But it seems advisable to state it more explicitly here. The philosophy of Constructive Pacifism proceeds from a consideration of what is to a statement of what ought to be — from empirical fact to idea. The facts upon which the doctrine is based are these. First, all men are capable of love for their fellows. Second, the limitations imposed upon this love are of such a nature that it is always possible for the individual, if he so desires, to transcend them. Third, love and goodness are infectious. So are hatred and evil.

The Constructive Pacifist formulates his belief in some such words as these. The spirit is one and all men are potentially at one in the spirit. Any thought or act which denies the fundamental unity of mankind is wrong and, in a certain sense, false; any thought or act which affirms it is right and true. It is in the power of every individual to choose whether he shall deny or affirm the unity of mankind in an ultimate spiritual reality.

The political, social and individual ideals of Constructive Peace follow logically from its doctrine. The pacifist's social and international policy have already been sufficiently described. It is necessary, however, to say a few words about his individual way of life. The whole philosophy of Constructive Peace is based on a consideration of the facts of personal relationship between man and man. Hence it is impossible that Constructive Pacifism should be merely a large-scale and, so to speak, abstract policy. It must also be a way of life. There are men who profess to be pacifists in international politics, but who are tyrants in their families, bullying employers, ruthless and unscrupulous competitors. Such men are not only hypocrites; they are also fools. Nobody but a fool can suppose that it is possible for a government to behave as a pacifist, when the individuals it represents conduct their private affairs in an essentially militaristic way. Constructive Peace must be first of all a personal ethic, a way of life for individuals; only on that condition will it come to be embodied, permanently and securely, in forms of social and international organization. There is another, immediately cogent reason why those who accept the doctrines and responsibilities of Constructive Peace should do their best to conform to the pacifist way of life. The finally convincing argument in favour of any doctrine is personal example. By their fruits ye shall know them; and unless the moral fruits of Constructive Peace are good, its doctrine will not be accepted. Soldiers are admired for their courage, their endurance, their self-sacrifice; the military virtues are the best propaganda for militarism. The Constructive Pacifist must exhibit all the finest military virtues together with others that the soldier cannot possess; if he does, his life will be his best propaganda.

It is easy to talk about a more excellent way of life, immensely difficult to live it. Five Latin words sum up the moral history of every man and woman who has ever lived.

Video meliora, proboque; Deteriora sequor.

“I see the better and approve it; the worse is what I pursue.” Hell is paved, not only with good intentions, but also with the most exquisite sensibilities, the noblest expressions of fine feeling, the profoundest insights into ethical truths. We know and we feel; but knowledge and feeling are not able, in a great many cases, to affect the sources of our will. For the sources of the will lie below the level of consciousness in a mental region where intellect and feeling are largely inoperative. Whatever else they may be — and many theological and psychological theories have been elaborated in order to explain their nature and their mode of action — religious rites, prayer and meditation are devices for affecting the sources of the will. It is a matter of empirical experience that regular meditation on, say, courage or peace often helps the meditate to be brave and serene. Prayer for moral strength and tenacity of purpose is in fact quite often answered. Those who, to express in symbolic action their attachment to a cause, take part in impressive ceremonies and rites, frequently come away strengthened in their power to resist temptations and make sacrifices for the cause. There is good evidence that the practice of some kind of spiritual exercise in common is extremely helpful to those who undertake it. Groups whose members are believing Christians will naturally adopt Christian forms of devotion. To those who are not affiliated to any Christian church we would tentatively recommend some form of group meditation on such subjects as peace, man’s unity, the spiritual reality underlying all phenomena and the virtues which Constructive Pacifists should exhibit in their daily lives. Meditation is a psychological technique whose efficacy does not depend on previous theological belief. It can be successfully practised by anyone who is prepared to take the necessary trouble. It is an exercise of the soul, just as running or jumping are exercises of the body. Constructive Pacifists are athletes in training for an event of much more than Olympic importance. They will be wise to use all the exercises that their predecessors in the endless struggle for the embodiment of goodness upon the earth have tested out and found to be useful.

“A Human Document”

LETTERS FROM LEAVENWORTH

Character, “Bad”: The story of a conscientious objector as told in the letters of Harold Studley Gray. Edited by Kenneth Irving Brown. Harpers, now \$1.25.

This is not the story of a theoretical conscientious objector to war, but of a real one, who kept his conscience, refusing not only to fight but to accept any form of “non-combatant” service under conscription, focusing his protest directly against the exercise of the state’s power to draft him for war service — and taking the consequences! The consequences were fourteen months federal imprisonment involving a court martial sentence of twenty-five years, the imprisonment being terminated by a dishonorable discharge from the army one year after the close of the war. On the reverse side

of his discharge paper in the space for “remarks,” was written the laconic comment: “Character, ‘Bad.’”

I commend this book to all sorts and conditions of readers. It is a human document of gripping and illuminating power. But there is one group to which I commend it particularly, namely, the 14,000 ministers and rabbis who recently in a questionnaire indicated their present purpose not to sanction or participate in any future war. This book will enable them to see realistically what the consequences of their decision, and that of the laymen who agree with them, are likely to be. If another war comes, the Harold Grays will tax the capacity of the nation’s prisons.

Charles Clayton Morrison,
in the Christian Century.

The Perennial Philosophy

CONTENTS

- Introduction
- 1. That Art Thou
- 2. The Nature of the Ground
- 3. Personality, Sanctity, Divine Incarnation
- 4. God in the World
- 5. Charity
- 6. Mortification, Non-Attachment, Right Livelihood
- 7. Truth
- 8. Religion and Temperament
- 9. Self-Knowledge
- 10. Grace and Free Will
- 11. Good and Evil
- 12. Time and Eternity
- 13. Salvation, Deliverance, Enlightenment
- 14. Immortality and Survival
- 15. Silence
- 16. Prayer
- 17. Suffering
- 18. Faith
- 19. God is not mocked
- 20. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*
- 21. Idolatry
- 22. Emotionalism
- 23. The Miraculous

- 24. Ritual, Symbol, Sacrament
- 25. Spiritual Exercises
- 26. Perseverance and Regularity
- 27. Contemplation, Action and Social Utility

Introduction

PHILOSOPHIA PERENNIS - the phrase was coined by Leibniz; but the thing - the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being - the thing is immemorial and universal. Rudiments of the Perennial Philosophy may be found among the traditionary lore of primitive peoples in every region of the world, and in its fully developed forms it has a place in every one of the higher religions. A version of this Highest Common Factor in all preceding and subsequent theologies was first committed to writing more than twenty-five centuries ago, and since that time the inexhaustible theme has been treated again and again, from the standpoint of every religious tradition and in all the principal languages of Asia and Europe. In the pages that follow I have brought together a number of selections from these writings, chosen mainly for their significance - because they effectively illustrated some particular point in the general system of the Perennial Philosophy - but also for their intrinsic beauty and memorableness. These selections are arranged under various heads and embedded, so to speak, in a commentary of my own, designed to illustrate and connect, to develop and, where necessary, to elucidate.

Knowledge is a function of being. When there is a change in the being of the knower, there is a corresponding change in the nature and amount of knowing. For example, the being of a child is transformed by growth and education into that of a man; among the results of this transformation is a revolutionary change in the way of knowing and the amount and character of the things known. As the individual grows up, his knowledge becomes more conceptual and systematic in form, and its factual, utilitarian content is enormously increased. But these gains are offset by a certain deterioration in the quality of immediate apprehension, a blunting and a loss of intuitive power. Or consider the change in his being which the scientist is able to induce mechanically by means of his instruments. Equipped with a spectroscope and a sixty-inch reflector an astronomer becomes, so far as eyesight is concerned, a superhuman creature; and, as we should naturally expect, the knowledge possessed by this superhuman creature is very different, both in quantity and quality, from that which can be acquired by a stargazer with unmodified, merely human eyes.

Nor are changes in the knower's physiological or intellectual being the only ones to affect his knowledge. What we know depends also on what, as moral beings, we choose to make ourselves. 'Practice,' in the words of William James, 'may change

our theoretical horizon, and this in a twofold way: it may lead into new worlds and secure new powers. Knowledge we could never attain, remaining what we are, may be attainable in consequence of higher powers and a higher life, which we may morally achieve.' To put the matter more succinctly, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' And the same idea has been expressed by the Sufi poet, Jalal-uddin Rumi, in terms of a scientific metaphor: 'The astrolabe of the mysteries of God is love.'

This book, I repeat, is an anthology of the Perennial Philosophy; but, though an anthology, it contains but few extracts from the writings of professional men of letters and, though illustrating a philosophy, hardly anything from the professional philosophers. The reason for this is very simple. The Perennial Philosophy is primarily concerned with the one, divine Reality substantial to the manifold world of things and lives and minds. But the nature of this one Reality is such that it cannot be directly and immediately apprehended except by those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spirit. Why should this be so? We do not know. It is just one of those facts which we have to accept, whether we like them or not and however implausible and unlikely they may seem. Nothing in our everyday experience gives us any reason for supposing that water is made up of hydrogen and oxygen; and yet when we subject water to certain rather drastic treatments, the nature of its constituent elements becomes manifest. Similarly, nothing in our everyday experience gives us much reason for supposing that the mind of the average sensual man has, as one of its constituents, something resembling, or identical with, the Reality substantial to the manifold world; and yet, when that mind is subjected to certain rather drastic treatments, the divine element, of which it is in part at least composed, becomes manifest, not only to the mind itself, but also, by its reflection in external behaviour, to other minds. It is only by making physical experiments that we can discover the intimate nature of matter and its potentialities. And it is only by making psychological and moral experiments that we can discover the intimate nature of mind and its potentialities. In the ordinary circumstances of average sensual life these potentialities of the mind remain latent and unmanifested. If we would realize them, we must fulfil certain conditions and obey certain rules, which experience has shown empirically to be valid.

In regard to few professional philosophers and men of letters is there any evidence that they did very much in the way of fulfilling the necessary conditions of direct spiritual knowledge. When poets or metaphysicians talk about the subject matter of the Perennial Philosophy, it is generally at second hand. But in every age there have been some men and women who chose to fulfil the conditions upon which alone, as a matter of brute empirical fact, such immediate knowledge can be had; and of these a few have left accounts of the Reality they were thus enabled to apprehend and have tried to relate, in one comprehensive system of thought, the given facts of this experience with the given facts of their other experiences. To such firsthand exponents of the Perennial Philosophy those who knew them have generally given the name of 'saint' or 'prophet,'

‘sage’ or ‘enlightened one.’ And it is mainly to these, because there is good reason for supposing that they knew what they were talking about, and not to the professional philosophers or men of letters, that I have gone for my selections.

In India two classes of scripture are recognized: the Shruti, or inspired writings which are their own authority, since they are the product of immediate insight into ultimate Reality; and the Smriti, which are based upon the Shruti and from them derive such authority as they have. ‘The Shruti,’ in Shankara’s words, ‘depends upon direct perception. The Smriti plays a part analogous to induction, since, like induction, it derives its authority from an authority other than itself.’ This book, then, is an anthology, with explanatory comments, of passages drawn from the Shruti and Smriti of many times and places. Unfortunately, familiarity, with traditionally hallowed writings tends to breed, not indeed contempt, but something which, for practical purposes, is almost as bad - namely a kind of reverential insensibility, a stupor of the spirit, an inward deafness to the meaning of the sacred words. For this reason, when selecting material to illustrate the doctrines of the Perennial Philosophy, as they were formulated in the West, I have gone almost always to sources other than the Bible. This Christian Smriti, from which I have drawn, is based upon the Shruti of the canonical books, but has the great advantage of being less well known and therefore more vivid and, so to say, more audible than they are. Moreover, much of this Smriti is the work of genuinely saintly men and women, who have qualified themselves to know at first hand what they are talking about. Consequently it may be regarded as being itself a form of inspired and self-validating Shruti - and this in a much higher degree than many of the writings now included in the Biblical canon.

In recent years a number of attempts have been made to work out a system of empirical theology. But in spite of the subtlety and intellectual power of such writers as Sorley, Oman and Tennant, the effort has met with only a partial success. Even in the hands of its ablest exponents empirical theology is not particularly convincing. The reason, it seems to me, must be sought in the fact that the empirical theologians have confined their attention more or less exclusively to the experience of those whom the theologians of an older school called ‘the unregenerate’ - that is to say, the experience of people who have not gone very far in fulfilling the necessary conditions of spiritual knowledge. But it is a fact, confirmed and re-confirmed during two or three thousand years of religious history, that the ultimate Reality is not clearly and immediately apprehended, except by those who have made themselves loving, pure in heart and poor in spirit. This being so, it is hardly surprising that a theology based upon the experience of nice, ordinary, unregenerate people should carry so little conviction. This kind of empirical theology is on precisely the same footing as an empirical astronomy, based upon the experience of naked-eye observers. With the unaided eye a small, faint smudge can be detected in the constellation of Orion, and doubtless an imposing cosmological theory could be based upon the observation of this smudge. But no amount of such theorizing, however ingenious, could ever tell us as much about the galactic and extra-galactic nebulae as can direct acquaintance by means of a good telescope,

camera and spectroscope. Analogously, no amount of theorizing about such hints as may be darkly glimpsed within the ordinary, unregenerate experience of the manifold world can tell us as much about divine Reality as can be directly apprehended by a mind in a state of detachment, charity and humility. Natural science is empirical; but it does not confine itself to the experience of human beings in their merely human and unmodified condition. Why empirical theologians should feel themselves obliged to submit to this handicap, goodness only knows. And of course, so long as they confine empirical experience within these all too human limits, they are doomed to the perpetual stultification of their best efforts. From the material they have chosen to consider, no mind, however brilliantly gifted, can infer more than a set of possibilities or, at the very best, specious probabilities. The self-validating certainty of direct awareness cannot in the very nature of things be achieved except by those equipped with the moral 'astrolabe of God's mysteries'. If one is not oneself a sage or saint, the best thing one can do, in the field of metaphysics, is to study the works of those who were, and who, because they had modified their merely human mode of being, were capable of a more than merely human kind and amount of knowledge.

1. That Art Thou

IN STUDYING THE Perennial Philosophy we can begin either at the bottom, with practice and morality; or at the top, with a consideration of metaphysical truths; or, finally, in the middle, at the focal point where mind and matter, action and thought have their meeting place in human psychology.

The lower gate is that preferred by strictly practical teachers — men who, like Gautama Buddha, have no use for speculation and whose primary concern is to put out in men's hearts the hideous fires of greed, resentment and infatuation. Through the upper gate go those whose vocation it is to think and speculate - the born philosophers and theologians. The middle gate gives entrance to the exponents of what has been called 'spiritual religion' - the devout contemplatives of India, the Sufis of Islam, the Catholic mystics of the later Middle Ages, and, in the Protestant tradition, such men as Denk and Franck and Castellio, as Everard and John Smith and the first Quakers and William Law.

It is through this central door, and just because it is central, that we shall make our entry into the subject matter of this book. The psychology of the Perennial Philosophy has its source in metaphysics and issues logically in a characteristic way of life and system of ethics. Starting from this mid-point of doctrine, it is easy for the mind to move in either direction.

In the present section we shall confine our attention to but a single feature of this traditional psychology - the most important, the most emphatically insisted upon by all exponents of the Perennial Philosophy and, we may add, the least psychological. For the doctrine that is to be illustrated in this section belongs to autology rather than psychology - to the science, not of the personal ego, but of that eternal Self in the depth of particular, individualized selves, and identical with, or at least akin to, the divine Ground. Based upon the direct experience of those who have fulfilled the necessary conditions of such knowledge, this teaching is expressed most succinctly in the Sanskrit formula, *tat Ivaṃ asi* ('That art thou'): the Atman, or immanent eternal Self, is one with Brahman, the Absolute Principle of all existence; and the last end of every human being is to discover the fact for himself, to find out Who he really is.

The more God is in all things, the more He is outside them. The more He is within, the more without.

Eckhart Only the transcendent, the completely other, can be immanent without being modified by the becoming of that in which it dwells. The Perennial Philosophy teaches that it is desirable and indeed necessary to know the spiritual Ground of things,

not only within the soul, but also outside in the world and, beyond world and soul, in its transcendent otherness - 'in heaven.'

Though GOD is everywhere present, yet He is only present to thee in the deepest and most central part of thy soul. The natural senses cannot possess God or unite thee to Him; nay, thy inward faculties of understanding, will and memory can only reach after God, but cannot be the place of His habitation in thee. But there is a root or depth of thee from whence all these faculties come forth, as lines from a centre, or as branches from the body of the tree. This depth is called the centre, the fund or bottom of the soul. This depth is the unity, the eternity - I had almost said the infinity - of thy soul; for it is so infinite that nothing can satisfy it or give it rest but the infinity of God.

William Law This extract seems to contradict what was said above; but the contradiction is not a real one. God within and God without - these are two abstract notions, which can be entertained by the understanding and expressed in words. But the facts to which these notions refer cannot be realized and experienced except in 'the deepest and most central part of the soul.' And this is true no less of God without than of God within. But though the two abstract notions have to be realized (to use a spatial metaphor) in the same place, the intrinsic nature of the realization of God within is qualitatively different from that of the realization of God without, and each in turn is different from that of the realization of the Ground as simultaneously within and without - as the Self of the perceiver and at the same time (in the words of the Bhagavad-Gita) as 'That by which all this world is pervaded.'

When Svetaketu was twelve years old he was sent to a teacher with whom he studied until he was twenty-four. After learning all the Vedas, he returned home full of conceit in the belief that he was consummately well educated, and very censorious.

His father said to him, 'Svetaketu, my child, you who are so full of your learning and so censorious, have you asked for that knowledge by which we hear the unbearable, by which we perceive what cannot be perceived and know what cannot be known?'

'What is that knowledge, sir?' asked Svetaketu.

His father replied, 'As by knowing one lump of clay all that is made of clay is known, the difference being only in name, but the truth being that all is clay - so, my child, is that knowledge, knowing which we know all.'

'But surely these venerable teachers of mine are ignorant of this knowledge; for if they possessed it they would have imparted it to me. Do you, sir, therefore, give me that knowledge.'

'So be it,' said the father... And he said, 'Bring me a fruit of the nyagrodha tree.'

'Here is one, sir.'

'Break it.'

'It is broken, sir.'

'What do you see there?'

'Some seeds, sir, exceedingly small.'

'Break one of these.'

'It is broken, sir.'

'What do you see there?'

'Nothing at all.'

The father said, 'My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there - in that very essence stands the being of the huge nyagrodha tree. In that which is the subtle essence all that exists has its self. That is the True, that is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu, art That.'

'Pray, sir,' said the son, 'tell me more.'

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied; and he said, 'Place this salt in water, and come to me tomorrow morning.'

The son did as he was told.

Next morning the father said, 'Bring me the salt which you put in the water.'

The son looked for it, but could not find it; for the salt, of course, had dissolved.

The father said, 'Taste some of the water from the surface of the vessel. How is it?'

'Salty.'

'Taste some from the middle. How is it?'

'Salty.'

'Taste some from the bottom. How is it?'

'Salty.'

The father said, 'Throw the water away and then come back to me again.'

The son did so; but the salt was not lost, for salt exists for ever. Then the father said, 'Here likewise in this body of yours, my son, you do not perceive the True; but there in fact it is. In that which is the subtle essence, all that exists has its self. That is the True, that is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu, art That.'

From the Chandogya Upanishad The man who wishes to know the 'That' which is 'thou' may set to work in any one of three ways. He may begin by looking inwards into his own particular thou and, by a process of 'dying to self - self in reasoning, self in willing, self in feeling - come at last to a knowledge of the Self, the Kingdom of God that is within. Or else he may begin with the thous existing outside himself, and may try to realize their essential unity with God and, through God, with one another and with his own being. Or, finally (and this is doubtless the best way), he may seek to approach the ultimate That both from within and from without, so that he comes to realize God experimentally as at once the principle of his own thou and of all other thous, animate and inanimate. The completely illuminated human being knows, with Law, that God 'is present in the deepest and most central part of his own soul'; but he is also and at the same time one of those who, in the words of Plotinus, see all things, not in process of becoming, but in Being, and see themselves in the other. Each being contains in itself the whole intelligible world. Therefore All is everywhere. Each is there All, and All is each. Man as he now is has ceased to be the All. But when he ceases to be an individual, he raises himself again and penetrates the whole world.

It is from the more or less obscure intuition of the oneness that is the ground and principle of all multiplicity that philosophy takes its source. And not alone philosophy,

but natural science as well. All science, in Meyerson's phrase, is the reduction of multiplicities to identities. Divining the One within and beyond the many, we find an intrinsic plausibility in any explanation of the diverse in terms of a single principle.

The philosophy of the Upanishads reappears, developed and enriched, in the Bhagavad-Gita and was finally systematized, in the ninth century of our era, by Shankara. Shankara's teaching (simultaneously theoretical and practical, as is that of all true exponents of the Perennial Philosophy) is summarized in his versified treatise, Viveka-Chudamani ('The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom'). All the following passages are taken from this conveniently brief and untechnical work.

The Atman is that by which the universe is pervaded, but which nothing pervades; which causes all things to shine, but which all things cannot make to shine...

The nature of the one Reality must be known by one's own clear spiritual perception; it cannot be known through a pandit (learned man). Similarly the form of the moon can only be known through one's own eyes. How can it be known through others?

Who but the Atman is capable of removing the bonds of ignorance, passion and self-interested action?...

Liberation cannot be achieved except by the perception of the identity of the individual spirit with the universal Spirit. It can be achieved neither by Yoga (physical training), nor by Sankhya (speculative philosophy), nor by the practice of religious ceremonies, nor by mere learning...

Disease is not cured by pronouncing the name of medicine, but by taking medicine. Deliverance is not achieved by repeating the word 'Brahman,' but by directly experiencing Brahman...

The Atman is the Witness of the individual mind and its operations. It is absolute knowledge...

The wise man is one who understands that the essence of Brahman and of Atman is Pure Consciousness, and who realizes their absolute identity. The identity of Brahman and Atman is affirmed in hundreds of sacred texts...

Caste, creed, family and lineage do not exist in Brahman. Brahman has neither name nor form, transcends merit and demerit, is beyond time, space and the objects of sense-experience. Such is Brahman, and 'thou art That.' Meditate upon this truth within your consciousness.

Supreme, beyond the power of speech to express, Brahman may yet be apprehended by the eye of pure illumination. Pure, absolute and eternal Reality - such is Brahman, and 'thou art That.' Meditate upon this truth within your consciousness...

Though One, Brahman is the cause of the many. There is no other cause. And yet Brahman is independent of the law of causation. Such is Brahman, and 'thou art That.' Meditate upon this truth within your consciousness...

The truth of Brahman may be understood intellectually. But (even in those who so understand) the desire for personal separateness is deep-rooted and powerful, for it exists from beginningless time. It creates the notion, 'I am the actor, I am he who experiences.' This notion is the cause of bondage to conditional existence, birth and

death. It can be removed only by the earnest effort to live constantly in union with Brahman. By the sages, the eradication of this notion and the craving for personal separateness is called Liberation.

It is ignorance that causes us to identify ourselves with the body, the ego, the senses, or anything that is not the Atman. He is a wise man who overcomes this ignorance by devotion to the Atman...

When a man follows the way of the world, or the way of the flesh, or the way of tradition (ie when he believes in religious rites and the letter of the scriptures, as though they were intrinsically sacred), knowledge of Reality cannot arise in him.

The wise say that this threefold way is like an iron chain, binding the feet of him who aspires to escape from the prison-house of this world. He who frees himself from the chain achieves Deliverance.

Shankara In the Taoist formulations of the Perennial Philosophy there is an insistence, no less forcible than in the Upanishads, the Gita and the writings of Shankara, upon the universal immanence of the transcendent spiritual Ground of all existence. What follows is an extract from one of the great classics of Taoist literature, the Book of Chuang Tzu, most of which seems to have been written around the turn of the fourth and third centuries B.C.

Do not ask whether the Principle is in this or in that; it is in all beings. It is on this account that we apply to it the epithets of supreme, universal, total... It has ordained that all things should be limited, but is Itself unlimited, infinite. As to what pertains to manifestation, the Principle causes the succession of its phases, but is not this succession. It is the author of causes and effects, but is not the causes and effects. It is the author of condensations and dissipations (birth and death, changes of state), but is not itself condensations and dissipations. All proceeds from It and is under its influence. It is in all things, but is not identical with beings, for it is neither differentiated nor limited.

Chuang Tzu From Taoism we pass to that Mahayana Buddhism which, in the Far East, came to be so closely associated with Taoism, borrowing and bestowing until the two came at last to be fused in what is known as Zen. The Lankavatara Sutra, from which the following extract is taken, was the scripture which the founder of Zen Buddhism expressly recommended to his first disciples.

Those who vainly reason without understanding the truth are lost in the jungle of the Vijnanas (the various forms of relative knowledge), running about here and there and trying to justify their view of ego-substance.

The self realized in your inmost consciousness appears in its purity; this is the Tathagata-garbha (literally, Buddha-womb), which is not the realm of those given over to mere reasoning.., Pure in its own nature and free from the category of finite and infinite, Universal Mind is the undefiled Buddha-womb, which is wrongly apprehended by sentient beings.

Lankavatara Sutra One Nature, perfect and pervading, circulates in all natures, One Reality, all-comprehensive, contains within itself all realities. The one Moon reflects

itself wherever there is a sheet of water, And all the moons in the waters are embraced within the one Moon.

The Dharma-body (the Absolute) of all the Buddhas enters into my own being.

And my own being is found in union with theirs...

The Inner Light is beyond praise and blame; Like space it knows no boundaries, Yet it is even here, within us, ever retaining its serenity and fullness.

It is only when you hunt for it that you lose it; You cannot take hold of it, but equally you cannot get rid of it, And while you can do neither, it goes on its own way.

You remain silent and it speaks; you speak and it is dumb; The great gate of charity is wide open, with no obstacles before it.

Yung-chia Ta-shih I am not competent, nor is this the place to discuss the doctrinal differences between Buddhism and Hinduism. Let it suffice to point out that, when he insisted that human beings are by nature 'non-Atman,' the Buddha was evidently speaking about the personal self and not the universal Self. The Brahman controversialists, who appear in certain of the Pali scriptures, never so much as mention the Vedanta doctrine of the identity of Atman and Godhead and the non-identity of ego and Atman. What they maintain and Gautama denies is the substantial nature and eternal persistence of the individual psyche. 'As an unintelligent man seeks for the abode of music in the body of the lute, so does he look for a soul within the skandhas (the material and psychic aggregates, of which the individual mind-body is composed).' About the existence of the Atman that is Brahman, as about most other metaphysical matters, the Buddha declines to speak, on the ground that such discussions do not tend to edification or spiritual progress among the members of a monastic order, such as he had founded. But though it has its dangers, though it may become the most absorbing, because the most serious and noblest, of distractions, metaphysical thinking is unavoidable and finally necessary. Even the Hinayanists found this, and the later Mahayanists were to develop, in connection with the practice of their religion, a splendid and imposing system of cosmological, ethical and psychological thought. This system was based upon the postulates of a strict idealism and professed to dispense with the idea of God. But moral and spiritual experience was too strong for philosophical theory, and under the inspiration of direct experience, the writers of the Mahayana sutras found themselves using all their ingenuity to explain why the Tathagata and the Bodhisattvas display an infinite charity towards beings that do not really exist. At the same time they stretched the framework of subjective idealism so as to make room for Universal Mind; qualified the idea of soullessness with the doctrine that, if purified, the individual mind can identify itself with the Universal Mind of Buddha-womb; and, while maintaining godlessness, asserted that this realizable Universal Mind is the inner consciousness of the eternal Buddha and that the Buddha-mind is associated with 'a great compassionate heart which desires the liberation of every sentient being and bestows divine grace on all who make a serious effort to achieve man's final end. In a word, despite their inauspicious vocabulary, the best of the Mahayana sutras contain an authentic formulation of the Perennial Philosophy - a formulation which in some

respects (as we shall see when we come to the section, 'God in the World') is more complete than any other.

In India, as in Persia, Mohammedan thought came to be enriched by the doctrine that God is immanent as well as transcendent, while to Mohammedan practice were added the moral disciplines and 'spiritual exercises,' by means of which the soul is prepared for contemplation or the unitive knowledge of the Godhead. It is a significant historical fact that the poet-saint Kabir is claimed as a coreligionist both by Moslems and Hindus. The politics of those whose goal is beyond time are always pacific; it is the idolaters of past and future, of reactionary memory and Utopian dream, who do the persecuting and make the wars.

Behold but One in all things; it is the second that leads you astray.

Kabir That this insight into the nature of things and the origin of good and evil is not confined exclusively to the saint, but is recognized obscurely by every human being, is proved by the very structure of our language. For language, as Richard Trench pointed out long ago, is often 'wiser, not merely than the vulgar, but even than the wisest of those who speak it. Sometimes it locks up truths which were once well known, but have been forgotten. In other cases it holds the germs of truths which, though they were never plainly discerned, the genius of its framers caught a glimpse of in a happy moment of divination.' For example, how significant it is that in the Indo-European languages, as Darmsteter has pointed out, the root meaning 'two' should connote badness. The Greek prefix dys-(as in dyspepsia) and the Latin dis-(as in dishonourable) are both derived from 'duo.' The cognate his gives a pejorative sense to such modern French words as *bévue* ('blunder', literally 'two-sight'). Traces of that 'second which leads you astray' can be found in 'dubious,'

'doubt' and Zweifel - for to doubt is to be double-minded. Bunyan has his Mr Facing-both-ways, and modern American slang its 'two-timers.' Obscurely and unconsciously wise, our language confirms the findings of the mystics and proclaims the essential badness of division - a word, incidentally, in which our old enemy 'two' makes another decisive appearance.

Here it may be remarked that the cult of unity on the political level is only an idolatrous ersatz for the genuine religion of unity on the personal and spiritual levels. Totalitarian regimes justify their existence by means of a philosophy of political monism, according to which the state is God on earth, unification under the heel of the divine state is salvation, and all means to such unification, however intrinsically wicked, are right and may be used without scruple. This political monism leads in practice to excessive privilege and power for the few and oppression for the many, to discontent at home and war abroad. But excessive privilege and power are standing temptations to pride, greed, vanity and cruelty, oppression results in fear and envy; war breeds hatred, misery and despair. All such negative emotions are fatal to the spiritual life. Only the pure in heart and poor in spirit can come to the unitive knowledge of God. Hence, the attempt to impose more unity upon societies than their individual

members are ready for makes it psychologically almost impossible for those individuals to realize their unity with the divine Ground and with one another.

Among the Christians and the Sufis, to whose writings we now return, the concern is primarily with the human mind and its divine essence.

My Me is God, nor do I recognize any other Me except my God Himself.

St Catherine of Genoa In those respects in which the soul is unlike God, it is also unlike itself.

St Bernard I went from God to God, until they cried from me in me, 'O thou I!'

Bayazid of Bistun Two of the recorded anecdotes about this Sufi saint deserve to be quoted here. 'When Bayazid was asked how old he was, he replied, "Four years." They said, "How can that be?" He answered, "I have been veiled from God by the world for seventy years, but I have seen Him during the last four years. The period during which one is veiled does not belong to one's life."' On another occasion someone knocked at the saint's door and cried, 'Is Bayazid here?' Bayazid answered, 'Is anybody here except God?'

To gauge the soul we must gauge it with God, for the Ground of God and the Ground of the Soul are one and the same.

Eckhart The spirit possesses God essentially in naked nature, and God the spirit.

Ruysbroeck For though she sink all sinking in the oneness of divinity, she never touches bottom. For it is of the very essence of the soul that she is powerless to plumb the depths of her creator. And here one cannot speak of the soul any more, for she has lost her nature vnder in the oneness of divine essence. There she is no more called soul, but is called immeasurable being.

Eckhart The knower and the known are one. Simple people imagine that they should see God, as if He stood there and they here. This is not so. God and I, we are one in knowledge.

Eckhart 'I live, yet not I, but Christ in me.' Or perhaps it might be more accurate to use the verb transitively and say, I live, yet not I; for it is the Logos who lives me' - lives me as an actor lives his part. In such a case, of course, the actor is always infinitely superior to the rôle. Where real life is concerned, there are no Shakespearean characters, there are only Addisonian Catos or, more often, grotesque Monsieur Perrichons and Charley's Aunts mistaking themselves for Julius Caesar or the Prince of Denmark. But by a merciful dispensation it is always in the power of every dramatis persona to get his low, stupid lines pronounced and supernaturally transfigured by the divine equivalent of a Garrick.

O my God, how does it happen in this poor old world that Thou art so great and yet nobody finds Thee, that Thou callest so loudly and nobody hears Thee, that Thou art so near and nobody feels Thee, that Thou givest Thyself to everybody and nobody knows Thy name? Men flee from Thee and say they cannot find Thee; they turn their backs and say they cannot see Thee; they stop their ears and say they cannot hear Thee.

Hans Denk Between the Catholic mystics of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the Quakers of the seventeenth there yawns a wide gap of time made hideous, so far as religion is concerned, with interdenominational wars and persecutions. But the gulf was bridged by a succession of men, whom Rufus Jones, in the only accessible English work devoted to their lives and teachings, has called the 'Spiritual Reformers.' Denk, Franck, Castellio, Weigel, Everard, the Cambridge Platonists - in spite of the murdering and the madness, the apostolic succession remains unbroken. The truths that had been spoken in the *Theologia Germanica* — that book which Luther professed to love so much and from which, if we may judge from his career, he learned so singularly little - were being uttered once again by Englishmen during the Civil War and under the Cromwellian dictatorship. The mystical tradition, perpetuated by the Protestant Spiritual Reformers, had become diffused, as it were, in the religious atmosphere of the time when George Fox had his first great 'opening' and knew by direct experience: that Every Man was enlightened by the Divine Light of Christ, and I saw it shine through all; And that they that believed in it came out of Condemnation and came to the Light of Life, and became the Children of it; And that they that hated it and did not believe in it, were condemned by it, though they made a profession of Christ. This I saw in the pure Openings of Light, without the help of any Man, neither did I then know where to find it in the Scriptures, though afterwards, searching the Scriptures, I found it.

From Fox's *Journal* The doctrine of the Inner Light achieved a clearer formulation in the writings of the second generation of Quakers. 'There is,' wrote William Penn, 'something nearer to us than Scriptures, to wit, the Word in the heart from which all Scriptures come.' And a little later Robert Barclay sought to explain the direct experience of *I am in God* in terms of an Augustinian theology that had, of course, to be considerably stretched and trimmed before it could fit the facts. Man, he declared in his famous theses, is a fallen being, incapable of good, unless united to the Divine Light. This Divine Light is Christ within the human soul, and is as universal as the seed of sin. All men, heathen as well as Christian, are endowed with the Inward Light, even though they may know nothing of the outward history of Christ's life. Justification is for those who do not resist the Inner Light and so permit of a new birth of holiness within them.

Goodness needeth not to enter into the soul, for it is there already, only it is unperceived.

Theologia Germanica When the Ten Thousand things are viewed in their oneness, we return to the Origin and remain where we have always been.

Sen T'sen

It is because we don't know Who we are, because we are unaware that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, that we behave in the generally silly, the often insane, the sometimes criminal ways that are so characteristically human. We are saved, we are liberated and enlightened, by perceiving the hitherto unperceived good that is already within us, by returning to our eternal Ground and remaining where, without knowing

it, we have always been. Plato speaks in the same sense when he says, in the Republic, that 'the virtue of wisdom more than anything else contains a divine clement which always remains. And in the Theaetetus he makes the point, so frequently insisted upon by those who have practised spiritual religion, that it is only by becoming Godlike that we can know God — and to become Godlike is to identify ourselves with the divine clement which in fact constitutes our essential nature, but of which, in our mainly voluntary ignorance, we choose to remain unaware.

They are on the way to truth who apprehend God by means of the divine, Light by the light.

Philo

Philo was the exponent of the Hellenistic Mystery Religion which grew up, as Professor Good enough has shown, among the Jews of the Dispersion between about 200 B.C. and 100 A.D. Reinterpreting the Pentateuch in terms of a metaphysical system derived from Platonism, Neo-Pythagoreanism and Stoicism, Philo transformed the wholly transcendental and almost anthropomorphically personal God of the Old Testament into the immanent-transcendent Absolute Mind of the Perennial Philosophy. But even from the orthodox scribes and Pharisees of that momentous century which witnessed along with the dissemination of Philo's doctrines, the first beginnings of Christianity and the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem, even from the guardians of the Law we hear significantly mystical utterances. Hillel, the great rabbi whose teachings on humility and the love of God and man read like an earlier, cruder version of some of the Gospel sermons, is reported to have spoken these words to an assemblage in the courts of the Temple. 'If I am here' (it is Jehovah who is speaking through the mouth of his prophet), 'everyone is here. If I am not here, no one is here.'

The Beloved is all in all; the lover merely veils Him;

The Beloved is all that lives, the lover a dead thing.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

There is a spirit in the soul, untouched by time and flesh, flowing from the Spirit, remaining in the Spirit, itself wholly spiritual. In this principle is God, ever verdant, ever flowering in all the joy and glory of His actual Self. Sometimes I have called this principle the Tabernacle of the soul, sometimes a spiritual Light, anon I say it is a Spark. But now I say that it is more exalted over this and that than the heavens are exalted above the earth. So now name it in a nobler fashion... It is free of all names and void of all forms. It is one and simple, as God is one and simple, and no man can in any wise behold it. —

Eckhart

Crude formulations of some of the doctrines of the Perennial Philosophy are to be found in the thought-systems of the uncivilized and so-called primitive peoples of the world. Among the Maoris, for example, every human being is regarded as a compound of four elements - a divine eternal principle, known as the *toiora*; an ego, which disappears at death; a ghost-shadow, or *psyche*, which survives death; and finally a body. Among the Oglala Indians the divine element is called the *sican*, and this is

regarded as identical with the ton, or divine essence of the world. Other elements of the self are the nagi, or personality, and niya, or vital soul. After death the sican is reunited with the divine Ground of all things, the nagi survives in the ghost world of psychic phenomena and the niya disappears into the material universe.

In regard to no twentieth-century 'primitive' society can we rule out the possibility of influence by, or borrowing from, some higher culture. Consequently, we have no right to argue from the present to the past. Because many contemporary savages have an esoteric philosophy that is monotheistic with a monotheism that is sometimes of the 'That art thou' variety, we are not entitled to infer offhand that neolithic or palaeolithic men held similar views.

More legitimate and more intrinsically plausible are the inferences that may be drawn from what we know about our own physiology and psychology. We know that human minds have proved themselves capable of everything from imbecility to Quantum Theory, from Mein Kampf and sadism to the sanctity of Philip Neri, from metaphysics to crossword puzzles, power politics and the Missa Solemnis. We also know that human minds are in some way associated with human brains, and we have fairly good reasons for supposing that there have been no considerable changes in the size and conformation of human brains for a good many thousands of years. Consequently it seems justifiable to infer that human minds in the remote past were capable of as many and as various kinds and degrees of activity as are minds at the present time.

It is, however, certain that many activities undertaken by some minds at the present time were not, in the remote past, undertaken by any minds at all. For this there are several obvious reasons. Certain thoughts are practically unthinkable except in terms of an appropriate language and within the framework of an appropriate system of classification. Where these necessary instruments do not exist, the thoughts in question are not expressed and not even conceived. Nor is this all: the incentive to develop the instruments of certain kinds of thinking is not always present. For long periods of history and prehistory it would seem that men and women, though perfectly capable of doing so, did not wish to pay attention to problems which their descendants found absorbingly interesting. For example, there is no reason to suppose that, between the thirteenth century and the twentieth, the human mind underwent any kind of evolutionary change, comparable to the change, let us say, in the physical structure of the horse's foot during an incomparably longer span of geological time. What happened was that men turned their attention from certain aspects of reality to certain other aspects. The result, among other things, was the development of the natural sciences. Our perceptions and our understanding are directed, in large measure, by our will.

We are aware of, and we think about, the things which, for one reason or another, we want to see and understand. Where there's a will there is always an intellectual way. The capacities of the human mind are almost indefinitely great. Whatever we will to do, whether it be to come to the unitive knowledge of the Godhead, or to manufacture self-propelled flame-throwers — that we are able to do, provided always that the willing be sufficiently intense and sustained.

It is clear that many of the things to which modern men have chosen to pay attention were ignored by their predecessors. Consequently the very means for thinking clearly and fruitfully about those things remained uninvented, not merely during prehistoric times, but even to the opening of the modern era.

The lack of a suitable vocabulary and an adequate frame of reference, and the absence of any strong and sustained desire to invent these necessary instruments of thought - here are two sufficient reasons why so many of the almost endless potentialities of the human mind remained for so long unactualized. Another and, on its own level, equally cogent reason is this: much of the world's most original and fruitful thinking is done by people of poor physique and of a thoroughly unpractical turn of mind. Because this is so, and because the value of pure thought, whether analytical or integral, has everywhere been more or less clearly recognized, provision was and still is made by every civilized society for giving thinkers a measure of protection from the ordinary strains and stresses of social life. The hermitage, the monastery, the college, the academy and the research laboratory; the begging bowl, the endowment, patronage and the grant of taxpayers' money - such are the principal devices that have been used by actives to conserve that rare bird, the religious, philosophical, artistic or scientific contemplative. In many primitive societies conditions are hard and there is no surplus wealth. The born contemplative has to face the struggle for existence and social predominance without protection. The result, in most cases, is that he either dies young or is too desperately busy merely keeping alive to be able to devote his attention to anything else. When this happens the prevailing philosophy will be that of the hardy, extraverted man of action.

All this sheds some light — dim, it is true, and merely inferential - on the problem of the perennialness of the Perennial Philosophy. In India the scriptures were regarded, not as revelations made at some given moment of history, but as eternal gospels, existent from everlasting to everlasting, inasmuch as coeval with man, or for that matter with any other kind of corporeal or incorporeal being possessed of reason. A similar point of view is expressed by Aristotle, who regards the fundamental truths of religion as everlasting and indestructible. There have been ascents and falls, periods (literally 'roads around' or cycles) of progress and regress; but the great fact of God as the First Mover of a universe which partakes of his divinity has always been recognized. In the light of what we know about prehistoric man (and what we know amounts to nothing more than a few chipped stones, some paintings, drawings and sculptures) and of what we may legitimately infer from other, better documented fields of knowledge, what are we to think of these traditional doctrines? My own view is that they may be true. We know that born contemplatives in the realm both of analytic and of integral thought have turned up in fair numbers and at frequent intervals during recorded history. There is therefore every reason to suppose that they turned up before history was recorded. That many of these people died young or were unable to exercise their talents is certain. But a few of them must have survived. In this context it is highly significant that among many contemporary primitives, two thought-patterns are found - an exoteric pattern

for the unphilosophic many and an esoteric pattern (often monotheistic, with a belief in a God not merely of power, but of goodness and wisdom) for the initiated few. There is no reason to suppose that circumstances were any harder for prehistoric men than they are for many contemporary savages. But if an esoteric monotheism of the kind that seems to come natural to the born thinker is possible in modern savage societies, the majority of whose members accept the sort of polytheistic philosophy that seems to come natural to men of action, a similar esoteric doctrine might have been current in prehistoric societies. True, the modern esoteric doctrines may have been derived from higher cultures. But the significant fact remains that, if so derived, they yet had a meaning for certain members of the primitive society and were considered valuable enough to be carefully preserved. We have seen that many thoughts are unthinkable apart from an appropriate vocabulary and frame of reference. But the fundamental ideas of the Perennial Philosophy can be formulated in a very simple vocabulary, and the experiences to which the ideas refer can and indeed must be had immediately and apart from any vocabulary whatsoever. Strange openings and theophanies are granted to quite small children, who are often profoundly and permanently affected by these experiences. We have no reason to suppose that what happens now to persons with small vocabularies did not happen in remote antiquity. In the modern world (as Vaughan and Traherne and Wordsworth, among others, have told us) the child tends to grow out of his direct awareness of the one Ground of things; for the habit of analytical thought is fatal to the intuitions of integral thinking, whether on the psychic or the spiritual level. Psychic preoccupations may be and often are a major obstacle in the way of genuine spirituality. In primitive societies now (and, presumably, in the remote past) there is much preoccupation with, and a widespread talent for, psychic thinking. But a few people may have worked their way through psychic into genuinely spiritual experience—just as, even in modern industrialized societies, a few people work their way out of the prevailing preoccupation with matter and through the prevailing habits of analytical thought into the direct experience of the spiritual Ground of things.

Such, then, very briefly are the reasons for supposing that the historical traditions of oriental and our own classical antiquity may be true. It is interesting to find that at least one distinguished contemporary ethnologist is in agreement with Aristotle and the Vedantists. ‘Orthodox ethnology,’ writes Dr Paul Radin in his *Primitive Man as Philosopher*, ‘has been nothing but an enthusiastic and quite uncritical attempt to apply the Darwinian theory of evolution to the facts of social experience.’ And he adds that ‘no progress in ethnology will be achieved until scholars rid themselves once and for all of the curious notion that everything possesses a history; until they realize that certain ideas and certain concepts are as ultimate for man, as a social being, as specific physiological reactions are ultimate for him, as a biological being.’ Among these ultimate concepts, in Dr Radin’s view, is that of monotheism. Such monotheism is often no more than the recognition of a single dark and numinous Power ruling the world. But it may sometimes be genuinely ethical and spiritual.

The nineteenth century's mania for history and prophetic Utopianism tended to blind the eyes of even its acutest thinkers to the timeless facts of eternity. Thus we find T. H. Green writing of mystical union as though it were an evolutionary process and not as all the evidence seems to show, a state which man, as man, has always had it in his power to realize. 'An animal organism, which has its history in time, gradually becomes the vehicle of an eternally complete consciousness, which in itself can have no history, but a history of the process by which the animal organism becomes its vehicle.' But in actual fact it is only in regard to peripheral knowledge that there has been a genuine historical development. Without much lapse of time and much accumulation of skills and information there can be but an imperfect knowledge of the material world. But direct awareness of the 'eternally complete consciousness,' which is the ground of the material world, is a possibility occasionally actualized by some human beings at almost any stage of their own personal development, from childhood to old age, and at any period of their race's history.

2. The Nature of the Ground

OUR STARTING POINT has been the psychological doctrine, 'That art thou.' The question that now quite naturally presents itself is a metaphysical one: What is the That to which the thou can discover itself to be akin?

To this the fully developed Perennial Philosophy has at all times and in all places given fundamentally the same answer. The divine Ground of all existence is a spiritual Absolute, ineffable in terms of discursive thought, but (in certain circumstances) susceptible of being directly experienced and realized by the human being. This Absolute is the God-without-form of Hindu and Christian mystical phraseology. The last end of man, the ultimate reason for human existence, is unitive knowledge of the divine Ground - the knowledge that can come only to those who are prepared to 'die to self' and so make room, as it were, for God. Out of any given generation of men and women very few will achieve the final end of human existence; but the opportunity for coming to unitive knowledge will, in one way or another, continually be offered until all sentient beings realize Who in fact they are.

The Absolute Ground of all existence has a personal aspect. The activity of Brahman is Isvara, and Isvara is further manifested in the Hindu Trinity and, at a more distant remove, in the other deities or angels of the Indian pantheon. Analogously, for Christian mystics, the ineffable, attributeless Godhead is manifested in a Trinity of Persons, of whom it is possible to predicate such human attributes as goodness, wisdom, mercy and love, but in a supereminent degree.

Finally there is an incarnation of God in a human being, who possesses the same qualities of character as the personal God, but who exhibits them under the limitations necessarily imposed by confinement within a material body born into the world at a given moment of time. For Christians there has been and, ex hypothesi, can be but one such divine incarnation; for Indians there can be and have been many. In Christendom as well as in the East, contemplatives who follow the path of devotion conceive of, and indeed directly perceive, the incarnation as a constantly renewed fact of experience. Christ is for ever being begotten within the soul by the Father, and the play of Krishna is the pseudo-historical symbol of an everlasting truth of psychology and metaphysics — the fact that, in relation to God, the personal soul is always feminine and passive.

Mahayana Buddhism teaches these same metaphysical doctrines in terms of the 'Three Bodies of Buddha' — the absolute Dharmakaya, known also as the Primordial Buddha, or Mind, or the Clear Light of the Void, the Sambhogakaya, corresponding to Isvara or the personal God of Judaism, Christianity and Islam; and finally the

Nirmanakaya, the material body, in which the Logos is incarnated upon earth as a living, historical Buddha.

Among the Sufis, Al Haqq, the Real, seems to be thought of as the abyss of Godhead underlying the personal Allah, while the Prophet is taken out of history and regarded as the incarnation of the Logos.

Some idea of the inexhaustible richness of the divine nature can be obtained by analysing, word by word, the invocation with which the Lord's Prayer begins - 'Our Father who art in heaven.' God is ours — ours in the same intimate sense that our consciousness and life are ours. But as well as immanently ours, God is also transcendently the personal Father, who loves his creatures and to whom love and allegiance are owed by them in return. 'Our Father who art': when we come to consider the verb in isolation, we perceive that the immanent-transcendent personal God is also the immanent-transcendent One, the essence and principle of all existence. And, finally God's being is 'in heaven'; the divine nature is other than, and incommensurable with, the nature of the creatures in whom God is immanent. That is why we can attain to the unitive knowledge of God only when we become in some measure Godlike, only when we permit God's kingdom to come by making our own creaturely kingdom go.

God may be worshipped and contemplated in any of his aspects. But to persist in worshipping only one aspect to the exclusion of all the rest is to run into grave spiritual peril. Thus, if we approach God with the preconceived idea that He is exclusively the personal, transcendental, all-powerful ruler of the world, we run the risk of becoming entangled in a religion of rites, propitiatory sacrifices (sometimes of the most horrible nature) and legalistic observances. Inevitably so; for if God is an unapproachable potentate out there, giving mysterious orders, this kind of religion is entirely appropriate to the cosmic situation. The best that can be said for ritualistic legalism is that it improves conduct. It does little, however, to alter character and nothing of itself to modify consciousness.

Things are a great deal better when the transcendent, omnipotent personal God is regarded as also a loving Father. The sincere worship of such a God changes character as well as conduct, and does something to modify consciousness. But the complete transformation of consciousness, which is 'enlightenment,'

'deliverance,'

'salvation,' comes only when God is thought of as the Perennial Philosophy affirms Him to be - immanent as well as transcendent, supra-personal as well as personal - and when religious practices are adapted to this conception.

When God is regarded as exclusively immanent, legalism and external practices are abandoned and there is a concentration on the Inner Light. The dangers now are quietism and antinomianism, a partial modification of consciousness that is useless or even harmful, because it is not accompanied by the transformation of character which is the necessary prerequisite of a total, complete and spiritually fruitful transformation of consciousness.

Finally it is possible to think of God as an exclusively supra-personal being. For many persons this conception is too 'philosophical' to provide an adequate motive for doing anything practical about their beliefs. Hence, for them, it is of no value.

It would be a mistake, of course, to suppose that people who worship one aspect of God to the exclusion of all the rest must inevitably run into the different kinds of trouble described above. If they are not too stubborn in their ready-made beliefs, if they submit with docility to what happens to them in the process of worshipping, the God who is both immanent and transcendent, personal and more than personal, may reveal Himself to them in his fullness. Nevertheless, the fact remains that it is easier for us to reach our goal if we are not handicapped by a set of erroneous or inadequate beliefs about the right way to get there and the nature of what we are looking for.

Who is God? I can think of no better answer than, He who is. Nothing is more appropriate to the eternity which God is. If you call God good, or great, or blessed, or wise, or anything else of this sort, it is included in these words, namely, He is.

St Bernard The purpose of all words is to illustrate the meaning of an object. When they are heard, they should enable the hearer to understand this meaning, and this according to the four categories of substance, of activity, of quality and of relationship. For example, cow and horse belong to the category of substance. He cooks or he prays belongs to the category of activity. White and black belong to the category of quality. Having money or possessing cows belongs to the category of relationship. Now there is no class of substance to which the Brahman belongs, no common genus. It cannot therefore be denoted by words which, like 'being' in the ordinary sense, signify a category of things. Nor can it be denoted by quality, for it is without qualities; nor yet by activity, because it is without activity - 'at rest, without parts or activity,' according to the Scriptures. Neither can it be denoted by relationship, for it is 'without a second' and is not the object of anything but its own self. Therefore it cannot be defined by word or idea; as the Scripture says, it is the One 'before whom words recoil.'

Shankara

It was from the Nameless that Heaven and Earth sprang; The named is but the mother that rears the ten thousand creatures, each after its kind.

Truly, 'Only he that rids himself forever of desire can see the Secret Essences.'

He that has never rid himself of desire can see only the Outcomes.

Lao Tzu One of the greatest favours bestowed on the soul transiently in this life is to enable it to see so distinctly and to feel so profoundly that it cannot comprehend God at all. These souls are herein somewhat like the saints in heaven, where they who know Him most perfectly perceive most clearly that He is infinitely incomprehensible; for those who have the less clear vision do not perceive so clearly as do these others how greatly He transcends their vision.

St John of the Cross When I came out of the Godhead into multiplicity, then all things proclaimed, 'There is a God' (the personal Creator). Now this cannot make me blessed, for hereby I realize myself as creature.

But in the breaking through I am more than all creatures; I am neither God nor creature; I am that which I was and shall remain, now and for ever more. There I receive a thrust which carries me above all angels. By this thrust I become so rich that God is not sufficient for me, in so far as He is only God in his divine works. For in thus breaking through, I perceive what God and I are in common. There I am what I was. There I neither increase nor decrease. For there I am the immovable which moves all things. Here man has won again what he is eternally and ever shall be. Here God is received into the soul.

Eckhart

The Godhead gave all things up to God. The Godhead is poor, naked and empty as though it were not; it has not, wills not, wants not, works not, gets not. It is God who has the treasure and the bride in him, the Godhead is as void as though it were not.

Eckhart

We can understand something of what lies beyond our experience by considering analogous cases lying within our experience. Thus, the relations subsisting between the world and God and between God and the Godhead seen to be analogous, in some measure at least, to those that hold between the body (with its environment) and the psyche, and between the psyche and the spirit. In the light of what we know about the second — and what we know of the first: not, unfortunately, very much — we may be able to form some not too hopelessly inadequate notions about the first.

Mind affects its body in four ways - subconsciously through that unbelievably subtle physiological intelligence which Driesch hypostatized under the name of the entelechy; consciously, by deliberate acts of will; subconsciously again, by the reaction upon the physical organism of emotional states having nothing to do with the organs or processes reacted upon; and, either consciously or subconsciously, in certain 'supernormal' manifestations. Outside the body matter can be influenced by the mind in two ways - first, by means of the body, and second, by a 'supernormal process,' recently studied under laboratory conditions and described as 'the PK effect.' Similarly, the mind can establish relations with other minds either indirectly, by willing its body to undertake symbolic activities, such as speech or writing; or 'supernormally,' by the direct approach of mind-reading, telepathy, extra-sensory perception.

Let us now consider these relationships a little more closely. In some fields the physiological intelligence works on its own initiative, as when it directs the never-ceasing processes of breathing, say, or assimilation. In others it acts at the behest of the conscious mind, as when we will to accomplish some action, but do not and cannot will the muscular, glandular, nervous and vascular means to the desired end. The apparently simple act of mimicry well illustrates the extraordinary nature of the feats performed by the physiological intelligence. When a parrot (making use, let us remember, of the beak, tongue and throat of a bird) imitates the sounds produced by the lips, teeth, palate and vocal cords of a man articulating words, what precisely happens? Responding in some as yet entirely uncomprehended way to the conscious

mind's desire to imitate some remembered or immediately perceived event, the physiological intelligence sets in motion large numbers of muscles, co-ordinating their efforts with such exquisite skill that the result is a more or less perfect copy of the original. Working on its own level, the conscious mind not merely of a parrot, but of the most highly gifted of human beings, would find itself completely baffled by a problem of comparable complexity.

As an example of the third way in which our minds affect matter, we may cite the all-too-familiar phenomenon of 'nervous indigestion.' In certain persons symptoms of dyspepsia make their appearance when the conscious mind is troubled by such negative emotions as fear, envy, anger or hatred. These emotions are directed towards events or persons in the outer environment; but in some way or other they adversely affect the physiological intelligence and this derangement results, among other things, in 'nervous indigestion.' From tuberculosis and gastric ulcer to heart disease and even dental caries, numerous physical ailments have been found to be closely correlated with certain undesirable states of the conscious mind. Conversely every physician knows that a calm and cheerful patient is much more likely to recover than one who is agitated and depressed.

Finally we come to such occurrences as faith healing and levitation — occurrences 'supernormally strange, but nevertheless attested by masses of evidence which it is hard to discount completely. Precisely how faith cures diseases (whether at Lourdes or in the hypnotist's consulting room), or how St Joseph of Cupertino was able to ignore the laws of gravitation, we do not know. (But let us remember that we are less ignorant of the way in which minds and bodies are related in the most ordinary of everyday activities.) In the same way we are unable to form any idea of the *modus operandi* of what Professor Rhine has called the PK effect. Nevertheless the fact that the fall of dice can be influenced by the mental states of certain individuals seems now to have been established beyond the possibility of doubt. And if the PK effect can be demonstrated in the laboratory and measured by statistical methods, then, obviously, the intrinsic credibility of the scattered anecdotal evidence for the direct influence of mind upon matter, not merely within the body, but outside in the external world, is thereby notably increased. The same is true of extra-sensory perception. Apparent examples of it are constantly turning up in ordinary life. But science is almost impotent to cope with the particular case, the isolated instance. Promoting their methodological ineptitude to the rank of a criterion of truth, dogmatic scientists have often branded everything beyond the pale of their limited competence as unreal and even impossible. But when tests for ESP can be repeated under standardized conditions, the subject comes under the jurisdiction of the law of probabilities and achieves (in the teeth of what passionate opposition!) a measure of scientific respectability.

Such, very baldly and briefly, are the most important things we know about mind in regard to its capacity to influence matter. From this modest knowledge about ourselves, what are we entitled to conclude in regard to the divine object of our nearly total ignorance?

First, as to creation: if a human mind can directly influence matter not merely within, but even outside its body, then a divine mind, immanent in the universe or transcendent to it, may be presumed to be capable of imposing forms upon a pre-existing chaos of formless matter, or even, perhaps, of thinking substance as well as forms into existence.

Once created or divinely informed, the universe has to be sustained. The necessity for a continuous re-creation of the world becomes manifest, according to Descartes, 'when we consider the nature of time, or the duration of things; for this is of such a kind that its parts are not mutually dependent and never co-existent; and, accordingly, from the fact that we are now it does not necessarily follow that we shall be a moment afterwards, unless some cause, viz that which first produced us, shall, as it were, continually reproduce us, that is, conserve us.' Here we seem to have something analogous, on the cosmic level, to that physiological intelligence which, in men and the lower animals, unsleepingly performs the task of seeing that bodies behave as they should. Indeed, the physiological intelligence may plausibly be regarded as a special aspect of the general re-creating Logos. In Chinese phraseology it is the Tao as it manifests itself on the level of living bodies.

The bodies of human beings are affected by the good or bad states of their minds. Analogously, the existence at the heart of things of a divine serenity and goodwill may be regarded as one of the reasons why the world's sickness, though chronic, has not proved fatal. And if, in the psychic universe, there should be other and more than human consciousnesses obsessed by thoughts of evil and egotism and rebellion, this would account, perhaps, for some of the quite extravagant and improbable wickedness of human behaviour.

The acts willed by our minds are accomplished either through the instrumentality of the physiological intelligence and the body, or, very exceptionally, and to a limited extent, by direct supernormal means of the PK variety. Analogously the physical situations willed by a divine Providence may be arranged by the perpetually creating Mind that sustains the universe — in which case Providence will appear to do its work by wholly natural means; or else, very exceptionally, the divine Mind may act directly on the universe from the outside, as it were — in which case the workings of Providence and the gifts of grace will appear to be miraculous. Similarly, the divine Mind may choose to communicate with finite minds either by manipulating the world of men and things in ways which the Particular mind to be reached at that moment will find meaningful; or else there may be direct communication by something resembling thought transference.

In Eckhart's phrase, God, the creator and perpetual recreator of the world, 'becomes and disbecomes.' In other words He is, to some extent at least, in time. A temporal God might have the nature of the traditional Hebrew God of the Old Testament; or He might be a limited deity of the kind described by certain philosophical theologians of the present century; or alternatively He might be an emergent God, starting unspiritually at Alpha and becoming gradually more divine as the aeons rolled on towards some

hypothetical Omega. (Why the movement should be towards more and better rather than less and worse, upwards rather than downwards or in undulations, onwards rather than round and round, one really doesn't know. There seems to be no reason why a God who is exclusively temporal — a God who merely becomes and is ungrounded in eternity - should not be as completely at the mercy of time as is the individual mind apart from the spirit. A God who becomes is a God who also disbecomes, and it is the disbecoming which may ultimately prevail, so that the last state of emergent deity may be worse than the first.)

The ground in which the multifarious and time-bound psyche is rooted is a simple, timeless awareness. By making ourselves pure in heart and poor in spirit we can discover and be identified with this awareness. In the spirit we not only have, but arc, the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground.

Analogously, God in time is grounded in the eternal now of the modeless Godhead. It is in the Godhead that things, lives and minds have their being; it is through God that they have their becoming - a becoming whose goal and purpose is to return to the eternity of the Ground.

Meanwhile, I beseech you by the eternal and imperishable truth, and by my soul, consider; grasp the unheard-of. God and Godhead are as distinct as heaven and earth. Heaven stands a thousand miles above the earth, and even so the Godhead is above God. God becomes and disbecomes. Whoever understands this preaching, I wish him well. But even if nobody had been here I must still have preached this to the poor-box.

Eckhart

Like St Augustine, Eckhart was to some extent the victim of his own literary talents. *Le style c'est l'homme*. No doubt. But the converse is also partly true. *L'homme c'est le style*. Because we have a gift for writing in a certain way, we find ourselves, in some sort, becoming our way of writing. We mould ourselves in the likeness of our particular brand of eloquence. Eckhart was one of the inventors of German prose, and he was tempted by his new-found mastery of forceful expression to commit himself to extreme positions - to be doctrinally the image of his powerful and over-emphatic sentences. A statement like the foregoing would lead one to believe that he despised what the Vedantists call the 'lower knowledge' of Brahman, not as the Absolute Ground of all things, but as the personal God. In reality he, like the Vedantists, accepts the lower knowledge as genuine knowledge and regards devotion to the personal God as the best preparation for the unitive knowledge of the Godhead. Another point to remember is that the attributeless Godhead of Vedanta, of Mahayana Buddhism, of Christian and Sufi mysticism is the Ground of all the qualities possessed by the personal God and the Incarnation. 'God is not good, I am good, says Eckhart in his violent and excessive way. What he really meant was, 'I am just humanly good; God is supereminently good; the Godhead is, and his "isness" (*istigheit*, in Eckhart's German) contains goodness, love, wisdom and all the rest in their essence and principle.' In consequence, the Godhead is never, for the exponent of the Perennial Philosophy, the mere Absolute of academic metaphysics, but something more purely perfect, more reverently to be adored than

even the personal God or his human incarnation - a Being towards whom it is possible to feel the most intense devotion and in relation to whom it is necessary (if one is to come to that unitive knowledge which is man's final end) to practise a discipline more arduous and unremitting than any imposed by ecclesiastical authority.

There is a distinction and differentiation, according to our reason, between God and the Godhead, between action and rest. The fruitful nature of the Persons ever worketh in a living differentiation. But the simple Being of God, according to the nature thereof, is an eternal Rest of God and of all created things.

Ruysbroeck

(In the Reality unitively known by the mystic), we can speak no more of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, nor of any creature, but only one Being, which is the very substance of the Divine Persons. There were we all one before our creation, for this is our superessence. There the Godhead is in simple essence without activity.

Ruysbroeck

The holy light of faith is so pure that, compared with it, particular lights are but impurities; and even ideas of the saints, of the Blessed Virgin, and the sight of Jesus Christ in his humanity are impediments in the way of the sight of God in his purity.

J J Olier

Coming as it does from a devout Catholic of the Counter-Reformation, this statement may seem somewhat startling. But we must remember that Olier (who was a man of saintly life and one of the most influential religious teachers of the seventeenth century) is speaking here about a state of consciousness, to which few people ever come. To those on the ordinary levels of being he recommends other modes of knowledge. One of his penitents, for example, was advised to read, as a corrective to St John of the Cross and other exponents of pure mystical theology, St Gertrude's revelations of the incarnate and even physiological aspects of the deity. In Olier's opinion, as in that of most directors of souls, whether Catholic or Indian, it was mere folly to recommend the worship of God-without-form to persons who are in a condition to understand only the personal and the incarnate aspects of the divine Ground. This is a perfectly sensible attitude, and we are justified in adopting a policy in accordance with it — provided always that we clearly remember that its adoption may be attended by certain spiritual dangers and disadvantages. The nature of these dangers and disadvantages will be illustrated and discussed in another section. For the present it will suffice to quote the warning words of Philo: 'He who thinks that God has any quality and is not the One, injures not God, but himself.'

Thou must love God as not-God, not-Spirit, not-person, not-image, but as He is, a sheer, pure absolute One, sundered from all two-ness, and in whom we must eternally sink from nothingness to nothingness.

Eckhart

What Eckhart describes as the pure One, the absolute not-God in whom we must sink from nothingness to nothingness is called in Mahayana Buddhism the Clear Light

of the Void. What follows is part of a formula addressed by the Tibetan priest to a person in the act of death.

O nobly born, the time has now come for thee to seek the Path. Thy breathing is about to cease. In the past thy teacher hath set thee face to face with the Clear Light; and now thou art about to experience it in its Reality in the Bardo state (the 'intermediate state' immediately following death, in which the soul is judged - or rather judges itself by choosing, in accord with the character formed during its life on earth, what sort of an after-life it shall have). In this Bardo state all things are like the cloudless sky, and the naked, immaculate Intellect is like unto a translucent void without circumference or centre. At this moment know thou thyself and abide in that state. I, too, at this time, am setting thee face to face.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead

Going back further into the past, we find in one of the earliest Upanishads the classical description of the Absolute One as a Super-Essential No-Thing.

The significance of Brahman is expressed by *neti neti* (not so, not so); for beyond this, that you say it is not so, there is nothing further. Its name, however, is 'the Reality of reality.' That is to say, the senses are real, and the Brahman is their Reality.

Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad

In other words, there is a hierarchy of the real. The manifold world of our everyday experience is real with a relative reality that is, on its own level, unquestionable; but this relative reality has its being within and because of the absolute Reality, which, on account of the incommensurable otherness of its eternal nature, we can never hope to describe, even though it is possible for us directly to apprehend it.

The extract which follows next is of great historical significance, since it was mainly through the 'Mystical Theology' and the 'Divine Names' of the fifth-century author who wrote under the name of Dionysius the Arcopagite that medieval Christendom established contact with Neoplatonism and thus, at several removes, with the metaphysical thought and discipline of India. In the ninth century Scotus Erigena translated the two books into Latin, and from that time forth their influence upon the philosophical speculations and the religious life of the West was wide, deep and beneficent. It was to the authority of the Arcopagite that the Christian exponents of the Perennial Philosophy appealed, whenever they were menaced (and they were always being menaced) by those whose primary interest was in ritual, legalism and ecclesiastical organization. And because Dionysius was mistakenly identified with St Paul's first Athenian convert, his authority was regarded as all but apostolic; therefore, according to the rules of the Catholic game, the appeal to it could not lightly be dismissed, even by those to whom the books meant less than nothing. In spite of their maddening eccentricity, the men and women who followed the Dionysian path had to be tolerated. And once left free to produce the fruits of the spirit, a number of them arrived at such a conspicuous degree of sanctity that it became impossible even for the heads of the Spanish Inquisition to condemn the tree from which such fruits had sprung.

The simple, absolute and immutable mysteries of divine Truth are hidden in the super-luminous darkness of that silence which revealeth in secret. For this darkness, though of deepest obscurity, is yet radiantly clear; and, though beyond touch and sight, it more than fills our unseeing minds with splendours of transcendent beauty... We long exceedingly to dwell in this translucent darkness and, through not seeing and not knowing, to see Him who is beyond both vision and knowledge - by the very fact of neither seeing Him nor knowing Him. For this is truly to see and to know and, through the abandonment of all things, to praise Him who is beyond and above all things. For this is not unlike the art of those who carve a life-like image from stone: removing from around it all that impedes clear vision of the latent form, revealing its hidden beauty solely by taking away. For it is, as I believe, more fitting to praise Him by taking away than by ascription; for we ascribe attributes to Him, when we start from universals and come down through the intermediate to the particulars. But here we take away all things from Him going up from particulars to universals, that we may know openly the unknowable, which is hidden in and under all things that may be known. And we behold that darkness beyond being, concealed under all natural light.

Dionysius the Areopagite

The world as it appears to common sense consists of an indefinite number of successive and presumably causally connected events, involving an indefinite number of separate, individual things, lives and thoughts, the whole constituting a presumably orderly cosmos. It is in order to describe, discuss and manage this common-sense universe that human languages have been developed.

Whenever, for any reason, we wish to think of the world, not as it appears to common sense, but as a continuum, we find that our traditional syntax and vocabulary are quite inadequate. Mathematicians have therefore been compelled to invent radically new symbol-systems for this express purpose. But the divine Ground of all existence is not merely a continuum, it is also out of time, and different, not merely in degree, but in kind from the worlds to which traditional language and the languages of mathematics are adequate. Hence, in all expositions of the Perennial Philosophy, the frequency of paradox, of verbal extravagance, sometimes even of seeming blasphemy. Nobody has yet invented a Spiritual Calculus, in terms of which we may talk coherently about the divine Ground and of the world conceived as its manifestation. For the present, therefore, we must be patient with the linguistic eccentricities of those who are compelled to describe one order of experience in terms of a symbol-system, whose relevance is to the facts of another and quite different order.

So far, then, as a fully adequate expression of the Perennial Philosophy is concerned, there exists a problem in semantics that is finally insoluble. The fact is one which must be steadily borne in mind by all who read its formulations. Only in this way shall we be able to understand even remotely what is being talked about. Consider, for example, those negative definitions of the transcendent and immanent Ground of being. In statements such as Eckhart's, God is equated with nothing. And in a certain sense the equation is exact; for God is certainly no thing. In the phrase used by Scotus

Erigena God is not a what; He is a That. In other words, the Ground can be denoted as being there, but not defined as having qualities. This means that discursive knowledge about the Ground is not merely, like all inferential knowledge, a thing at one remove, or even at several removes, from the reality of immediate acquaintance; it is and, because of the very nature of our language and our standard patterns of thought, it must be, paradoxical knowledge. Direct knowledge of the Ground cannot be had except by union, and union can be achieved only by the annihilation of the self-regarding ego, which is the barrier separating the 'thou' from the 'That.'

3. Personality, Sanctity, Divine Incarnation

IN ENGLISH, WORDS of Latin origin tend to carry overtones of intellectual, moral and aesthetic 'classiness' - overtones which are not carried, as a rule, by their Anglo-Saxon equivalents. 'Maternal,' for instance, means the same as 'motherly,'

'intoxicated' as 'drunk' - but with what subtly important shades of difference! And when Shakespeare needed a name for a comic character, it was Sir Toby Belch that he chose, not Cavalier Tobias Eructation.

The word 'personality' is derived from the Latin and its upper partials are in the highest degree respectable. For some odd philological reason, the Saxon equivalent of 'personality' is hardly ever used. Which is a pity. For if it were used - used as currently as 'belch' is used for 'eructation' - would people make such a reverential fuss about the thing connoted as certain English-speaking philosophers, moralists and theologians have recently done? 'Personality,' we are constantly being assured, is the highest form of reality with which we are acquainted. But surely people would think twice about making or accepting this affirmation if, instead of 'personality,' the word employed had been its Teutonic synonym, 'selfness.' For 'selfness,' though it means precisely the same, carries none of the high-class overtones that go with 'personality.' On the contrary, its primary meaning comes to us embedded, as it were, in discords, like the note of a cracked bell. For, as all exponents of the Perennial Philosophy have constantly insisted, man's obsessive consciousness of, and insistence on being, a separate self is the final and most formidable obstacle to the unitive knowledge of God. To be a self is, for them, the original sin, and to die to self, in feeling, will and intellect, is the final and all-inclusive virtue. It is the memory of these utterances that calls up the unfavourable overtones with which the word 'selfness' is associated. The all too favourable overtones of 'personality' are evoked in part by its intrinsically solemn Latinity, but also by reminiscences of what has been said about the 'persons' of the Trinity. But the persons of the Trinity have nothing in common with the flesh-and-blood persons of our everyday acquaintance - nothing, that is to say, except that indwelling Spirit, with which we ought and are intended to identify ourselves, but which most of us prefer to ignore in favour of our separate selfness. That this God-eclipsing and anti-spiritual selfness should have been given the same name as is applied to the God who is a Spirit, is, to say the least of it, unfortunate. Like all such mistakes it is probably, in some obscure and subconscious way, voluntary and purposeful. We love our selfness; we want to

be justified in our love; therefore we christen it with the same name as is applied by theologians to Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

But now thou askest me how thou mayest destroy this naked knowing and feeling of thine own being. For peradventure thou thinkest that if it were destroyed, all other hindrances were destroyed; and if thou thinkest thus, thou thinkest right truly. But to this I answer thee and I say, that without a full special grace full freely given by God, and also a full according ableness on thy part to receive this grace, this naked knowing and feeling of thy being may in nowise be destroyed. And this ableness is nought else but a strong and a deep ghostly sorrow... All men have matter of sorrow; but most specially he feeleth matter of sorrow that knoweth and feeleth that he is. All other sorrows in comparison to this be but as it were game to earnest. For he may make sorrow earnestly that knoweth and feeleth not only what he is, but that he is. And whoso felt never this sorrow, let him make sorrow; for he hath never yet felt perfect sorrow. This sorrow, when it is had, cleanseth the soul, not only of sin, but also of pain that it hath deserved for sin; and also it maketh a soul able to receive that joy, the which reaveth from a man all knowing and feeling of his being.

This sorrow, if it be truly conceived, is full of holy desire; and else a man might never in this life abide it or bear it. For were it not that a soul were somewhat fed with a manner of comfort by his right working, he should not be able to bear that pain that he hath by the knowing and feeling of his being. For as often as he would have a true knowing and a feeling of his God in purity of spirit (as it may be here), and then feeleth that he may not - for he findeth evermore his knowing and his feeling as it were occupied and filled with a foul stinking lump of himself, the which must always be hated and despised and forsaken, if he shall be God's perfect disciple, taught by Himself in the mount of perfection - so oft he goeth nigh mad for sorrow...

This sorrow and this desire must every soul have and feel in itself (either in this manner or in another), as God vouchsafeth to teach his ghostly disciples according to his good will and their according ableness in body and in soul, in degree and disposition, ere the time be that they may perfectly be oned unto God in perfect charity such as may be had here, if God vouchsafeth.

The Cloud of Unknowing

What is the nature of this 'stinking lump' of selfness or personality, which has to be so passionately repented of and so completely died to, before there can be any 'true knowing of God in purity of spirit'? The most meagre and noncommittal hypothesis is that of Hume. 'Mankind,' he says, 'are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity and are in a perpetual flux and movement.' An almost identical answer is given by the Buddhists, whose doctrine of *anatta* is the denial of any permanent soul, existing behind the flux of experience and the various psycho-physical *skandhas* (closely corresponding to Hume's 'bundles'), which constitute the more enduring elements of personality. Hume and the Buddhists give a sufficiently realistic description of selfness in action; but they fail to explain how or why the bundles ever became bundles. Did their constituent atoms

of experience come together of their own accord? And, if so, why, or by what means, and within what kind of a non-spatial universe? To give a plausible answer to these questions in terms of anatta is so difficult that we are forced to abandon the doctrine in favour of the notion that, behind the flux and within the bundles, there exists some kind of permanent soul, by which experience is organized and which in turn makes use of that organized experience to become a particular and unique personality. This is the view of the orthodox Hinduism, from which Buddhist thought parted company, and of almost all European thought from before the time of Aristotle to the present day. But whereas most contemporary thinkers make an attempt to describe human nature in terms of a dichotomy of interacting psyche and physique, or an inseparable wholeness of these two elements within particular embodied selves, all the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy make, in one form or another, the affirmation that man is a kind of trinity composed of body, psyche and spirit. Selfness or personality is a product of the first two elements. The third element (that *quidquid increatum et increabile*, as Eckhart called it) is akin to, or even identical with, the divine Spirit that is the Ground of all being. Man's final end, the purpose of his existence, is to love, know and be united with the immanent and transcendent Godhead. And this identification of self with spiritual not-self can be achieved only by 'dying to' selfness and living to spirit.

What could begin to deny self, if there were not something in man different from self?

William Law

What is man? An angel, an animal, a void, a world, a nothing surrounded by God, indigent of God, capable of God, filled with God, if it so desires.

Bérulle

The separate creaturely life, as opposed to life in union with God, is only a life of various appetites, hungers and wants, and cannot possibly be anything else. God Himself cannot make a creature to be in itself, or in its own nature, anything else but a state of emptiness. The highest life that is natural and creaturely can go no higher than this; it can only be a bare capacity for goodness and cannot possibly be a good and happy life but by the life of God dwelling in and in union with it. And this is the twofold life that, of all necessity, must be united in every good and perfect and happy creature.

William Law

The Scriptures say of human beings that there is an outward man and along with him an inner man.

To the outward man belong those things that depend on the soul, but are connected with the flesh and are blended with it, and the cooperative functions of the several members, such as the eye, the ear, the tongue, the hand and so on.

The Scripture speaks of all this as the old man, the earthy man, the outward person, the enemy, the servant.

Within us all is the other person, the inner man, whom the Scripture calls the new man, the heavenly man, the young person, the friend, the aristocrat.

Eckhart

The seed of God is in us. Given an intelligent and hard-working farmer, it will thrive and grow up to God, whose seed it is; and accordingly its fruits will be God-nature. Pear seeds grow into pear trees, nut seeds into nut trees, and God seed into God.

Eckhart

The will is free and we are at liberty to identify our being either exclusively with our selfness and its interests, regarded as independent of indwelling Spirit and transcendent Godhead (in which case we shall be passively damned or actively fiendish), or exclusively with the divine within us and without (in which case we shall be saints), or finally with self at one moment or in one context and with spiritual not-self at other moments and in other contexts (in which case we shall be average citizens, too theocentric to be wholly lost, and too egocentric to achieve enlightenment and a total deliverance). Since human craving can never be satisfied except by the unitive knowledge of God and since the mind-body is capable of an enormous variety of experiences, we are free to identify ourselves with an almost infinite number of possible objects - with the pleasures of gluttony, for example, or intemperance, or sensuality; with money, power or fame; with our family, regarded as a possession or actually an extension and projection of our own selfness; with our goods and chattels, our hobbies, our collections; with our artistic or scientific talents; with some favourite branch of knowledge, some fascinating 'special subject'; with our professions, our political parties, our churches; with our pains and illnesses; with our memories of success or misfortune, our hopes, fears and schemes for the future; and finally with the eternal Reality within which and by which all the rest has its being. And we are free, of course, to identify ourselves with more than one of these things simultaneously or in succession. Hence the quite astonishingly improbable combination of traits making up a complex personality. Thus a man can be at once the craftiest of politicians and the dupe of his own verbiage, can have a passion for brandy and money, and an equal passion for the poetry of George Meredith and under-age girls and his mother, for horse-racing and detective stories and the good of his country - the whole accompanied by a sneaking fear of hell-fire, a hatred of Spinoza and an unblemished record for Sunday church-going. A person born with one kind of psycho-physical constitution will be tempted to identify himself with one set of interests and passions, while a person with another kind of temperament will be tempted to make very different identifications. But these temptations (though extremely powerful, if the constitutional bias is strongly marked) do not have to be succumbed to; people can and do resist them, can and do refuse to identify themselves with what it would be all too easy and natural for them to be; can and do become better and quite other than their own selves. In this context the following brief article on 'How Men Behave in Crisis' (published in a recent issue of Harper's Magazine) is highly significant. 'A young psychiatrist, who went as a medical observer on five combat missions of the Eighth Air Force in England, says that in times of great stress and danger men are

likely to react quite uniformly, even though under normal circumstances they differ widely in personality. He went on one mission, during which the B-17 plane and crew were so severely damaged that survival seemed impossible. He had already studied the "on the ground" personalities of the crew and had found that they represented a great diversity of human types. Of their behaviour in crisis he reported:

"Their reactions were remarkably alike. During the violent combat and in the acute emergencies that arose during it, they were all quietly precise on the interphone and decisive in action. The tail gunner, right waist gunner and navigator were severely wounded early in the fight, but all three kept at their duties efficiently and without cessation. The burden of emergency work fell on the pilot, engineer and ball turret gunner, and all functioned with rapidity, skilful effectiveness and no lost motion. The burden of the decisions, during, but particularly after the combat, rested essentially on the pilot and, in secondary details, on the co-pilot and bombardier. The decisions, arrived at with care and speed, were unquestioned once they were made, and proved excellent. In the period when disaster was momentarily expected, the alternative plans of action were made clearly and with no thought other than the safety of the entire crew. All at this point were quiet, unobtrusively cheerful and ready for anything. There was at no time paralysis, panic, unclear thinking, faulty or confused judgment, or self-seeking in any one of them.

"One could not possibly have inferred from their behaviour that this one was a man of unstable moods and that that one was a shy, quiet, introspective man. They all became outwardly calm, precise in thought and rapid in action.

"Such action is typical of a crew who know intimately what fear is, so that they can use, without being distracted by, its physiological concomitants; who are well trained, so that they can direct their action with clarity; and who have all the more than personal trust inherent in a unified team."

We see then that, when the crisis came, each of these young men forgot the particular personality which he had built up out of the elements provided by his heredity and the environment in which he had grown up; that one resisted the normally irresistible temptation to identify himself with his mood of the moment, another the temptation to identify himself with his private day-dreams, and so on with the rest; and that all of them behaved in the same strikingly similar and wholly admirable way. It was as though the crisis and the preliminary training for crisis had lifted them out of their divergent personalities and raised them to the same higher level.

Sometimes crisis alone, without any preparatory training, is sufficient to make a man forget to be his customary self and become, for the time being, something quite different. Thus the most unlikely people will, under the influence of disaster, temporarily turn into heroes, martyrs, selfless labourers for the good of their fellows. Very often, too, the proximity of death produces similar results. For example, Samuel Johnson behaved in one way during almost the whole of his life and in quite another way during his last illness. The fascinatingly complex personality, in which six generations of Boswellians have taken so much delight - the learned boor and glutton, the kind-hearted bully, the

superstitious intellectual, the convinced Christian who was a fetishist, the courageous man who was terrified of death - became, while he was actually dying, simple, single, serene and God-centred.

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is, for very many persons, much easier to behave selflessly in time of crisis than it is when life is taking its normal course in undisturbed tranquillity. When the going is easy, there is nothing to make us forget our precious selfness, nothing (except our own will to mortification and the knowledge of God) to distract our minds from the distractions with which we have chosen to be identified; we are at perfect liberty to wallow in our personality to our heart's content. And how we wallow! It is for this reason that all masters of the spiritual life insist so strongly upon the importance of little things.

God requires a faithful fulfilment of the merest trifle given us to do, rather than the most ardent aspiration to things to which we are not called.

St François de Sales

There is no one in the world who cannot arrive without difficulty at the most eminent perfection by fulfilling with love obscure and common duties.

J. P. de Caussade

Some people measure the worth of good actions only by their natural qualities or their difficulty, giving the preference to what is conspicuous or brilliant. Such men forget that Christian virtues, which are God's inspirations, should be viewed from the side of grace, not that of nature. The dignity and difficulty of a good action certainly affects what is technically called its accidental worth, but all its essential worth comes from love alone.

Jean Pierre Camus (quoting St François de Sales)

The saint is one who knows that every moment of our human life is a moment of crisis; for at every moment we are called upon to make an all-important decision - to choose between the way that leads to death and spiritual darkness and the way that leads towards light and life; between interests exclusively temporal and the eternal order; between our personal will, or the will of some projection of our personality, and the will of God. In order to fit himself to deal with the emergencies of his way of life, the saint undertakes appropriate training of mind and body, just as the soldier does. But whereas the objectives of military training are limited and very simple, namely, to make men courageous, cool-headed and co-operatively efficient in the business of killing other men, with whom, personally, they have no quarrel, the objectives of spiritual training are much less narrowly specialized. Here the aim is primarily to bring human beings to a state in which, because there are no longer any God-eclipsing obstacles between themselves and Reality, they are able to be aware continuously of the divine Ground of their own and all other beings; secondarily, as a means to this end, to meet all, even the most trivial circumstances of daily living, without malice, greed, self-assertion or voluntary ignorance, but consistently with love and understanding. Because its objectives are not limited, because, for the lover of God, every moment

is a moment of crisis, spiritual training is incomparably more difficult and searching than military training. There are many good soldiers, few saints.

We have seen that, in critical emergencies, soldiers specifically trained to cope with that kind of thing tend to forget the inborn and acquired idiosyncrasies with which they normally identify their being and, transcending selfness, to behave in the same, one-pointed, better-than-personal way. What is true of soldiers is also true of saints, but with this important difference - that the aim of spiritual training is to make people become selfless in every circumstance of life, while the aim of military training is to make them selfless only in certain very special circumstances and in relation to only certain classes of human beings. This could not be otherwise; for all that we are and will and do depends, in the last analysis, upon what we believe the Nature of Things to be. The philosophy that rationalizes power politics and justifies war and military training is always (whatever the official religion of the politicians and war makers) some wildly unrealistic doctrine of national, racial or ideological idolatry, having, as its inevitable corollaries, the notions of *Herrenvolk* and 'the lesser breeds without the Law.'

The biographies of the saints testify unequivocally to the fact that spiritual training leads to a transcendence of personality, not merely in the special circumstances of battle, but in all circumstances and in relation to all creatures, so that the saint 'loves his enemies' or, if he is a Buddhist, does not even recognize the existence of enemies, but treats all sentient beings, sub-human as well as human, with the same compassion and disinterested goodwill. Those who win through to the unitive knowledge of God set out upon their course from the most diverse starting points. One is a man, another a woman; one a born active, another a born contemplative. No two of them inherit the same temperament and physical constitution, and their lives are passed in material, moral and intellectual environments that are profoundly dissimilar. Nevertheless, in so far as they are saints, in so far as they possess the unitive knowledge that makes them 'perfect as their Father which is in heaven is perfect,' they are all astonishingly alike. Their actions are uniformly selfless and they are constantly recollected, so that at every moment they know who they are and what is their true relation to the universe and its spiritual Ground. Of even plain average people it may be said that their name is Legion - much more so of exceptionally complex personalities, who identify themselves with a wide diversity of moods, cravings and opinions. Saints, on the contrary, are neither double-minded nor half-hearted, but single and, however great their intellectual gifts, profoundly simple. The multiplicity of Legion has given place to one-pointedness - not to any of those evil one-pointednesses of ambition or covetousness, or lust for power and fame, not even to any of the nobler, but still all too human one-pointednesses of art, scholarship and science, regarded as ends in themselves, but to the supreme, more than human one-pointedness that is the very being of those souls who consciously and consistently pursue man's final end, the knowledge of eternal Reality. In one of the Pali scriptures there is a significant anecdote about the Brahman Drona who, 'seeing

the Blessed One sitting at the foot of a tree, asked him, "Are you a deva?" And the Exalted One answered, "I am not."

"Are you a gandharva?"

"I am not."

"Are you ayaksha?"

"I am not."

"Are you a man?"

"I am not a man." On the Brahman asking what he might be, the Blessed One replied, "Those evil influences, those cravings, whose non-destruction would have individualized me as a deva, a gandharva, a yaksha (three types of supernatural being), or a man, I have completely annihilated. Know therefore that I am Buddha."

Here we may remark in passing that it is only the one-pointed who are truly capable of worshipping one God. Monotheism as a theory can be entertained even by a person whose name is Legion. But when it comes to passing from theory to practice, from discursive knowledge about to immediate acquaintance with the one God, there cannot be monotheism except where there is singleness of heart. Knowledge is in the knower according to the mode of the knower. Where the knower is poly-psychic the universe he knows by immediate experience is polytheistic. The Buddha declined to make any statement in regard to the ultimate divine Reality. All he would talk about was nirvana, which is the name of the experience that comes to the totally selfless and one-pointed. To this same experience others have given the name of union with Brahman, with Al Haqq, with the immanent and transcendent Godhead. Maintaining, in this matter, the attitude of a strict operationalist, the Buddha would speak only of the spiritual experience, not of the metaphysical entity presumed by the theologians of other religions, as also of later Buddhism, to be the object and (since in contemplation the knower, the known and the knowledge are all one) at the same time the subject and substance of that experience.

When a man lacks discrimination, his will wanders in all directions, after innumerable aims. Those who lack discrimination may quote the letter of the scripture; but they are really denying its inner truth. They are full of worldly desires and hungry for the rewards of heaven. They use beautiful figures of speech; they teach elaborate rituals, which are supposed to obtain pleasure and power for those who practise them. But, actually, they understand nothing except the law of Karma that chains men to rebirth.

Those whose discrimination is stolen away by such talk grow deeply attached to pleasure and power. And so they are unable to develop that one-pointed concentration of the will, which leads a man to absorption in God.

Bhagavad-Gita

Among the cultivated and mentally active, hagiography is now a very unpopular form of literature. The fact is not at all surprising. The cultivated and the mentally active have an insatiable appetite for novelty, diversity and distraction. But the saints, however commanding their talents and whatever the nature of their professional ac-

tivities, are all incessantly preoccupied with only one subject - spiritual Reality and the means by which they and their fellows can come to the unitive knowledge of that Reality. And as for their actions - these are as monotonously uniform as their thoughts; for in all circumstances they behave selflessly, patiently and with indefatigable charity. No wonder, then, if the biographies of such men and women remain unread. For one well-educated person who knows anything about William Law there are two or three hundred who have read Boswell's life of his younger contemporary. Why? Because, until he actually lay dying, Johnson indulged himself in the most fascinating of multiple personalities; whereas Law, for all the superiority of his talents, was almost absurdly simple and single-minded. Legion prefers to read about Legion. It is for this reason that, in the whole repertory of epic, drama and the novel, there are hardly any representations of true theocentric saints.

O Friend, hope for Him whilst you live, know whilst you live, understand whilst you live; for in life deliverance abides.

If your bonds be not broken whilst living, what hope of deliverance in death?

It is but an empty dream that the soul shall have union with Him because it has passed from the body; If He is found now, He is found then; If not, we do but go to dwell in the City of Death.

Kabir

This figure in the form of a sun (the description is of the engraved frontispiece to the first edition of *The Rule of Perfection*) represents the will of God. The faces placed here in the sun represent souls living in the divine will. These faces are arranged in three concentric circles, showing the three degrees of this divine will. The first or outermost degree signifies the souls of the active life; the second, those of the life of contemplation; the third, those of the life of supereminence. Outside the first circle are many tools, such as pincers and hammers, denoting the active life. But round the second circle we have placed nothing at all, in order to signify that in this kind of contemplative life, without any other speculations or practices, one must follow the leading of the will of God. The tools are on the ground and in shadow, inasmuch as outward works are in themselves full of darkness. These tools, however, are touched by a ray of the sun, to show that works may be enlightened and illuminated by the will of God.

The light of the divine will shines but little on the faces of the first circle; much more on those of the second; while those of the third or innermost circle are resplendent. The features of the first show up most clearly; the second, less; the third, hardly at all. This signifies that the souls of the first degree are much in themselves; those of the second degree are less in themselves and more in God; those in the third degree are almost nothing in themselves and all in God, absorbed in his essential will. All these faces have their eyes fixed on the will of God.

Benet of Canfield

It is in virtue of his absorption in God and just because he has not identified his being with the inborn and acquired elements of his private personality, that the saint is able to exercise his entirely non-coercive and therefore entirely beneficent influence

on individuals and even on whole societies. Or, to be more accurate, it is because he has purged himself of selfness that divine Reality is able to use him as a channel of grace and power. 'I live, yet not I, but Christ - the eternal Logos - liveth in me.' True of the saint, this must a fortiori be true of the Avatar, or incarnation of God. If, in so far as he was a saint, St Paul was 'not I,' then certainly Christ was 'not I'; and to talk, as so many liberal churchmen now do, of worshipping 'the personality of Jesus,' is an absurdity. For, obviously, had Jesus remained content merely to have a personality, like the rest of us, he would never have exercised the kind of influence which in fact he did exercise, and it would never have occurred to anyone to regard him as a divine incarnation and to identify him with the Logos. That he came to be thought of as the Christ was due to the fact that he had passed beyond selfness and had become the bodily and mental conduit through which a more than personal, supernatural life flowed down into the world.

Souls which have come to the unitive knowledge of God are, in Benet of Canfield's phrase, 'almost nothing in themselves and all in God.' This vanishing residue of selfness persists because, in some slight measure, they still identify their being with some innate psycho-physical idiosyncrasy, some acquired habit of thought or feeling, some convention or unanalysed prejudice current in the social environment. Jesus was almost wholly absorbed in the essential will of God; but in spite of this, he may have retained some elements of selfness. To what extent there was any 'I,' associated with the more-than-personal, divine 'Not-I,' it is very difficult, on the basis of the existing evidence, to judge. For example, did Jesus interpret his experience of divine Reality and his own spontaneous inferences from that experience in terms of those fascinating apocalyptic notions current in contemporary Jewish circles? Some eminent scholars have argued that the doctrine of the world's imminent dissolution was the central core of his teaching. Others, equally learned, have held that it was attributed to him by the authors of the Synoptic Gospels, and that Jesus himself did not identify his experience and his theological thinking with locally popular opinions. Which party is right? Goodness knows. On this subject, as on so many others, the existing evidence does not permit of a certain and unambiguous answer.

The moral of all this is plain. The quantity and quality of the surviving biographical documents are such that we have no means of knowing what the residual personality of Jesus was really like. But if the Gospels tell us very little about the 'I' which was Jesus, they make up for this deficiency by telling us inferentially, in the parables and discourses, a good deal about the spiritual 'not-I,' whose manifest presence in the mortal man was the reason why his disciples called him the Christ and identified him with the eternal Logos.

The biography of a saint or avatar is valuable only in so far as it throws light upon the means by which, in the circumstances of a particular human life, the 'I' was purged away so as to make room for the divine 'not-I.' The authors of the Synoptic Gospels did not choose to write such a biography, and no amount of criticism or ingenious surmise can call it into existence. In the course of the last hundred years an enormous sum

of energy has been expended on the attempt to make documents yield more evidence than in fact they contain. However regrettable may be the Synoptists' lack of interest in biography, and whatever objections may be raised against the theologies of Paul and John, there can still be no doubt that their instinct was essentially sound. Each in his own way wrote about the eternal 'not-I' of Christ rather than the historical T; each in his own way stressed that element in the life of Jesus, in which, because it is more-than-personal, all persons can participate. (The nature of selfness is such that one person cannot be a part of another person. A self can contain or be contained by something that is either less or more than a self, it can never contain or be contained by a self.)

The doctrine that God can be incarnated in human form is found in most of the principal historic expositions of the Perennial Philosophy - in Hinduism, in Mahayana Buddhism, in Christianity and in the Mohammedanism of the Sufis, by whom the Prophet was equated with the eternal Logos.

When goodness grows weak,
 When evil increases,
 I make myself a body.
 In every age I come back
 To deliver the holy,
 To destroy the sin of the sinner,
 To establish righteousness.
 He who knows the nature
 Of my task and my holy birth
 Is not reborn
 When he leaves this body;
 He comes to Me.
 Flying from tear,
 From lust and anger,
 He hides in Me,
 His refuge and safety.
 Burnt clean in the blaze of my being,
 In Me many find home.
 Bhagavad-Güa

Then the Blessed One spoke and said: 'Know, Vasetha, that from time to time a Tathagata is born into the world, a fully Enlightened One blessed and worthy, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy with' knowledge of the worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to erring mortals, a teacher of gods and men, a Blessed Buddha. He thoroughly understands this universe, as though he saw it face to face... The Truth does he proclaim both in its letter and in its spirit, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation. A higher life doth he make known in all its purity and in all its perfectness.

Tevigga butta

Krishna is an incarnation of Brahman, Gautama Buddha of what the Mahayanists called the Dharmakaya, Suchness, Mind, the spiritual Ground of all being. The Christian doctrine of the incarnation of the Godhead in human form differs from that of India and the Far East inasmuch as it affirms that there has been and can be only one Avatar.

What we do depends in large measure upon what we think, and if what we do is evil, there is good empirical reason for supposing that our thought-patterns are inadequate to material, mental or spiritual reality. Because Christians believed that there had been only one Avatar, Christian history has been disgraced by more and bloodier crusades, interdenominational wars, persecutions and proselytizing imperialism than has the history of Hinduism and Buddhism. Absurd and idolatrous doctrines, affirming the quasi-divine nature of sovereign states and their rulers, have led oriental, no less than Western, peoples into innumerable political wars; but because they have not believed in an exclusive revelation at one sole instant of time, or in the quasi-divinity of an ecclesiastical organization, oriental peoples have kept remarkably clear of the mass murder for religion's sake, which has been so dreadfully frequent in Christendom. And while, in this important respect, the level of public morality has been lower in the West than in the East, the levels of exceptional sanctity and of ordinary individual morality have not, so far as one can judge from the available evidence, been any higher. If the tree is indeed known by its fruits, Christianity's departure from the norm of the Perennial Philosophy would seem to be philosophically unjustifiable.

The Logos passes out of eternity into time for no other purpose than to assist the beings, whose bodily form he takes, to pass out of time into eternity. If the Avatar's appearance upon the stage of history is enormously important, this is due to the fact that by his teaching he points out, and by his being a channel of grace and divine power he actually is, the means by which human beings may transcend the limitations of history. The author of the Fourth Gospel affirms that the Word became flesh; but in another passage he adds that the flesh profiteth nothing - nothing, that is to say, in itself, but a great deal, of course, as a means to the union with immanent and transcendent Spirit. In this context it is very interesting to consider the development of Buddhism. 'Under the forms of religious or mystical imagery,' writes R. E. Johnston in his *Buddhist China*, 'the Mahayana expresses the universal, whereas Hinayana cannot set itself free from the domination of historical fact.' In the words of an eminent orientalist, Amanda K. Coomaraswamy, 'The Mahayanist believer is warned - precisely as the worshipper of Krishna is warned in the Vaishnavite scriptures that the Krishna Lila is not a history, but a process for ever unfolded in the heart of man - that matters of historical fact are without religious significance' (except, we should add, in so far as they point to or themselves constitute the means - whether remote or proximate, whether political, ethical or spiritual - by which men may come to deliverance from selfness and the temporal order.)

In the West, the mystics went some way towards liberating Christianity from its unfortunate servitude to historic fact (or, to be more accurate, to those various mix-

tures of contemporary record with subsequent inference and phantasy, which have, at different epochs, been accepted as historic fact). From the writings of Eckhart, Tauler and Ruysbroeck, of Boehme, William Law and the Quakers, it would be possible to extract a spiritualized and universalized Christianity, whose narratives should refer, not to history as it was, or as someone afterwards thought it ought to be, but to 'processes forever unfolded in the heart of man.' But unfortunately the influence of the mystics was never powerful enough to bring about a radical Mahayanist revolution in the West. In spite of them, Christianity has remained a religion in which the pure Perennial Philosophy has been overlaid, now more, now less, by an idolatrous preoccupation with events and things in time - events and things regarded not merely as useful means, but as ends, intrinsically sacred and indeed divine. Moreover, such improvements on history as were made in the course of centuries were, most imprudently, treated as though they themselves were a part of history - a procedure which put a powerful weapon into the hands of Protestant and, later, of Rationalist controversialists. How much wiser it would have been to admit the perfectly avowable fact that, when the sternness of Christ the Judge had been unduly emphasized, men and women felt the need of personifying the divine compassion in a new form, with the result that the figure of the Virgin, mediatrix to the mediator, came into increased prominence. And when, in course of time, the Queen of Heaven was felt to be too awe-inspiring, compassion was re-personified in the homely figure of St Joseph, who thus became mediator to the mediatrix to the mediator. In exactly the same way Buddhist worshippers felt that the historic Sakyamuni, with his insistence on recollectedness, discrimination and a total dying to self as the principal means of liberation, was too stern and too intellectual. The result was that the love and compassion which Sakyamuni had also inculcated came to be personified in Buddhas such as Amida and Maitreya - divine characters completely removed from history, inasmuch as their temporal career was situated somewhere in the distant past or distant future. Here it may be remarked that the vast numbers of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, of whom the Mahayanist theologians speak, are commensurate with the vastness of their cosmology. Time, for them, is beginningless, and the innumerable universes, every one of them supporting sentient beings of every possible variety, are born, evolve, decay and die, only to repeat the same cycle - again and again, until the final inconceivably remote consummation, when every sentient being in all the worlds shall have won to deliverance out of time into eternal Suchness or Buddhahood. This cosmological background to Buddhism has affinities with the world picture of modern astronomy - especially with that version of it offered in the recently published theory of Dr Weiszäcker regarding the formation of planets. If the Weiszäcker hypothesis is correct, the production of a planetary system would be a normal episode in the life of every star. There are forty thousand million stars in our own galactic system alone, and beyond our galaxy other galaxies, indefinitely. If, as we have no choice but to believe, spiritual laws governing consciousness are uniform throughout the whole planet-bearing and presumably life-supporting universe, then certainly there is plenty of room, and at the same time, no doubt, the

most agonizing and desperate need, for those innumerable redemptive incarnations of Suchness, upon whose shining multitudes the Mahayanists love to dwell.

For my part, I think the chief reason which prompted the invisible God to become visible in the flesh and to hold converse with men was to lead carnal men, who are only able to love carnally, to the healthful love of his flesh, and afterwards, little by little, to spiritual love.

St Bernard

St Bernard's doctrine of 'carnal love of Christ' has been admirably summed up by Professor Étienne Gilson in his book, *The Mystical Theology of St Bernard*. 'Knowledge of self already expanded into social carnal love of the neighbour, so like oneself in misery, is now a second time expanded into a carnal love of Christ, the model of compassion, since for our salvation He has become the Man of Sorrows. Here then is the place occupied in Cistercian mysticism by the meditation on the visible Humanity of Christ. It is but a beginning, but an absolutely necessary beginning... Charity, of course, is essentially spiritual, and a love of this kind can be no more than its first moment. It is too much bound up with the senses, unless we know how to make use of it with prudence, and to lean on it only as something to be surpassed. In expressing himself thus, Bernard merely codified the teachings of his own experience; for we have it from him that he was much given to the practice of this sensitive love at the outset of his "conversion"; later on he was to consider it an advance to have passed beyond it; not, that is to say, to have forgotten it, but to have added another, which outweighs it as the rational and spiritual outweigh the carnal. Nevertheless, this beginning is already a summit.

'This sensitive affection for Christ was always presented by St Bernard as love of a relatively inferior order. It is so precisely on account of its sensitive character, for charity is of a purely spiritual essence. In right the soul should be able to enter directly into union, in virtue of its spiritual powers, with a God Who is pure spirit. The Incarnation, moreover, should be regarded as one of the consequences of man's transgression, so that love for the Person of Christ is, as a matter of fact, bound up with the history of a fall which need not, and should not, have happened. St Bernard furthermore, and in several places, notes that this affection cannot stand safely alone, but needs to be supported by what he calls "science". He had examples before him of the deviations into which even the most ardent devotion can fall, when it is not allied with, and ruled by a sane theology.'

Can the many fantastic and mutually incompatible theories of expiation and atonement, which have been grafted on to the Christian doctrine of divine incarnation, be regarded as indispensable elements in a 'sane theology'? I find it difficult to imagine how anyone who has looked into a history of these notions, as expounded, for example, by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, by Athanasius and Augustine, by Anselm and Luther, by Calvin and Grotius, can plausibly answer this question in the affirmative. In the present context, it will be enough to call attention to one of the bitterest of all the bitter ironies of history. For the Christ of the Gospels, lawyers

seemed further from the Kingdom of Heaven, more hopelessly impervious to Reality, than almost any other class of human beings except the rich. But Christian theology, especially that of the Western churches, was the product of minds imbued with Jewish and Roman legalism. In all too many instances the immediate insights of the Avatar and the theocentric saint were rationalized into a system, not by philosophers, but by speculative barristers and metaphysical jurists. Why should what Abbot John Chapman calls 'the problem of reconciling (not merely uniting) Mysticism and Christianity' be so extremely difficult? Simply because so much Roman and Protestant thinking was done by those very lawyers whom Christ regarded as being peculiarly incapable of understanding the true Nature of Things. 'The Abbot (Chapman is apparently referring to Abbot Marmion) says St John of the Cross is like a sponge full of Christianity. You can squeeze it all out, and the full mystical theory (in other words, the pure Perennial Philosophy) remains. Consequently for fifteen years or so I hated St John of the Cross and called him a Buddhist. I loved St Teresa and read her over and over again. She is first a Christian, only secondarily a mystic. Then I found I had wasted fifteen years, so far as prayer was concerned.'

Now see the meaning of these two sayings of Christ s. The one, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me,' that is through my life. The other saying, 'No man cometh unto me except the Father draw him'; that is, he does not take my life upon him and follow after me, except he is moved and drawn of my Father, that is, of the Simple and Perfect Good, of which St Paul saith, 'When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.'

Theologia Germanica

In other words, there must be imitation of Christ before there can be identification with the Father; and there must be essential identity or likeness between the human spirit and the God who is Spirit in order that the idea of imitating the earthly behaviour of the incarnate Godhead should ever cross anybody's mind. Christian theologians speak of the possibility of 'deification,' but deny that there is identity of substance between spiritual Reality and the human spirit. In Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism, as also among the Sufis, spirit and Spirit are held to be the same substance; Atman is Brahman; That art thou.

When not enlightened, Buddhas are no other than ordinary beings; when there is enlightenment, ordinary beings at once turn into Buddhas.

Hui Neng

Every human being can thus become an Avatar by adoption, but not by his unaided efforts. He must be shown the way, and he must be aided by divine grace. That men and women may be thus instructed and helped, the Godhead assumes the form of an ordinary human being, who has to earn deliverance and enlightenment in the way that is prescribed by the divine Nature of Things - namely, by charity, by a total dying to self and a total, one-pointed awareness. Thus enlightened, the Avatar can reveal the way of enlightenment to others and help them actually to become what they already potentially are. Tel qu'en Lui-même enfin l'éternité le change. And of

course the eternity which transforms us into Ourselves is not the experience of mere persistence after bodily death. There will be no experience of timeless Reality then, unless there is the same or similar knowledge within the world of time and matter. By precept and by example, the Avatar teaches that this transforming knowledge is possible, that all sentient beings are called to it and that, sooner or later, in one way or another, all must finally come to it.

4. God in the World

‘THAT ART THOU’; Behold but One in all things’ - God within and God without. There is a way to Reality in and through the soul, and there is a way to Reality in and through the world. Whether the ultimate goal can be reached by following either of these ways to the exclusion of the other is to be doubted. The third, best and hardest way is that which leads to the divine Ground simultaneously in the perceiver and in that which is perceived.

The Mind is no other than the Buddha, and Buddha is no other than sentient being. When Mind assumes the form of a sentient being, it has suffered no decrease; when it has become a Buddha, it has added nothing to itself.

Huang-Po

All creatures have existed eternally in the divine essence, as in their exemplar. So far as they conform to the divine idea, all beings were, before their creation, one thing with the essence of God. (God creates into time what was and is in eternity.) Eternally, all creatures are God in God... So far as they are in God, they are the same life, the same essence, the same power, the same One, and nothing less.

Suso

The image of God is found essentially and personally in all mankind. Each possesses it whole, entire and undivided, and all together not more than one alone. In this way we are all one, intimately united in our eternal image, which is the image of God and the source in us of all our life. Our created essence and our life are attached to it without mediation as to their eternal cause.

Ruysbroeck

God who, in his simple substance, is all everywhere equally, nevertheless, in efficacy, is in rational creatures in another way than in irrational, and in good rational creatures in another way than in the bad. He is in irrational creatures in such a way as not to be comprehended by them; by all rational ones, however, he can be comprehended through knowledge; but only by the good is he to be comprehended also through love.

St Bernard

When is a man in mere understanding? I answer, ‘When a man sees one thing separated from another.’ And when is a man above mere understanding? That I can tell you: ‘When a man sees All in all, then a man stands beyond mere understanding.’

Eckhart

There are four kinds of Dhyana (spiritual disciplines). What are these four? They are, first, the Dhyana practised by the ignorant; second, the Dhyana devoted to the

examination of meaning; third, the Dhyana with Suchness for its object; fourth, the Dhyana of the Tathagatas (Buddhas).

What is meant by the Dhyana practised by the ignorant? It is the one resorted to by the Yogins who exercise themselves in the disciplines of Sravakas and Pratyekabuddhas (contemplatives and 'solitary Buddhas' of the Hinayana school), who perceiving that there is no ego substance, that the body is a shadow and a skeleton which is transient, impure and full of suffering, persistently cling to these notions, which are regarded as just so and not otherwise, and who, starting from them advance by stages until they reach the cessation where there are no thoughts. This is called the Dhyana practised by the ignorant.

What then is Dhyana devoted to the examination of meaning? It is the one practised by those who having gone beyond the egolessness of things, beyond individuality and generality, beyond the untenability of such ideas as 'self,'

'other' and 'both,' which are held by the philosophers, proceed to examine and follow up the meaning of the various aspects of Bodhisattvahood. This is the Dhyana devoted to the examination of meaning.

What is the Dhyana with Tathata (or Suchness) as its object? When the Yogin recognizes that the discrimination of the two forms of egolessness is mere imagination and that where he establishes himself in the reality of Suchness there is no rising of discrimination - this I call the Dhyana with Suchness for its object. What is the Dhyana of the Tathagata? When the Yogin, entering upon the stage of Tathagatahood and abiding in the triple bliss characterizing self-realization attained by noble wisdom, devotes himself for the sake of all beings to the accomplishment of incomprehensible works - this I call the Dhyana of the Tathagata.

Lankavatara Sutra

When followers of Zen fail to go beyond the world of their senses and thoughts, all their doings and movements are of no significance. But when the senses and thoughts are annihilated all the passages to Universal Mind are blocked, and no entrance then becomes possible. The original Mind is to be recognized along with the working of the senses and thoughts — only it does not belong to them, nor yet is it independent of them. Do not build up your views upon your senses and thoughts, do not base your understanding upon your senses and thoughts; but at the same time do not seek the Mind away from your senses and thoughts, do not try to grasp Reality by rejecting your senses and thoughts. When you are neither attached to, nor detached from, them, then you enjoy your perfect unobstructed freedom, then you have your seat of enlightenment.

Huang-Po

Every individual being, from the atom up to the most highly organized of living bodies and the most exalted of finite minds, may be thought of, in René Guénon's phrase, as a point where a ray of the primordial Godhead meets one of the differentiated, creaturely emanations of that same Godhead's creative energy. The creature, as creature, may be very far from God, in the sense that it lacks the intelligence to

discover the nature of the divine Ground of its being. But the creature in its eternal essence - as the meeting place of creatureliness and primordial Godhead - is one of the infinite number of points where divine Reality is wholly or eternally present. Because of this, rational beings can come to the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground, non-rational and inanimate beings may reveal to rational beings the fullness of God's presence within their material forms. The poet's or the painter's vision of the divine in nature, the worshipper's awareness of a holy presence in the sacrament, symbol or image - these are not entirely subjective. True, such perceptions cannot be had by all perceivers, for knowledge is a function of being; but the thing known is independent of the mode and nature of the knower. What the poet and painter see, and try to record for us, is actually there, waiting to be apprehended by anyone who has the right kind of faculties. Similarly, in the image or the sacramental object the divine Ground is wholly present. Faith and devotion prepare the worshipper's mind for perceiving the ray of Godhead at its point of intersection with the particular fragment of matter before him. Incidentally, by being worshipped, such symbols become the centres of a field of force. The longings, emotions and imaginations of those who kneel and for generations have knelt before the shrine create, as it were, an enduring vortex in the psychic medium, so that the image lives with a secondary, inferior divine life projected on to it by its worshippers, as well as with the primary divine life which, in common with all other animate and inanimate beings, it possesses in virtue of its relation to the divine Ground. The religious experience of sacramentalists and image worshippers may be perfectly genuine and objective; but it is not always or necessarily an experience of God or the Godhead. It may be, and perhaps in most cases it actually is, an experience of the field of force generated by the minds of past and present worshippers and projected on to the sacramental object where it sticks, so to speak, in a condition of what may be called secondhand objectivity, waiting to be perceived by minds suitably attuned to it. How desirable this kind of experience really is will have to be discussed in another section. All that need be said here is that the iconoclast's contempt for sacraments and symbols, as being nothing but mummery with sticks and stones, is quite unjustified.

The workmen still in doubt what course to take,
 Whether I'd best a saint or hog-trough make,
 After debate resolved me for a saint;
 And so famed Loyala I represent.

The all too Protestant satirist forgot that God is in the hog-trough no less than in the conventionally sacred image. 'Lift the stone and you will find me,' affirms the best known of the Oxyrhynchus Logia of Jesus, 'cleave the wood, and I am there.' Those who have personally and immediately realized the truth of this saying and, along with it, the truth of Brahmanism's 'That art thou' are wholly delivered.

The Sravaka (literally 'hearer,' the name given by Mahayana Buddhists to contemplatives of the Hinayana school) fails to perceive that Mind, as it is in itself, has no stages, no causation. Disciplining himself in the cause, he has attained the result and abides in the samadhi (contemplation) of Emptiness for ever so many aeons. However

enlightened in this way, the Sravaka is not at all on the right track. From the point of view of the Bodhisattva, this is like suffering the torture of hell. The Sravaka has buried himself in Emptiness and does not know how to get out of his quiet contemplation, for he has no insight into the Buddha-nature itself.

Mo Tsu

When Enlightenment is perfected, a Bodhisattva is free from the bondage of things, but does not seek to be delivered from things.

Samsara (the world of becoming) is not hated by him, nor is Nirvana loved. When perfect Enlightenment shines, it is neither bondage nor deliverance.

Prunabuddha-sutra

The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the son of Earth, even when he seeks a supraphysical Knowledge. It may even be said that the supraphysical can only be really mastered in its fullness - to its heights we can always reach - when we keep our feet firmly on the physical. 'Earth is His footing,' says the Upanishad, whenever it images the Self that manifests in the universe.

Sri Aurobindo

'To heights we can always come.' For those of us who are still splashing about in the lower ooze, the phrase has a rather ironical ring. Nevertheless, in the light of even the most distant acquaintance with the heights and the fullness, it is possible to understand what its author means. To discover the Kingdom of God exclusively within oneself is easier than to discover it, not only there, but also in the outer world of minds and things and living creatures. It is easier because the heights within reveal themselves to those who are ready to exclude from their purview all that lies without. And though this exclusion may be a painful and mortificatory process, the fact remains that it is less arduous than the process of inclusion, by which we come to know the fullness as well as the heights of spiritual life. Where there is exclusive concentration on the heights within, temptations and distractions are avoided and there is a general denial and suppression. But when the hope is to know God inclusively - to realize the divine Ground in the world as well as in the soul, temptations and distractions must not be avoided, but submitted to and used as opportunities for advance; there must be no suppression of outward-turning activities, but a transformation of them so that they become sacramental. Mortification becomes more searching and more subtle; there is need of unsleeping awareness and, on the levels of thought, feeling and conduct, the constant exercise of something like an artist's tact and taste.

It is in the literature of Mahayana and especially of Zen Buddhism that we find the best account of the psychology of the man for whom samsara and nirvana, time and eternity, are one and the same. More systematically perhaps than any other religion, the Buddhism of the Far East teaches the way to spiritual Knowledge in its fullness as well as in its heights, in and through the world as well as in and through the soul. In this context we may point to a highly significant fact, which is that the incomparable landscape painting of China and Japan was essentially a religious art, inspired by Taoism and Zen Buddhism; in Europe, on the contrary, landscape painting and the

poetry of 'nature worship' were secular arts which arose when Christianity was in decline, and derived little or no inspiration from Christian ideals.

'Blind, deaf, dumb!

Infinitely beyond the reach of imaginative contrivances!'

In these lines Seccho has swept everything away for you - what you see together with what you do not see, what you hear together with what you do not hear, and what you talk about together with what you cannot talk about. All these are completely brushed off, and you attain the life of the blind, deaf and dumb. Here all your imaginations, contrivances and calculations are once and for all put an end to; they are no more made use of. This is where lies the highest point of Zen, this is where we have true blindness, true deafness and true dumbness, each in its artless and effectless aspect.

'Above the heavens and below the heavens!

How ludicrous, how disheartening!'

Here Seccho lifts up with one hand and with the other puts down. Tell me what he finds to be ludicrous, what he finds to be disheartening. It is ludicrous that this dumb person is not dumb after all, that this deaf person is not after all deaf; it is disheartening that the one who is not at all blind is blind for all that, and that the one who is not at all deaf is deaf for all that.

'Li-lou does not know how to discriminate right colour.'

Li-lou lived in the reign of the Emperor Huang. He is said to have been able to distinguish the point of a soft hair at a distance of one hundred paces. His eyesight was extraordinary. When the Emperor Huang took a pleasure cruise on the River Ch'in, he dropped his precious jewel in the water and made Li fetch it up. But he failed. The Emperor made Ch'ih-kou search for it; but he also failed to find it. Later Hsiang-wang was ordered to get it, and he got it. Hence, 'When Hsiang-wang goes down, the precious gem shines most brilliantly; But where Li-lou walks about, the waves rise even to the sky.' When we come to these higher spheres, even the eyes of Li-lou are incapable of discriminating the right colour.

'How can Shih-kuang recognize the mysterious tune?' Shih-kuang was the son of Ching-kuang of Chin in the province of Chiang under the Chou dynasty. His other name was Tzu-yeh. He could thoroughly distinguish the five sounds and the six notes; he could even hear the ants fighting on the other side of a hill. When Chin and Ch'u were at war, Shih-kuang could tell, just by softly fingering the strings of his lute, that the engagement would surely be unfavourable for Ch'u. In spite of his extraordinary sensitiveness Seccho declares that he is unable to recognize the mysterious tune. After all, one who is not at all deaf is really deaf. The most exquisite note in the higher spheres is beyond the hearing of Shih-kuang. Says Seccho, I am not going to be a Lilou, nor a Shih-kuang; for 'What life can compare with this? Sitting quietly by the window, I watch the leaves fall and the flowers bloom, as the seasons come and go.'

When one reaches this stage of realization, seeing is no-seeing, hearing is no-hearing, preaching is no-preaching. When hungry one eats, when tired one sleeps. Let the leaves

fall, let the flowers bloom as they like. When the leaves fall, I know it is the autumn; when the flowers bloom, I know it is the spring.

Having swept everything clean before you, Seccho now opens a passage-way, saying: 'Do you understand, or not?

An iron bar without a hole!

He has done all he could for you; he is exhausted - only able to turn round and present you with this iron bar without a hole. It is a most significant expression. Look and see with your own eyes! If you hesitate, you miss the mark for ever.

Yengo (the author of this commentary) now raised his staff and said, 'Do you see?' He then struck his chair and said, 'Do you hear?' Coming down from the chair, he said, 'Was anything talked about?'

What precisely is the significance of that iron bar without a hole? I do not pretend to know. Zen has always specialized in nonsense as a means of stimulating the mind to go forward to that which is beyond sense; so perhaps the point of the bar resides precisely in its pointlessness and in our disturbed, bewildered reaction to that pointlessness.

In the root divine Wisdom is all-Brahman; in the stem she is all-illusion; in the flower she is all-World; and in the fruit, all-Liberation.

Tantra Tattva

The Sravakas and the Pratyekabuddhas, when they reach the eighth stage of the Bodhisattva's discipline, become so intoxicated with the bliss of mental tranquillity that they fail to realize that the visible world is nothing but the Mind. They are still in the realm of individuation; their insight is not yet pure. The Bodhisattvas, on the other hand, are alive to their original vows, flowing out of the all-embracing love that is in their hearts. They do not enter into Nirvana (as a state separate from the world of becoming); they know that the visible world is nothing but a manifestation of Mind itself.

Condensed from the Lankavatara Sutra

A conscious being alone understands what is meant by moving; To those not endowed with consciousness the moving is unintelligible.

If you exercise yourself in the practice of keeping your mind unmoved, The immovable you gain is that of one who has no consciousness.

If you are desirous for the truly immovable, The immovable is in the moving itself, And this immovable is the truly immovable one.

There is no seed of Buddhahood where there is no consciousness.

Mark well how varied are the aspects of the immovable one, And know that the first reality is immovable.

Only when this reality is attained Is the true working of Suchness understood.

Hui Neng

These phrases about the unmoving first mover remind one of Aristotle. But between Aristotle and the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy within the great religious traditions there is this vast difference: Aristotle is primarily concerned with cosmology, the Perennial Philosophers are primarily concerned with liberation and enlightenment:

Aristotle is content to know about the unmoving mover, from the outside and theoretically; the aim of the Perennial Philosophers is to become directly aware of it, to know it unitively, so that they and others may actually become the unmoving One. This unitive knowledge can be knowledge in the heights, or knowledge in the fullness, or knowledge simultaneously in the heights and the fullness. Spiritual knowledge exclusively in the heights of the soul was rejected by Mahayana Buddhism as inadequate. The similar rejection of quietism within the Christian tradition will be touched upon in the section, 'Contemplation and Action.' Meanwhile it is interesting to find that the problem which aroused such acrimonious debate throughout seventeenth-century Europe had arisen for the Buddhists at a considerably earlier epoch. But whereas in Catholic Europe the outcome of the battle over Molinos, Mme Guyon and Fenelon was to all intents and purposes the extinction of mysticism for the best part of two centuries, in Asia the two parties were tolerant enough to agree to differ. Hinayana spirituality continued to explore the heights within, while the Mahayanist masters held up the ideal not of the Arhat, but of the Bodhisattva, and pointed the way to spiritual knowledge in its fullness as well as in its heights. What follows is a poetical account, by a Zen saint of the eighteenth century, of the state of those who have realized the Zen ideal.

Abiding with the non-particular which is in particulars,
 Going or returning, they remain for ever unmoved.
 Taking hold of the not-thought which lies in thoughts,
 In their every act they hear the voice of Truth.
 How boundless the sky of contemplation!
 How transparent the moonlight of the four-fold Wisdom!
 As the Truth reveals itself in its eternal tranquillity,
 This very earth is the Lotus-Land of Purity,
 And this body is the body of the Buddha.

Hakuin

Nature's intent is neither food, nor drink, nor clothing, nor comfort, nor anything else from which God is left out. Whether you like it or not, whether you know it or not, secretly Nature seeks and hunts and tries to ferret out the track in which God may be found.

Eckhart

Any ilea as it is in God is nobler than the highest of the angels in himself.

Eckhart

My inner man relishes things not as creatures but as the gift of God. But to my innermost man they savour not of God's gift, but of ever and aye.

Eckhart

Pigs eat acorns, but neither consider the sun that gave them life nor the influence of the heavens by which they were nourished, nor the very root of the tree from whence they came.

Thomas Traherne

Your enjoyment of the world is never right till every morning you awake in Heaven; see yourself in your Father's palace; and look upon the skies, the earth and the air as celestial joys; having such a reverend esteem of all, as if you were among the Angels. The bride of a monarch, in her husband's chamber, hath no such causes of delight as you.

You never enjoy the world aright till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars; and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and kings in sceptres, you can never enjoy the world.

Till your spirit filleth the whole world, and the stars are your jewels; till you are as familiar with the ways of God in all ages as with your walk and table; till you are intimately acquainted with that shady nothing out of which the world was made; till you love men so as to desire their happiness with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own; till you delight in God for being good to all; you never enjoy the world. Till you more feel it than your private estate, and are more present in the hemisphere, considering the glories and the beauties there, than in your own house; till you remember how lately you were made, and how wonderful it was when you came into it; and more rejoice in the palace of your glory than if it had been made today morning.

Yet further, you never enjoyed the world aright, till you so love the beauty of enjoying it, that you are covetous and earnest to persuade others to enjoy it. And so perfectly hate the abominable corruption of men in despising it that you had rather suffer the flames of hell than willingly be guilty of their error.

The world is a mirror of Infinite Beauty, yet no man sees it. It is a Temple of Majesty, yet no man regards it. It is a region of Light and Peace, did not men disquiet it. It is the Paradise of God. It is more to man since he is fallen, than it was before. It is the place of Angels and the Gate of Heaven. When Jacob waked out of his dream, he said, God is here, and I wish it not. How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the House of God and the Gate of Heaven.

Thomas Traherne

Before going on to discuss the means whereby it is possible to come to the fullness as well as the height of spiritual knowledge, let us briefly consider the experience of those who have been privileged to 'behold the One in all things,' but have made no efforts to perceive it within themselves. A great deal of interesting material on this subject may be found in Buck's *Cosmic Consciousness*. All that need be said here is that such 'cosmic consciousness' may come unsought and is in the nature of what Catholic theologians call a 'gratuitous grace.' One may have a gratuitous grace (the power of healing, for example, or foreknowledge) while in a state of mortal sin, and the gift is neither necessary to, nor sufficient for, salvation. At the best such sudden accessions of 'cosmic consciousness' as are described by Buck are merely unusual invitations to further personal effort in the direction of the inner height as well as the external fullness of knowledge. In a great many cases the invitation is not accepted; the gift is prized

for the ecstatic pleasure it brings; its coming is remembered nostalgically and, if the recipient happens to be a poet, written about with eloquence - as Byron, for example, wrote in a splendid passage of *Childe Harold*, as Wordsworth wrote in *Tintern Abbey* and *The Prelude*. In these matters no human being may presume to pass definitive judgment upon another human being; but it is at least permissible to say that, on the basis of the biographical evidence, there is no reason to suppose that either Wordsworth or Byron ever seriously did anything about the theophanies they described; nor is there any evidence that these theophanies were of themselves sufficient to transform their characters.

That enormous egotism, to which De Quincey and Keats and Haydon bear witness, seems to have remained with Wordsworth to the end. And Byron was as fascinatingly and tragi-comically Byronic after he had beheld the One in all things as he was before.

In this context it is interesting to compare Wordsworth with another great nature lover and man of letters, St Bernard. 'Let Nature be your teacher,' says the first; and he goes on to affirm that

One impulse from the vernal wood
Will tell you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

St Bernard speaks in what seems a similar strain. 'What I know of the divine sciences and Holy Scripture, I learnt in woods and fields. I have had no other masters than the beeches and the oaks.' And in another of his letters he says: 'Listen to a man of experience: thou wilt learn more in the woods than in books. Trees and stones will teach thee more than thou canst acquire from the mouth of a magister.' The phrases are similar; but their inner significance is very different. In Augustine's language, God alone is to be enjoyed; creatures are not to be enjoyed but used - used with love and compassion and a wondering, detached appreciation, as means to the knowledge of that which may be enjoyed. Wordsworth, like almost all other literary Nature-worshippers, preaches the enjoyment of creatures rather than their use for the attainment of spiritual ends - a use which, as we shall see, entails much self-discipline for the user. For Bernard it goes without saying that his correspondents are actively practising this self-discipline and that Nature, though loved and heeded as a teacher, is only being used as a means to God, not enjoyed as though she were God. The beauty of flowers and landscape is not merely to be relished as one 'wanders lonely as a cloud' about the countryside, is not merely to be pleasurably remembered when one is lying 'in vacant or in pensive mood' on the sofa in the library, after tea. The reaction must be a little more strenuous and purposeful. 'Here, my brothers,' says an ancient Buddhist author, 'are the roots of trees, here are empty places; meditate.' The truth is, of course, that the world is only for those who have deserved it; for, in Philo's words, 'even though a man may be incapable of making himself worthy of the creator of the cosmos, yet he ought to try to make himself worthy of the cosmos. He ought to transform himself from being a man into the nature of the cosmos and become, if one may say so, a little cosmos.' For those

who have not deserved the world, either by making themselves worthy of its creator (that is to say, by non-attachment and a total self-naughting), or, less arduously, by making themselves worthy of the cosmos (by bringing order and a measure of unity to the manifold confusion of undisciplined human personality), the world is, spiritually speaking, a very dangerous place.

That nirvana and samsara are one is a fact about the nature of the universe; but it is a fact which cannot be fully realized or directly experienced, except by souls far advanced in spirituality. For ordinary, nice, unregenerate people to accept this truth by hearsay, and to act upon it in practice, is merely to court disaster. All the dismal story of antinomianism is there to warn us of what happens when men and women make practical applications of a merely intellectual and unrealized theory that all is God and God is all. And hardly less depressing than the spectacle of antinomianism is that of the earnestly respectable 'well-rounded life' of good citizens who do their best to live sacramentally, but don't in fact have any direct acquaintance with that for which the sacramental activity really stands. Dr Oman, in his *The Natural and the Supernatural*, writes at length of the theme that 'reconciliation to the evanescent is revelation of the eternal'; and in a recent volume, *Science, Religion and the Future*, Canon Raven applauds Dr Oman for having stated the principles of theology in which there could be no ultimate antithesis between nature and grace, science and religion, in which, indeed, the worlds of the scientist and the theologian are seen to be one and the same. All this is in full accord with Taoism and Zen Buddhism and with such Christian teachings as St Augustine's *Ama et fac quod vis* and Father Lallemant's advice to theocentric contemplatives to go out and act in the world, since their actions are the only ones capable of doing any real good to the world. But what neither Dr Oman nor Canon Raven makes sufficiently clear is that nature and grace, samsara and nirvana, perpetual perishing and eternity, are really and experientially one only to persons who have fulfilled certain conditions. *Fac quod vis* in the temporal world - but only when you have learnt the infinitely difficult art of loving God with all your mind and heart and your neighbour as yourself. If you haven't learnt this lesson, you will either be an antinomian eccentric or criminal or else a respectable well-rounded-lifer, who has left himself no time to understand either nature or grace. The Gospels are perfectly clear about the process by which, and by which alone, a man may gain the right to live in the world as though he were at home in it: he must make a total denial of selfhood, submit to a complete and absolute mortification. At one period of his career, Jesus himself seems to have undertaken austerities, not merely of the mind, but of the body. There is the record of his forty day's fast and his statement, evidently drawn from personal experience, that some demons cannot be cast out except by those who have fasted much as well as prayed. (The *Curé d'Ars*, whose knowledge of miracles and corporal penance was based on personal experience, insists on the close correlation between severe bodily austerities and the power to get petitionary prayer answered in ways that are sometimes supernormal.) The Pharisees reproached Jesus because he 'came eating and drinking,' and associated with 'publicans and sinners';

they ignored, or were unaware of, the fact that this apparently worldly prophet had at one time rivalled the physical austerities of John the Baptist and was practising the spiritual mortifications which he consistently preached. The pattern of Jesus' life is essentially similar to that of the ideal sage, whose career is traced in the 'Oxherding Pictures,' so popular among Zen Buddhists. The wild ox, symbolizing the unregenerate self, is caught, made to change its direction, then tamed and gradually transformed from black to white. Regeneration goes so far that for a time the ox is completely lost, so that nothing remains to be pictured but the full-orbed moon, symbolizing Mind, Suchness, the Ground. But this is not the final stage. In the end, the herdsman comes back to the world of men, riding on the back of his ox. Because he now loves, loves to the extent of being identified with the divine object of his love, he can do what he likes; for what he likes is what the Nature of Things likes. He is found in company with wine-bibbers and butchers; he and they are all converted into Buddhas. For him, there is complete reconciliation to the evanescent and, through that reconciliation, revelation of the eternal. But for nice ordinary unregenerate people the only reconciliation to the evanescent is that of indulged passions, of distractions submitted to and enjoyed. To tell such persons that evanescence and eternity are the same, and not immediately to qualify the statement, is positively fatal - for, in practice, they are not the same except to the saint; and there is no record that anybody ever came to sanctity who did not, at the outset of his or her career, behave as if evanescence and eternity, nature and grace, were profoundly different and in many respects incompatible. As always, the path of spirituality is a knife-edge between abysses. On one side is the danger of mere rejection and escape, on the other the danger of mere acceptance and the enjoyment of things which should only be used as instruments or symbols. The versified caption which accompanies the last of the 'Ox-herding Pictures' runs as follows:

Even beyond the ultimate limits there extends a passage-way,
 By which he comes back to the six realms of existence.
 Every worldly affair is now a Buddhist work,
 And wherever he goes he finds his home air.
 Like a gem he stands out even in the mud,
 Like pure gold he shines even in the furnace.
 Along the endless road (of birth and death) he walks sufficient unto himself.
 In all circumstances he moves tranquil and unattached.

The means whereby man's final end is to be attained will be described and illustrated at length in the section on 'Mortification and Non-attachment.' This section, however, is mainly concerned with the disciplining of the will. But the disciplining of the will must have as its accompaniment a no less thorough disciplining of the consciousness. There has to be a conversion, sudden or otherwise, not merely of the heart, but also of the senses and of the perceiving mind. What follows is a brief account of this metanoia, as the Greeks called it, this total and radical 'change of mind.'

It is in the Indian and Far Eastern formulations of the Perennial Philosophy that this subject is most systematically treated. What is prescribed is a process of conscious

discrimination between the personal self and the Self that is identical with Brahman, between the individual ego and the Buddha-womb or Universal Mind. The result of this discrimination is a more or less sudden and complete 'revulsion' of consciousness, and the realization of a state of 'no-mind,' which may be described as the freedom from perceptual and intellectual attachment to the ego-principle. This state of 'no-mind' exists, as it were, on a knife-edge between the carelessness of the average sensual man and the strained over-eagerness of the zealot for salvation. To achieve it, one must walk delicately and, to maintain it, must learn to combine the most intense alertness with a tranquil and self-denying passivity, the most indomitable determination with a perfect submission to the leadings of the spirit. 'When no-mind is sought after by a mind,' says Huang-Po, 'that is making it a particular object of thought. There is only testimony of silence; it goes beyond thinking.' In other words, we, as separate individuals, must not try to think it, but rather permit ourselves to be thought by it. Similarly, in the Diamond Sutra we read that if a Bodhi-sattva, in his attempt to realize Suchness, 'retains the thought of an ego, a person, a separate being, or a soul, he is no longer a Bodhisattva.' Al-Ghazzali, the philosopher of Sufism, also stresses the need for intellectual humbleness and docility. 'If the thought that he is effaced from self occurs to one who is in fana (a term roughly corresponding to Zen's "no-mind", or mushin), that is a defect. The highest state is to be effaced from effacement.' There is an ecstatic effacement-from-effacement in the interior heights of the Atman-Brahman; and there is another, more comprehensive effacement-from-effacement, not only in the inner heights, but also in and through the world, in the waking, everyday knowledge of God in his fullness.

A man must become truly poor and as free from his own creaturely will as he was when he was born. And I tell you, by the eternal truth, that so long as you desire to fulfil the will of God and have any hankering after eternity and God, for just so long you are not truly poor. He alone has true spiritual poverty who wills nothing, knows nothing, desires nothing.

Eckhart

The Perfect Way knows no difficulties,
 Except that it refuses to make preferences.
 Only when freed from hate and love
 Does it reveal itself fully and without disguise.
 A tenth of an inch's difference,
 And heaven and earth are set apart.
 If you wish to see it before your own eyes,
 Have no fixed thoughts either for or against it.
 To set up what you like against what you dislike -
 This is the disease of the mind.
 When the deep meaning of the Way is not understood,
 Peace of mind is disturbed to no purpose...
 Pursue not the outer entanglements,

Dwell not in the inner void;
 Be serene in the oneness of things,
 And dualism vanishes of itself.
 When you strive to gain quiescence by stopping motion,
 The quiescence so gained is ever in motion.
 So long as you tarry in such dualism,
 How can you realize oneness?
 And when oneness is not thoroughly grasped,
 Loss is sustained in two ways:
 The denying of external reality is the assertion of it,
 And the assertion of Emptiness (the Absolute) is the denying of it...
 Transformations going on in the empty world that confronts us
 Appear to be real because of Ignorance.
 Do not strive to seek after the True,
 Only cease to cherish opinions.
 The two exist because of the One;
 But hold not even to this One.
 When a mind is not disturbed,
 The ten thousand things offer no offence...
 If an eye never falls asleep,
 All dreams will cease of themselves;
 If the Mind retains its absoluteness,
 The ten thousand things are of one substance.
 When the deep mystery of one Suchness is fathomed,
 All of a sudden we forget the external entanglements;
 When the ten thousand things are viewed in their oneness,
 We return to the origin and remain where we have always been...
 One in all,
 All in One -
 If only this is realized,
 No more worry about not being perfect!
 When Mind and each believing mind are not divided,
 And undivided are each believing mind and Mind,
 This is where words fail,
 For it is not of the past, present or future.
 The Third Patriarch of Zen

Do what you are doing now, suffer what you are suffering now; to do all this with holiness, nothing need be changed but your hearts. Sanctity consists in willing what happens to us by God's order. de Caussade The seventeenth-century Frenchman's vocabulary is very different from that of the seventh-century Chinaman's. But the advice they give is fundamentally similar. Conformity to the will of God, submission, docility to the leadings of the Holy Ghost — in practice, if not verbally, these are

the same as conformity to the Perfect Way, refusing to have preferences and cherish opinions, keeping the eyes open so that dreams may cease and Truth reveal itself.

The world inhabited by ordinary, nice, unregenerate people is mainly dull (so dull that they have to distract their minds from being aware of it by all sorts of artificial ‘amusements’), sometimes briefly and intensely pleasurable, occasionally or quite often disagreeable and even agonizing. For those who have deserved the world by making themselves fit to see God within it as well as within their own souls, it wears a very different aspect.

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold. The gates at first were the end of the world. The green trees, when I saw them first through one of the gates, transported and ravished me; their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal Cherubim! And young men glittering and sparkling angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die. But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifested in the light of the day, and something infinite behind everything appeared; which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine; and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it... And so it was that with much ado I was corrupted and made to learn the dirty devices of the world. Which now I unlearn, and become as it were a little child again, that I may enter into the Kingdom of

Thomas Traherne

Therefore I give you still another thought, which is yet purer and more spiritual: In the Kingdom of Heaven all is in all, all is one, and all is ours.

Eckhart

The doctrine that God is in the world has an important practical corollary - the sacredness of Nature, and the sinfulness and folly of man’s overweening efforts to be her master rather than her intelligently docile collaborator. Sub-human lives and even things are to be treated with respect and understanding, not brutally oppressed to serve our human ends.

The ruler of the Southern Ocean was Shu, the ruler of the Northern Ocean was Hu, and the ruler of the Centre was Chaos. Shu and Hu were continually meeting in the land of Chaos, who treated them very well. They consulted together how they might repay his kindness, and said: ‘Men all have seven orifices for the purpose of seeing, hearing, eating and breathing, while this ruler alone has not a single one. Let us try

to make them for him. Accordingly they dug one orifice in him every day. At the end of seven days Chaos died.

Chuang Tzu

In this delicately comic parable Chaos is Nature in the state of wu-wei — non-assertion or equilibrium. Shu and Hu are the living images of those busy persons who thought they would improve on Nature by turning dry prairies into wheat fields, and produced deserts; who proudly proclaimed the Conquest of the Air, and then discovered that they had defeated civilization; who chopped down vast forests to provide the newsprint demanded by that universal literacy which was to make the world safe for intelligence and democracy, and got wholesale erosion, pulp magazines and the organs of Fascist, Communist, capitalist and nationalist propaganda. In brief Shu and Hu are devotees of the apocalyptic religion of Inevitable Progress, and their creed is that the Kingdom of Heaven is outside you, and in the future. Chuang Tzu, on the other hand, like all good Taoists, has no desire to bully Nature into subserving ill-considered temporal ends, at variance with the final end of men as formulated in the Perennial Philosophy. His wish is to work with Nature, so as to produce material and social conditions in which individuals may realize Tao on every level from the physiological up to the spiritual.

Compared with that of the Taoists and Far Eastern Buddhists, the Christian attitude towards Nature has been curiously insensitive and often downright domineering and violent. Taking their cue from an unfortunate remark in Genesis, Catholic moralists have regarded animals as mere things which men do right to exploit for their own ends. Like landscape painting, the humanitarian movement in Europe was an almost completely secular affair. In the Far East both were essentially religious.

The Greeks believed that hubris was always followed by nemesis, that if you went too far you would get a knock on the head to remind you that the gods will not tolerate insolence on the part of mortal men. In the sphere of human relations, the modern mind understands the doctrine of hubris and regards it as mainly true. We wish pride to have a fall, and we see that very often it does fall.

To have too much power over one's fellows, to be too rich, too violent, too ambitious - all this invites punishment, and in the long run, we notice, punishment of one sort or another duly comes. But the Greeks did not stop there. Because they regarded Nature as in some way divine, they felt that it had to be respected and they were convinced that a hubristic lack of respect for Nature would be punished by avenging nemesis. In 'The Persians,' Aeschylus gives the reasons - the ultimate, metaphysical reasons - for the barbarians' defeat. Xerxes was punished for two offences - overweening imperialism directed against the Athenians, and overweening imperialism directed against Nature. He tried to enslave his fellow-men, and he tried to enslave the sea, by building a bridge across the Hellespont.

Atossa. From shore to shore he bridged the Hellespont.

Ghost of Darius. What, could he chain the mighty Bosphorus?

Atossa. Even so, some god assisting his design.

Ghost of Darius. Some god of power to cloud his better sense.

Today we recognize and condemn the first kind of imperialism; but most of us ignore the existence and even the very possibility of the second. And yet the author of *Erewhon* was certainly not a fool, and now that we are paying the appalling price for our much touted 'conquest of Nature' his book seems more than ever topical. And Butler was not the only nineteenth-century sceptic in regard to Inevitable Progress. A generation or more before him, Alfred de Vigny was writing about the new technological marvel of his days, the steam engine — writing in a tone very different from the enthusiastic roarings and trumpetings of his great contemporary, Victor Hugo.

Sur le taureau de fer, qui fume, souffle et beugle,
L'homme est monté trop tôt. Nul ne connaît encor

Quels orages en lui porte ce rude aveugle,
Et le gai voyageur lui livre son trésor.

And a little later in the same poem he adds:

Tous se sont dit: 'Allons,' mais aucun n'est le maître
D'un dragon mugissant qu'un savant a fait naître.

Nous nous sommes joués à plus fort que nous tous.

Looking backwards across the carnage and the devastation, we can see that Vigny was perfectly right. None of those gay travellers, of whom Victor Hugo was the most vociferously eloquent, had the faintest notion where that first, funny little Puffing Billy was taking them. Or rather they had a very clear notion, but it happened to be entirely false. For they were convinced that Puffing Billy was hauling them at full speed towards universal peace and the brotherhood of man; while the newspapers which they were so proud of being able to read, as the train rumbled along towards its Utopian destination not more than fifty years or so away, were the guarantee that liberty and reason would soon be everywhere triumphant. Puffing Billy has now turned into a four-motored bomber loaded with white phosphorus and high explosives, and the free press is everywhere the servant of its advertisers, of a pressure group, or of the government. And yet, for some inexplicable reason, the travellers (now far from gay) still hold fast to the religion of Inevitable Progress - which is, in the last analysis, the hope and faith (in the teeth of all human experience) that one can get something for nothing. How much saner and more realistic is the Greek view that every victory has to be paid for, and that, for some victories, the price exacted is so high that it outweighs any advantage that may be obtained! Modern man no longer regards Nature as being in any sense divine and feels perfectly free to behave towards her as an overweening conqueror and tyrant. The spoils of recent technological imperialism have been enormous; but meanwhile nemesis has seen to it that we get our kicks as well as halfpence. For example, has the ability to travel in twelve hours from New York to Los Angeles given more pleasure to the human race than the dropping of bombs and fire has given pain? There is no known method of computing the amount of felicity or goodness in the world at large. What is obvious, however, is that the advantages accruing from recent technological advances - or, in Greek phraseology, from recent

acts of hubris directed against Nature - are generally accompanied by corresponding disadvantages, that gains in one direction entail losses in other directions, and that we never get something except for something. Whether the net result of these elaborate credit and debit operations is a genuine Progress in virtue, happiness, charity and intelligence is something we can never definitely determine. It is because the reality of Progress can never be determined that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have had to treat it as an article of religious faith. To the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy, the question whether Progress is inevitable or even real is not a matter of primary importance. For them, the important thing is that individual men and women should come to the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground, and what interests them in regard to the social environment is not its progressiveness or non-progressiveness (whatever those terms may mean), but the degree to which it helps or hinders individuals in their advance towards man's final end.

5. Charity

HE THAT LOVETH not knoweth not God, for God is love.

i John iv

By love may He be gotten and holden, but by thought never.

The Cloud of Unknowing Whosoever studies to reach contemplation (i.e. unitive knowledge) should begin by searchingly enquiring of himself how much he loves. For love is the motive power of the mind (*machina mentis*), which draws it out of the world and raises it on high.

St Gregory the Great

The astrolabe of the mysteries of God is love.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

Heavens, deal so still!

Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man That slaves your ordinance, that will not see Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly.

Shakespeare

Love is infallible; it has no errors, for all errors are the want of love.

William Law

We can only love what we know, and we can never know completely what we do not love. Love is a mode of knowledge, and when the love is sufficiently disinterested and sufficiently intense, the knowledge becomes unitive knowledge and so takes on the quality of infallibility. Where there is no disinterested love (or, more briefly, no charity), there is only biased self-love, and consequently only a partial and distorted knowledge both of the self and of the world of things, lives, minds and spirit outside the self. The lust-dieted man 'slaves the ordinances of Heaven' - that is to say, he subordinates the laws of Nature and the spirit to his own cravings. The result is that 'he does not feel' and therefore makes himself incapable of knowledge. His ignorance is ultimately voluntary; if he cannot see, it is because 'he will not see.' Such voluntary ignorance inevitably has its negative reward. Nemesis follows hubris - sometimes in a spectacular way, as when the self-blinded man (*Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Lear*) falls into the trap which his own ambition or possessiveness or petulant vanity has prepared for him; sometimes in a less obvious way, as in the cases where power, prosperity and reputation endure to the end but at the cost of an ever-increasing imperviousness to grace and enlightenment, an ever completer inability to escape, now or hereafter, from the stifling prison of selfness and separateness. How profound can be the spiritual ignorance by which such 'enslavers of heaven's ordinances' are punished is indicated by the behaviour of Cardinal Richelieu on his death-bed. The priest who attended

him urged the great man to prepare his soul for its coming ordeal by forgiving all his enemies. 'I have never had any enemies,' the Cardinal replied with the calm sincerity of an ignorance which long years of intrigue and avarice and ambition had rendered as absolute as had been his political power, 'save only those of the State.' Like Napoleon, but in a different way, he was 'feeling heaven's power,' because he had refused to feel charity and therefore refused to know the truth about his own soul or anything else.

Here on earth the love of God is better than the knowledge of God, while it is better to know inferior things than to love them.

By knowing them we raise them, in a way, to our intelligence, whereas by loving them we stoop towards them and may become subservient to them, as the miser to his gold.

St Thomas Aquinas (paraphrased)

This remark seems, at first sight, to be incompatible with what precedes it. But in reality St Thomas is merely distinguishing between the various forms of love and knowledge. It is better to love-know God than just to know about God, without love, through the reading of a treatise on theology. Gold, on the other hand, should never be known with the miser's love, or rather concupiscence, but either abstractly, as the scientific investigator knows it, or else with the disinterested love-knowledge of the artist in metal, or of the spectator, who love-knows the goldsmith's work, not for its cash value, not for the sake of possessing it, but just because it is beautiful. And the same applies to all created things, lives and minds. It is bad to love-know them with self-centred attachment and cupidity; it is somewhat better to know them with scientific dispassion; it is best to supplement abstract knowledge-without-cupidity with true disinterested love-knowledge, having the quality of aesthetic delight, or of charity, or of both combined.

We make an idol of truth itself; for truth apart from charity is not God, but his image and idol, which we must neither love nor worship.

Pascal By a kind of philological accident (which is probably no accident at all, but one of the more subtle expressions of man's deep-seated will to ignorance and spiritual darkness), the word 'charity' has come, in modern English, to be synonymous with 'almsgiving,' and is almost never used in its original sense, as signifying the highest and most divine form of love. Owing to this impoverishment of our, at the best of times, very inadequate vocabulary of psychological and spiritual terms, the word 'love' has to assume an added burden. 'God is love,' we repeat glibly, and that we must 'love our neighbours as ourselves'; but 'love,' unfortunately, stands for everything from what happens when, on the screen, two close-ups rapturously collide to what happens when a John Woolman or a Peter Claver feels a concern about Negro slaves, because they are temples of the Holy Spirit - from what happens when crowds shout and sing and wave flags in the Sport-Palast or the Red Square to what happens when a solitary contemplative becomes absorbed in the prayer of simple regard. Ambiguity in vocabulary leads to confusion of thought; and, in this matter of love, confusion of thought admirably serves the purpose of an unregenerate and divided human nature

that is determined to make the best of both worlds - to say that it is serving God, while in fact it is serving Mammon, Mars or Priapus.

Systematically or in brief aphorism and parable, the masters of the spiritual life have described the nature of true charity and have distinguished it from the other, lower forms of love. Let us consider its principal characteristics in order. First, charity is disinterested, seeking no reward, nor allowing itself to be diminished by any return of evil for its good. God is to be loved for Himself, not for his gifts, and persons and things are to be loved for God's sake, because they are temples of the Holy Ghost. Moreover, since charity is disinterested, it must of necessity be universal.

Love seeks no cause beyond itself and no fruit; it is its own fruit, its own enjoyment. I love because I love; I love in order that I may love... Of all the motions and affections of the soul, love is the only one by means of which the creature, though not on equal terms, is able to treat with the Creator and to give back something resembling what has been given to it... When God loves, He only desires to be loved, knowing that love will render all those who love Him happy.

St Bernard

For as love has no by-ends, wills nothing but its own increase, so everything is as oil to its flame; it must have that which it wills and cannot be disappointed, because everything (including unkindness on the part of those loved) naturally helps it to live in its own way and to bring forth its own work.

William Law

Those who speak ill of me are really my good friends.

When, being slandered, I cherish neither enmity nor preference, There grows within me the power of love and humility, which is born of the Unborn.

Kung-chia Ta-shih

Some people want to see God with their eyes as they see a cow, and to love Him as they love their cow - for the milk and cheese and profit it brings them. This is how it is with people who love God for the sake of outward wealth or inward comfort. They do not rightly love God, when they love Him for their own advantage. Indeed, I tell you the truth, any object you have in your mind, however good, will be a barrier between you and the inmost Truth.

Eckhart

A beggar, Lord, I ask of Thee More than a thousand kings could ask.

Each one wants something, which he asks of Thee.

I come to ask Thee to give me Thyself.

Ansari of Herat

I will have nothing to do with a love which would be for God or in God. This is a love which pure love cannot abide; for pure love is God Himself.

St Catherine of Genoa

As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son, so let there be good will without measure between all beings. Let good will without measure prevail in the whole world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling

of differing or opposing interests. If a man remain steadfastly in this state of mind all the time he is awake, then it comes to pass the saying, 'Even in this world holiness has been found.'

Metta Sutta

Learn to look with an equal eye upon all beings, seeing the one Self in all.

Srimad Bhagavatam The second distinguishing mark of charity is that, unlike the lower forms of love, it is not an emotion. It begins as an act of the will and is consummated as a purely spiritual awareness, a unitive love-knowledge of the essence of its object.

Let everyone understand that real love of God does not consist in tear-shedding, nor in that sweetness and tenderness for which usually we long, just because they console us, but in serving God in justice, fortitude of soul and humility.

St Teresa

The worth of love does not consist of high feelings, but in detachment, in patience under all trials for the sake of God whom we love.

St John of the Cross

By love I do not mean any natural tenderness, which is more or less in people according to their constitution; but I mean a larger principle of the soul, founded in reason and piety, which makes us tender, kind and gentle to all our fellow creatures as creatures of God, and for his sake.

William Law

The nature of charity, or the love-knowledge of God, is defined by Shankara, the great Vedantist saint and philosopher of the ninth century, in the thirty-second couplet of his Viveka-Chudamani.

Among the instruments of emancipation the supreme is devotion. Contemplation of the true form of the real Self (the Atman which is identical with Brahman) is said to be devotion.

In other words, the highest form of the love of God is an immediate spiritual intuition, by which the 'knower, known and knowledge are made one.' The means to, and earlier stages of, this supreme love-knowledge of Spirit by spirit are described by Shankara in the preceding verses of his philosophical poem, and consist in acts of a will directed towards the denial of selfness in thought, feeling and action, towards desirelessness and non-attachment or (to use the corresponding Christian term) 'holy indifference,' towards a cheerful acceptance of affliction, without self-pity and without thought of returning evil for evil, and finally towards unsleeping and one-pointed mindfulness of the Godhead who is at once transcendent and, because transcendent, immanent in every soul.

It is plain that no distinct object whatever that pleases the will can be God; and, for that reason, if the will is to be united with Him, it must empty itself, cast away every disorderly affection of the desire, every satisfaction it may distinctly have, high and low, temporal and spiritual, so that, purified and cleansed from all unruly satisfactions, joys and desires, it may be wholly occupied, with all its affections, in loving God. For

if the will can in any way comprehend God and be united with Him, it cannot be through any capacity of the desire, but only by love; and as all the delight, sweetness and joy, of which the will is sensible, is not love, it follows that none of these pleasing impressions can be the adequate means of uniting the will to God. These adequate means consist in an act of the will. And because an act of the will is quite distinct from feeling, it is by an act that the will is united with God and rests in Him; that act is love. This union is never wrought by feeling or exertion of the desire; for these remain in the soul as aims and ends. It is only as motives of love that feelings can be of service, if the will is bent on going onwards, and for nothing else...

He, then, is very unwise who, when sweetness and spiritual delight fail him, thinks for that reason that God has abandoned him; and when he finds them again, rejoices and is glad, thinking that he has in that way come to possess God.

More unwise still is he who goes about seeking for sweetness in God, rejoices in it, and dwells upon it; for in so doing he is not seeking after God with the will grounded in the emptiness of faith and charity, but only in spiritual sweetness and delight, which is a created thing, following herein in his own will and fond pleasure... It is impossible for the will to attain to the sweetness and bliss of the divine union otherwise than in detachment, in refusing to the desire every pleasure in the things of heaven and earth.

St John of the Cross Love (the sensible love of the emotions) does not unify. True, it unites in act; but it does not unite in essence.

Eckhart

The reason why sensible love even of the highest object cannot unite the soul to its divine Ground in spiritual essence is that, like all other emotions of the heart, sensible love intensifies that selfness, which is the final obstacle in the way of such union. 'The damned are in eternal movement without any mixture of rest; we mortals, who are yet in this pilgrimage, have now movement, now rest... Only God has repose without movement.' Consequently it is only if we abide in the peace of God that passes all understanding that we can abide in the knowledge and love of God. And to the peace that passes understanding we have to go by way of the humble and very ordinary peace which can be understood by everybody - peace between nations and within them (for wars and violent revolutions have the effect of more or less totally eclipsing God for the majority of those involved in them);- peace between individuals and within the individual soul (for personal quarrels and private fears, loves, hates, ambitions and distractions are, in their petty way, no less fatal to the development of the spiritual life than are the greater calamities). We have to will the peace that it is within our power to get for ourselves and others, in order that we may be fit to receive that other peace, which is a fruit of the Spirit and the condition, as St Paul implied, of the unitive knowledge-love of God.

It is by means of tranquillity of mind that you are able to transmute this false mind of death and rebirth into the clear Intuitive Mind and, by so doing, to realize the primal and enlightening Essence of Mind. You should make this your starting point

for spiritual practices. Having harmonized your starting point with your goal, you will be able by right practice to attain your true end of perfect Enlightenment.

If you wish to tranquillize your mind and restore its original purity, you must proceed as you would do if you were purifying a jar of muddy water. You first let it stand, until the sediment settles at the bottom, when the water will become clear, which corresponds with the state of the mind before it was troubled by defiling passions. Then you carefully strain off the pure water... When the mind becomes tranquillized and concentrated into perfect unity, then all things will be seen, not in their separateness, but in their unity, wherein there is no place for the passions to enter, and which is in full conformity with the mysterious and indescribable purity of Nirvana.

Surangama Sutra

This identity out of the One into the One and with the One is the source and fountainhead and breaking forth of glowing Love.

Eckhart

Spiritual progress, as we have had occasion to discover in several other contexts, is always spiritual and reciprocal. Peace from distractions and emotional agitations is the way to charity; and charity, or unitive love-knowledge, is the way to the higher peace of God. And the same is true of humility, which is the third characteristic mark of charity. Humility is a necessary condition of the highest form of love, and the highest form of love makes possible the consummation of humility in a total self-naughting.

Would you be a pilgrim on the road of Love?

The first condition is that you make yourself humble as dust and ashes.

Ansari of Herat

I have but one word to say to you concerning love for your neighbour, namely that nothing save humility can mould you to it; nothing but the consciousness of your own weakness can make you indulgent and pitiful to that of others. You will answer, I quite understand that humility should produce forbearance towards others, but how am I first to acquire humility? Two things combined will bring that about; you must never separate them. The first is contemplation of the deep gulf, whence God's all-powerful hand has drawn you out, and over which He ever holds you, so to say, suspended. The second is the presence of that all-penetrating God. It is only in beholding and loving God that we can learn forgetfulness of self, measure duly the nothingness which has dazzled us, and accustom ourselves thankfully to decrease beneath that great Majesty which absorbs all things. Love God and you will be humble; love God and you will throw off the love of self; love God and you will love all that He gives you to love for love of Him.

Fénelon

Feelings, as we have seen, may be of service as motives of charity; but charity as charity has its beginning in the will - will to peace and humility in oneself, will to patience and kindness towards one's fellow-creatures, will to that disinterested love of God which 'asks nothing and refuses nothing.' But the will can be strengthened by exercise and confirmed by perseverance. This is very clearly brought out in the

following record — delightful for its Boswellian vividness - of a conversation between the young Bishop of Belley and his beloved friend and master, François de Sales.

I once asked the Bishop of Geneva what one must do to attain perfection. ‘You must love God with all your heart,’ he answered, ‘and your neighbour as yourself.’

‘I did not ask wherein perfection lies,’ I rejoined, ‘but how to attain it.’

‘Charity,’ he said again, ‘that is both the means and the end, the only way by which we can reach that perfection which is, after all, but Charity itself...Just as the soul is the life of the body, so charity is the life of the soul.’

‘I know all that,’ I said. ‘But I want to know how one is to love God with all one’s heart and one’s neighbour as oneself.’

But again he answered, ‘We must love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves.’

‘I am no further than I was,’ I replied. ‘Tell me how to acquire such love.’

‘The best way, the shortest and easiest way of loving God with all one’s heart is to love Him wholly and heartily!’

He would give no other answer. At last, however, the Bishop said, ‘There are many besides you who want me to tell them of methods and systems and secret ways of becoming perfect, and I can only tell them that the whole secret is a hearty love of God, and the only way of attaining that love is by loving. You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working; and just so you learn to love God and man by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves. If you want to love God, go on loving Him more and more. Begin as a mere apprentice, and the very power of love will lead you on to become a master in the art. Those who have made most progress will continually press on, never believing themselves to have reached their end; for charity should go on increasing until we draw our last breath.’

Jean Pierre Camus

The passage from what St Bernard calls the ‘carnal love’ of the sacred humanity to the spiritual love of the Godhead, from the emotional love that can only unite lover and beloved in act to the perfect charity which unifies them in spiritual substance, is reflected in religious practice as the passage from meditation, discursive and affective, to infused contemplation. All Christian writers insist that the spiritual love of the Godhead is superior to the carnal love of the humanity, which serves as introduction and means to man’s final end in unitive love-knowledge of the divine Ground; but all insist no less strongly that carnal love is a necessary introduction and an indispensable means. Oriental writers would agree that this is true for many persons, but not for all, since there are some born contemplatives who are able to ‘harmonize their starting point with their goal’ and to embark directly upon the Yoga of Knowledge. It is from the point of view of the born contemplative that the greatest of Taoist philosophers writes in the following passage.

Those men who in a special way regard Heaven as Father and have, as it were, a personal love for it, how much more should they love what is above Heaven as Father!

Other men in a special way regard their rulers as better than themselves and they, as it were, personally die for them. How much more should they die for what is truer than a ruler; When the springs dry up, the fish are all together on dry land. They then moisten each other with their dampness and keep each other wet with their slime. But this is not to be compared with forgetting each other in a river or lake.

Chuang Tzu

The slime of personal and emotional love is remotely similar to the water of the Godhead's spiritual being, but of inferior quality and (precisely because the love is emotional and therefore personal) of insufficient quantity. Having, by their voluntary ignorance, wrong-doing and wrong being, caused the divine springs to dry up, human beings can do something to mitigate the horrors of their situation by 'keeping one another wet with their slime.' But there can be no happiness or safety in time and no deliverance into eternity, until they give up thinking that slime is enough and, by abandoning themselves to what is in fact their element, call back the eternal waters. To those who seek first the Kingdom of God, all the rest will be added. From those who, like the modern idolaters of progress, seek first all the rest in the expectation that (after the harnessing of atomic power and the next revolution but three) the Kingdom of God will be added, everything will be taken away. And yet we continue to trust in progress, to regard personal slime as the highest form of spiritual moisture and to prefer an agonizing and impossible existence on dry land to love, joy and peace in our native ocean.

The sect of lovers is distinct from all others; Lovers have a religion and a faith all their own.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

The soul lives by that which it loves rather than in the body which it animates. For it has not its life in the body, but rather gives it to the body and lives in that which it loves.

St John of the Cross

Temperance is love surrendering itself wholly to Him who is its object; courage is love bearing all things gladly for the sake of Him who is its object; justice is love serving only Him who is its object, and therefore rightly ruling, prudence is love making wise distinctions between what hinders and what helps itself.

St Augustine

The distinguishing marks of charity are disinterestedness, tranquillity and humility. But where there is disinterestedness there is neither greed for personal advantage nor fear for personal loss or punishment; where there is tranquillity, there is neither craving nor aversion, but a steady will to conform to the divine Tao or Logos on every level of existence and a steady awareness of the divine Suchness and what should be one's own relations to it; and where there is humility there is no censoriousness and no glorification of the ego or any projected alter-ego at the expense of others, who are recognized as having the same weaknesses and faults, but also the same capacity for transcending them in the unitive knowledge of God, as one has oneself. From all this it

follows that charity is the root and substance of morality, and that where there is little charity there will be much avoidable evil. All this has been summed up in Augustine's formula: 'Love, and do what you like.' Among the later elaborations of the Augustinian theme we may cite the following from the writings of John Everard, one of those spiritually minded seventeenth-century divines whose teachings fell on the deaf ears of warring factions and, when the revolution and the military dictatorship were at an end, on the even deafer ears of Restoration clergymen and their successors in the Augustan age. (Just how deaf those ears could be we may judge by what Swift wrote of his beloved and morally perfect Houyhnhnms. The subject matter of their conversations, as of their poetry, consisted of such things as 'friendship and benevolence, the visible operations of nature or ancient traditions; the bounds and limits of virtue, the unerring rules of reason.' Never once do the ideas of God, or charity, or deliverance engage their minds. Which shows sufficiently clearly what the Dean of St Patrick's thought of the religion by which he made his money.)

Turn the man loose who has found the living guide within him, and then let him neglect the outward if he can! Just as you would say to a man who loves his wife with all tenderness, 'You are at liberty to beat her, hurt her or kill her, if you want to.'

John Everard

From this it follows that, where there is charity, there can be no coercion.

God forces no one, for love cannot compel, and God's service, therefore, is a thing of perfect freedom.

Hans Denk

But just because it cannot compel, charity has a kind of authority, a non-coercive power, by means of which it defends itself and gets its beneficent will done in the world - not always, of course, not inevitably or automatically (for individuals and, still more, organizations can be impenetrably armoured against divine influence), but in a surprisingly large number of cases.

Heaven arms with pity those whom it would not see destroyed.

Lao Tzu

'He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me' - in those who harbour such thoughts hatred will never cease.

'He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me' - in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease.

For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time - this is an old rule.

Dhammapada

Our present economic, social and international arrangements are based, in large measure, upon organized lovelessness. We begin by lacking charity towards Nature, so that instead of trying to co-operate with Tao or the Logos on the inanimate and sub-human levels, we try to dominate and exploit, we waste the earth's mineral resources, ruin its soil, ravage its forests, pour filth into its rivers and poisonous fumes into its air. From lovelessness in relation to Nature we advance to lovelessness in relation to art — a lovelessness so extreme that we have effectively killed all the fundamental or useful

arts and set-up various kinds of mass-production by machines in their place. And of course this lovelessness in regard to art is at the same time a lovelessness in regard to the human beings who have to perform the fool-proof and grace-proof tasks imposed by our mechanical art-surrogates and by the interminable paper work connected with mass-production and mass-distribution. With mass-production and mass-distribution go mass-financing, and the three have conspired to expropriate ever-increasing numbers of small owners of land and productive equipment, thus reducing the sum of freedom among the majority and increasing the power of a minority to exercise a coercive control over the lives of their fellows. This coercively controlling minority is composed of private capitalists or governmental bureaucrats or of both classes of bosses acting in collaboration — and, of course, the coercive and therefore essentially loveless nature of the control remains the same, whether the bosses call themselves ‘company directors’ or ‘civil servants.’ The only difference between these two kinds of oligarchical rulers is that the first derive more of their power from wealth than from position within a conventionally respected hierarchy, while the second derive more power from position than from wealth. Upon this fairly uniform groundwork of loveless relationships are imposed others, which vary widely from one society to another, according to local conditions and local habits of thought and feeling. Here are a few examples: contempt and exploitation of coloured minorities living among white majorities, or of coloured majorities governed by minorities of white imperialists; hatred of Jews, Catholics, Freemasons or of any other minority whose language, habits, appearance or religion happens to differ from those of the local majority. And the crowning superstructure of uncharity is the organized lovelessness of the relations between state and sovereign state - a lovelessness that expresses itself in the axiomatic assumption that it is right and natural for national organizations to behave like thieves and murderers, armed to the teeth and ready, at the first favourable opportunity, to steal and kill. (Just how axiomatic is this assumption about the nature of nationhood is shown by the history of Central America. So long as the arbitrarily delimited territories of Central America were called provinces of the Spanish colonial empire, there was peace between their inhabitants. But early in the nineteenth century the various administrative districts of the Spanish empire broke from their allegiance to the ‘mother country’ and decided to become nations on the European model. Result: they immediately went to war with one another. Why? Because, by definition, a sovereign national state is an organization that has the right and duty to coerce its members to steal and kill on the largest possible scale.)

‘Lead us not into temptation’ must be the guiding principle of all social organization, and the temptations to be guarded against and, so far as possible, eliminated by means of appropriate economic and political arrangements are temptations against charity, that is to say, against the disinterested love of God, Nature and man. First, the dissemination and general acceptance of any form of the Perennial Philosophy will do something to preserve men and women from the temptation to idolatrous worship of things in time - church-worship, state-worship, revolutionary future-worship, humanistic self-worship, all of them essentially and necessarily opposed to charity. Next

come decentralization, widespread private ownership of land and the means of production on a small scale, discouragement of monopoly by state or corporation, division of economic and political power (the only guarantee, as Lord Acton was never tired of insisting, of civil liberty under law). These social rearrangements would do much to prevent ambitious individuals, organizations and governments from being led into the temptation of behaving tyrannously; while co-operatives, democratically controlled professional organizations and town meetings would deliver the masses of the people from the temptation of making their decentralized individualism too rugged. But of course none of these intrinsically desirable reforms can possibly be carried out, so long as it is thought right and natural that sovereign states should prepare to make war on one another. For modern war cannot be waged except by countries with an over-developed capital goods industry; countries in which economic power is wielded either by the state or by a few monopolistic corporations which it is easy to tax and, if necessary, temporarily to nationalize; countries where the labouring masses, being without property, are rootless, easily transferable from one place to another, highly regimented by factory discipline. Any decentralized society of free, uncoerced small owners, with a properly balanced economy must, in a war-making world such as ours, be at the mercy of one whose production is highly mechanized and centralized, whose people are without property and therefore easily coercible, and whose economy is lop-sided. This is why the one desire of industrially undeveloped countries like Mexico and China is to become like Germany, or England, or the United States. So long as the organized lovelessness of war and preparation for war remains, there can be no mitigation, on any large, nationwide or world-wide scale, of the organized lovelessness of our economic and political relationships. War and preparation for war are standing temptations to make the present bad, God eclipsing arrangements of society progressively worse as technology becomes progressively more efficient.

6. Mortification, Non-Attachment, Right Livelihood

THIS TREASURE OF the Kingdom of God has been hidden by time and multiplicity and the soul's own works, or briefly by its creaturely nature. But in the measure that the soul can separate itself from this multiplicity, to that extent it reveals within itself the Kingdom of God. Here the soul and the Godhead are one.

Eckhart

'OUR KINGDOM GO' is the necessary and unavoidable corollary of 'Thy kingdom come.' For the more there is of self, the less there is of God. The divine eternal fullness of life can be gained only by those who have deliberately lost the partial, separative life of craving and self-interest, of egocentric thinking, feeling, wishing and acting. Mortification or deliberate dying to self is inculcated with an uncompromising firmness in the canonical writings of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and most of the other major and minor religions of the world, and by every theocentric saint and spiritual reformer who has ever lived out and expounded the principle of the Perennial Philosophy. But this 'self-naughting' is never (at least by anyone who knows what he is talking about) regarded as an end in itself. It possesses merely an instrumental value, as the indispensable means to something else. In the words of one whom we have often had occasion to cite in earlier sections, it is necessary for all of us to 'learn the true nature and worth of all self-denials and mortifications.'

As to their nature, considered in themselves, they have nothing of goodness or holiness, nor are any real part of our sanctification, they are not the true food or nourishment of the Divine Life in our souls, they have no quickening, sanctifying power in them; their only worth consists in this, that they remove the impediments of holiness, break down that which stands between God and us, and make way for the quickening, sanctifying spirit of God to operate on our souls, which operation of God is the one only thing that can raise the Divine Life in the soul, or help it to the smallest degree of real holiness or spiritual life... Hence we may learn the reason why many people not only lose the benefit, but are even the worse for all their mortifications. It is because they mistake the whole nature and worth of them. They practise them for their own sakes, as things good in themselves; they think them to be real parts of holiness, and so rest in them and look no further, but grow full of self-esteem and self-admiration for their own progress in them. This makes them self-sufficient, morose, severe judges of all those that fall short of their mortifications. And thus their self-denials do only that for them which indulgences do for other people: they withstand and hinder the operation

of God upon their souls, and instead of being really self-denials, they strengthen and keep up the kingdom of self.

William Law

The rout and destruction of the passions, while a good, is not the ultimate good; the discovery of Wisdom is the surpassing good. When this is found, all the people will sing.

Philo

Dame Gertrude More

Living in religion (as I can speak by experience) if one is not in a right course of prayer and other exercises between God and our soul, one's nature groweth much worse than ever it would have been, if one had lived in the world. For pride and self-love, which are rooted in the soul by sin, find means to strengthen themselves exceedingly in religion, if the soul is not in a course that may teach her and procure her true humility. For by the corrections and contradictions of the will (which cannot be avoided by any living in a religious community) I find my heart grown, as I may say, as hard as a stone; and nothing would have been able to soften it but by being put into a course of prayer, by which the soul tendeth towards God and learneth of Him the lesson of truly humbling herself.

Once, when I was grumbling over being obliged to eat meat and do no penance, I heard it said that sometimes there was more of self-love than desire of penance in such sorrow.

St Teresa

That the mortified are, in some respects, often much worse than the unmortified is a commonplace of history, fiction and descriptive psychology. Thus, the Puritan may practise all the cardinal virtues - prudence, fortitude, temperance and chastity - and yet remain a thoroughly bad man; for, in all too many cases, these virtues of his are accompanied by, and indeed causally connected with, the sins of pride, envy, chronic anger and an uncharitableness pushed sometimes to the level of active cruelty. Mistaking the means for the end, the Puritan has fancied himself holy because he is stoically austere. But stoical austerity is merely the exaltation of the more creditable side of the ego at the expense of the less creditable. Holiness, on the contrary, is the total denial of the separative self, in its creditable no less than its discreditable aspects, and the abandonment of the will to God. To the extent that there is attachment to 'I,' 'me,'

'mine,' there is no attachment to, and therefore no unitive knowledge of, the divine Ground. Mortification has to be carried to the pitch of non-attachment or (in the phrase of St François de Sales) 'holy indifference'; otherwise it merely transfers self-will from one channel to another, not merely without decrease in the total volume of that self-will, but sometimes with an actual increase. As usual, the corruption of the best is the worst. The difference between the mortified but still proud and self-centred stoic and the unmortified hedonist consists in this: the latter, being flabby, shiftless and at heart rather ashamed of himself, lacks the energy and the motive to do much harm

except to his own body, mind and spirit; the former, because he has all the secondary virtues and looks down on those who are not like himself, is morally equipped to wish and to be able to do harm on the very largest scale and with a perfectly untroubled conscience. These are obvious facts; and yet, in the current religious jargon of our day the word 'immoral' is reserved almost exclusively for the carnally self-indulgent. The covetous and the ambitious, the respectable toughs and those who cloak their lust for power and place under the right sort of idealistic cant, are not merely unblamed; they are even held up as models of virtue and godliness. The representatives of the organized churches begin by putting haloes on the heads of the people who do most to make wars and revolutions, then go on, rather plaintively, to wonder why the world should be in such a mess.

Mortification is not, as many people seem to imagine, a matter, primarily, of severe physical austerities. It is possible that, for certain persons in certain circumstances, the practice of severe physical austerities may prove helpful in advance towards man's final end. In most cases, however, it would seem that what is gained by such austerities is not liberation, but something quite different - the achievement of 'psychic' powers. The ability to get petitionary prayer answered, the power to heal and work other miracles, the knack of looking into the future or into other people's minds - these, it would seem, are often related in some kind of causal connection with fasting, watching and the self-infliction of pain. Most of the great theocentric saints and spiritual teachers have admitted the existence of supernormal powers, only, however, to deplore them. To think that such Siddhis, as the Indians call them, have anything to do with liberation is, they say, a dangerous illusion. These things are either irrelevant to the main issue of life, or, if too much prized and attended to, an obstacle in the way of spiritual advance. Nor are these the only objections to physical austerities. Carried to extremes, they may be dangerous to health - and without health the steady persistence of effort required by the spiritual life is very difficult of achievement. And being difficult, painful and generally conspicuous, physical austerities are a standing temptation to vanity and the competitive spirit of record breaking. 'When thou didst give thyself up to physical mortification, thou wast great, thou wast admired.' So writes Suso of his own experiences - experiences which led him, just as Gautama Buddha had been led many centuries before, to give up his course of bodily penance. And St Teresa remarks how much easier it is to impose great penances upon oneself than to suffer in patience, charity and humbleness the ordinary everyday crosses of family life (which did not prevent her, incidentally, from practising, to the very day of her death, the most excruciating forms of self-torture. Whether these austerities really helped her to come to the unitive knowledge of God, or whether they were prized and persisted in because of the psychic powers they helped to develop, there is no means of determining.)

Our dear Saint (François de Sales) disapproved of immoderate fasting. He used to say that the spirit could not endure the body when overfed, but that, if underfed, the body could not endure the spirit.

Jean Pierre Camus

When the will, the moment it feels any joy in sensible things rises upwards in that joy to God, and when sensible things move it to pray, it should not neglect them, it should make use of them for so holy an exercise; because sensible things, in these conditions, subserve the end for which God created them, namely to be occasions for making Him better known and loved.

St John of the Cross

He who is not conscious of liberty of spirit among the things of sense and sweetness - things which should serve as motives to prayer - and whose will rests and feeds upon them, ought to abstain from the use of them; for to him they are a hindrance on the road to God.

St John of the Cross

One man may declare that he cannot fast; but can he declare that he cannot love God? Another may affirm that he cannot preserve virginity or sell all his goods in order to give the price to the poor; but can he tell me that he cannot love his enemies? All that is necessary is to look into one's own heart; for what God asks of us is not found at a great distance.

St Jerome

Anybody who wishes to do so can get all, and indeed more than all, the mortification he wants out of the incidents of ordinary, day-to-day living, without ever resorting to harsh bodily penance. Here are the rules laid down by the author of Holy Wisdom for Dame Gertrude More.

First, that she should do all that belonged to her to do by any law, human or Divine. Secondly, that she was to refrain from doing those things that were forbidden her by human or Divine Law, or by Divine inspiration. Thirdly, that she should bear with as much patience or resignation as possible all crosses and contradictions to her natural will, which were inflicted by the hand of God. Such, for instance, were aridities, temptations, afflictions or bodily pain, sickness and infirmity; or again, the loss of friends or want of necessities and comforts. All this was to be endured patiently, whether the crosses came direct from God or by means of His creatures... These indeed were mortifications enough for Dame Gertrude, or for any other soul, and there was no need for anyone to advise or impose others.

Augustine Baker

To sum up, that mortification is the best which results in the elimination of self-will, self-interest, self-centred thinking, wishing and imagining. Extreme physical austerities are not likely to achieve this kind of mortification. But the acceptance of what happens to us (apart, of course, from our own sins) in the course of daily living is likely to produce this result. If specific exercises in self-denial are undertaken, they should be inconspicuous, non-competitive and uninjurious to health. Thus, in the matter of diet, most people will find it sufficiently mortifying to refrain from eating all the things which the experts in nutrition condemn as unwholesome. And where social relations are concerned, self-denial should take the form, not of showy acts of would-be humility, but of control of the tongue and the moods - in refraining from saying anything uncharitable

or merely frivolous (which means, in practice, refraining from about fifty per cent of ordinary conversation), and in behaving calmly and with quiet cheerfulness when external circumstances or the state of our bodies predisposes us to anxiety, gloom or an excessive elation.

When a man practises charity in order to be reborn in heaven, or for fame, or reward, or from fear, such charity can obtain no pure effect.

Sutra on the Distinction and Protection of the Dharma

When Prince Wen Wang was on a tour of inspection in Tsang, he saw an old man fishing. But his fishing was not real fishing, for he did not fish in order to catch fish, but to amuse himself. So Wen Wang wished to employ him in the administration of government, but feared lest his own ministers, uncles and brothers might object. On the other hand, if he let the old man go, he could not bear to think of the people being deprived of such an influence.

Chuang Tzu

God, if I worship Thee in fear of hell, burn me in hell. And if I worship Thee in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, withhold not Thine everlasting Beauty.

Rahi 'a Rabi'a, the Sufi woman-saint, speaks, thinks and feels in terms of devotional theism; the Buddhist theologian, in terms of impersonal moral Law; the Chinese philosopher, with characteristic humour, in terms of politics; but all three insist on the need for non-attachment to self-interest - insist on it as strongly as does Christ when he reproaches the Pharisees for their egocentric piety, as does the Krishna of the Bhagavad-Gita when he tells Arjuna to do his divinely ordained duty without personal craving for, or fear of, the fruits of his actions.

St Ignatius Loyola was once asked what his feelings would be if the Pope were to suppress the Company of Jesus. 'A quarter of an hour of prayer,' he answered, 'and I should think no more about it.'

This is, perhaps, the most difficult of all mortifications - to achieve a 'holy indifference' to the temporal success or failure of the cause to which one has devoted one's best energies. If it triumphs, well and good; and if it meets defeat, that also is well and good, if only in ways that, to a limited and time-bound mind, are here and now entirely incomprehensible.

By a man without passions I mean one who does not permit good or evil to disturb his inward economy, but rather falls in with what happens and does not add to the sum of his mortality.

Chuang Tzu

The fitting disposition for union with God is not that the soul should understand, feel, taste or imagine anything on the subject of the nature of God, or any other thing whatever, but should remain in that pureness and love which is perfect resignation and complete detachment from all things for God alone.

St John of the Cross

Disquietude is always vanity, because it serves no good. Yes, even if the whole world were thrown into confusion and all things in it, disquietude on that account would be vanity.

St John of the Cross

Sufficient not only unto the day, but also unto the place, is the evil thereof. Agitation over happenings which we are powerless to modify, either because they have not yet occurred, or else are occurring at an inaccessible distance from us, achieves nothing beyond the inoculation of here and now with the remote or anticipated evil that is the object of our distress. Listening four or five times a day to newscasters and commentators, reading the morning papers and all the weeklies and monthlies - nowadays, this is described as 'taking an intelligent interest in politics.' St John of the Cross would have called it indulgence in idle curiosity and the cultivation of disquietude for disquietude's sake.

I want very little, and what I do want I have very little wish for. I have hardly any desires, but if I were to be born again, I should have none at all. We should ask nothing and refuse nothing, but leave ourselves in the arms of divine Providence without wasting time in any desire, except to will what God wills of us.

St François de Sales

Push far enough towards the Void,
Hold fast enough for Quietness,
And of the ten thousand things none but can be worked on by you.
I have beheld them, whither they go back.
See, all things howsoever they flourish
Return to the root from which they grew.
This return to the Root is called Quietness;
Quietness is called submission to Fate;
What has submitted to Fate becomes part of the always-so;
To know the always-so is to be illumined;
Not to know it means to go blindly to disaster.

Lao Tzu

I wish I could join the 'Solitaries' (on Caldey Island), instead of being Superior and having to write books. But I don't wish to have what I wish, of course.

Abbot John Chapman

We must not wish anything other than what happens from moment to moment, all the while, however, exercising ourselves in goodness.

St Catherine of Genoa

In the practice of mortification as in most other fields, advance is along a knife-edge. On one side lurks the Scylla of egocentric austerity, on the other the Charybdis of an uncaring quietism. The holy indifference inculcated by the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy is neither stoicism nor mere passivity. It is rather an active resignation. Self-will is renounced, not that there may be a total holiday from willing, but that the divine will may use the mortified mind and body as its instrument for good. Or

we may say, with Kabir, that 'the devout seeker is he who mingles in his heart the double currents of love and detachment, like the mingling of the streams of Ganges and Jumna.' Until we put an end to particular attachments, there can be no love of God with the whole heart, mind and strength and no universal charity towards all creatures for God's sake. Hence the hard sayings in the Gospels about the need to renounce exclusive family ties. And if the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head, if the Tathagata and the Bodhisattvas 'have their thoughts awakened to the nature of Reality without abiding in anything whatever,' this is because a truly Godlike love which, like the sun, shines equally upon the just and the unjust, is impossible to a mind imprisoned in private preferences and aversions.

The soul that is attached to anything, however much good there may be in it, will not arrive at the liberty of divine union. For whether it be a strong wire rope or a slender and delicate thread that holds the bird, it matters not, if it really holds fast; for, until the cord be broken, the bird cannot fly. So the soul, held by the bonds of human affections, however slight they may be, cannot, while they last, make its way to God.

St John of the Cross

There are some who are newly delivered from their sins and so, though they are resolved to love God, they are still novices and apprentices, soft and weak... They love a number of superfluous, vain and dangerous things at the same time as Our Lord. Though they love God above all things, they yet continue to take pleasure in many things which they do not love according to God, but besides Him - things such as slight inordinations in word, gesture, clothing, pastimes and frivolities.

St François de Sales

There are souls who have made some progress in divine love, and have cut off all the love they had for dangerous things; yet they still have dangerous and superfluous loves, because they love what God wills them to love, but with excess and too tender and passionate a love... The love of our relations, friends and benefactors is itself according to God, but we may love them excessively; as also our vocations, however spiritual they be; and our devotional exercises (which we should yet love very greatly) may be loved inordinately, when we set them above obedience and the more general good, or care for them as an end, when they are only means.

St François de Sales

The goods of God, which are beyond all measure, can only be contained in an empty and solitary heart.

St John of the Cross

Suppose a boat is crossing a river and another boat, an empty one, is about to collide with it. Even an irritable man would not lose his temper. But suppose there was someone in the second boat. Then the occupant of the first would shout to him to keep clear. And if he did not hear the first time, nor even when called to three times, bad language would inevitably follow. In the first case there was no anger, in the second there was - because in the first case the boat was empty, in the second it

was occupied. And so it is with man. If he could only pass empty through life, who would be able to injure him?

Chuang Tzu

When the heart weeps for what it has lost, the spirit laughs for what it has found.

Anonymous Sufi Aphorism

It is by losing the egocentric life that we save the hitherto latent and undiscovered life which, in the spiritual part of our being, we share with the divine Ground. This newfound life is 'more abundant' than the other, and of a different and higher kind. Its possession is liberation into the eternal, and liberation is beatitude. Necessarily so; for the Brahman, who is one with the Atman, is not only Being and Knowledge, but also Bliss, and, after Love and Peace, the final fruit of the Spirit is Joy. Mortification is painful, but the pain is one of the pre-conditions of blessedness. This fact of spiritual experience is sometimes obscured by the language in which it is described. Thus, when Christ says that the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be entered except by those who are as little children, we are apt to forget (so touching are the images evoked by the simple phrase) that a man cannot become childlike unless he chooses to undertake the most strenuous and searching course of self-denial. In practice the command to become as little children is identical with the command to lose one's life. As Traherne makes clear in the beautiful passage quoted in the section on 'God in the World,' one cannot know created Nature in all its essentially sacred beauty, unless one first unlearns the dirty devices of adult humanity. Seen through the dung-coloured spectacles of self-interest, the universe looks singularly like a dung-heap; and as, through long wearing, the spectacles have grown on to the eyeballs, the process of 'cleansing the doors of perception' is often, at any rate in the earlier stages of the spiritual life, painfully like a surgical operation. Later on, it is true, even self-naughting may be suffused with the joy of the Spirit. On this point the following passage from the fourteenth-century Scale of Perfection is illuminating.

Many a man hath the virtues of humility, patience and charity towards his neighbours, only in the reason and will, and hath no spiritual delight nor love in them; for oftentimes he feeleth grudging, heaviness and bitterness for to do them, but yet nevertheless he doth them, but 'tis only by stirring of reason for dread of God. This man hath these virtues in reason and will, but not the love of them in affection. But when, by the grace of Jesus and by ghostly and bodily exercise, reason is turned into light and will into love, then hath he virtues in affection; for he hath so gnawn on the bitter bark or shell of the nut that at length he hath broken it and now feeds on the kernel; that is to say, the virtues which were first heavy for to practise are now turned into a very delight and savour.

Walter Hilton

As long as I am this or that, or have this or that, I am not all things and I have not all things. Become pure till you neither are nor have either this or that; then you are omnipresent and, being neither this nor that, are all things.

Eckhart

The point so dramatically emphasized by Eckhart in these lines is one that has often been made by the moralists and psychologists of the spiritual life. It is only when we have renounced our preoccupation with 'I,'

'me,'

'mine' that we can truly possess the world in which we live. Everything is ours, provided that we regard nothing as our property. And not only is everything ours; it is also everybody else's.

True love in this differs from gold and clay,

That to divide is not to take away.

There can be no complete communism except in the goods of the spirit and, to some extent also, of the mind, and only when such goods are possessed by men and women in a state of non-attachment and self-denial. Some degree of mortification, it should be noted, is an indispensable prerequisite for the creation and enjoyment even of merely intellectual and aesthetic goods. Those who choose the profession of artist, philosopher or man of science, choose, in many cases, a life of poverty and unrewarded hard work. But these are by no means the only mortifications they have to undertake. When he looks at the world, the artist must deny his ordinary human tendency to think of things in utilitarian, self-regarding terms. Similarly, the critical philosopher must mortify his common sense, while the research worker must steadfastly resist the temptations to over-simplify and think conventionally, and must make himself docile to the leadings of mysterious Fact. And what is true of the creators of aesthetic and intellectual goods is also true of the enjoyers of such goods, when created. That these mortifications are by no means trifling has been shown again and again in the course of history. One thinks, for example, of the intellectually mortified Socrates and the hemlock with which his unmortified compatriots rewarded him. One thinks of the heroic efforts that had to be made by Galileo and his contemporaries to break with the Aristotelian convention of thought, and the no less heroic efforts that have to be made today by any scientist who believes that there is more in the universe than can be discovered by employing the time-hallowed recipes of Descartes. Such mortifications have their reward in a state of consciousness that corresponds, on a lower level, to spiritual beatitude. The artist — and the philosopher and the man of science are also artists — knows the bliss of aesthetic contemplation, discovery and non-attached possession.

The goods of the intellect, the emotions and the imagination are real goods; but they are not the final good, and when we treat them as ends in themselves, we fall into idolatry. Mortification of will, desire and action is not enough; there must also be mortification in the fields of knowing, thinking, feeling and fancying.

Man's intellectual faculties are by the Fall in a much worse state than his animal appetites and want a much greater self-denial. And when own will, own understanding and own imagination have their natural strength indulged and gratified, and are made seemingly rich and honourable with the treasures acquired from a study of the Belles Lettres, they will just as much help poor fallen man to be like-minded with Christ as

the art of cookery, well and duly studied, will help a professor of the Gospel to the spirit and practice of Christian abstinence.

William Law

Because it was German and spelt with a K, Kultur was an object, during the First World War, of derisive contempt. All this has now been changed. In Russia, Literature, Art and Science have become the three persons of a new humanistic Trinity. Nor is the cult of Culture confined to the Soviet Union. It is practised by a majority of intellectuals in the capitalist democracies. Clever, hard-boiled journalists, who write about everything else with the condescending cynicism of people who know all about God, Man and the Universe, and have seen through the whole absurd caboodle, fairly fall over themselves when it comes to Culture. With an earnestness and enthusiasm that arc, in the circumstances, unutterably ludicrous, they invite us to share their positively religious emotions in the face of High Art, as represented by the latest murals or civic centres; they insist that so long as Mrs X goes on writing her inimitable novels and Mr Y his more than Coleridgean criticism, the world, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, makes sense. The same over-valuation of Culture, the same belief that Art and Literature are ends in themselves and can flourish in isolation from a reasonable and realistic philosophy of life, have even invaded the schools and colleges. Among 'advanced' educationists there are many people who seem to think that all will be well so long as adolescents are permitted to 'express themselves,' and small children are encouraged to be 'creative' in the art class. But, alas, plasticine and self-expression will not solve the problems of education. Nor will technology and vocational guidance; nor the classics and the Hundred Best Books. The following criticisms of education were made more than two and a half centuries ago; but they are as relevant today as they were in the seventeenth century.

He knoweth nothing as he ought to know, who thinks he knoweth anything without seeing its place and the manner how it relateth to God, angels and men, and to all the creatures in earth, heaven and hell, time and eternity.

Thomas Traherne

Nevertheless some things were defective too (at Oxford under the Commonwealth). There was never a tutor that did professly teach Felicity, though that be the mistress of all the other sciences. Nor did any of us study these things but as aliens, which we ought to have studied as our own enjoyments. We studied to inform our knowledge, but knew not for what end we studied. And for lack of aiming at a certain end, we erred in the manner.

Thomas Traherne

In Traherne's vocabulary 'felicity' means 'beatitude,' which is identical in practice with liberation, which, in its turn, is the unitive knowledge of God in the heights within and in the fullness without as well as within.

What follows is an account of the intellectual mortifications which must be practised by those whose primary concern is with the knowledge of the Godhead in the interior heights of the soul.

Happy is the man who, by continually effacing all images and through introversion and the lifting up of his mind to God, at last forgets and leaves behind all such hindrances. For by such means only, he operates inwardly, with his naked, pure, simple intellect and affections, about the most pure and simple object, God. Therefore see that thy whole exercise about God within thee may depend wholly and only on that naked intellect, affection and will. For indeed, this exercise cannot be discharged by any bodily organ, or by the external senses, but only by that which constitutes the essence of man - understanding and love. If, therefore, thou desirest a safe stair and short path to arrive at the end of true bliss, then, with an intent mind, earnestly desire and aspire after continual cleanness of heart and purity of mind. Add to this a constant calm tranquillity of the senses, and a recollecting of the affections of the heart, continually fixing them above. Work to simplify the heart, that being immovable and at peace from any invading vain phantasms, thou mayest always stand fast in the Lord within thee, to that degree as if thy soul had already entered the always present now of eternity - that is, the state of deity. To mount to God is to enter into oneself. For he who so mounts and enters and goes above and beyond himself, he truly mounts up to God. The mind must then raise itself above itself and say, 'He who above all I need is above all I know.' And so carried into the darkness of the mind, gathering itself into that all-sufficient good, it learns to stay at home and with its whole affection it cleaves and becomes habitually fixed in the supreme good within. Thus continue, until thou becomest immutable and dost arrive at that true life which is God Himself, perpetually, without any vicissitude of space or time, reposing in that inward quiet and secret mansion of the deity.

Albertus Magnus (?)

Some men love knowledge and discernment as the best and most excellent of all things. Behold, then knowledge and discernment come to be loved more than that which is discerned; for the false natural light loveth its knowledge and powers, which are itself, more than what is known. And were it possible that this false natural light should understand the simple Truth, as it is in God and in truth, it still would not lose its own property, that is, it could not depart from itself and its own things.

Theologia Germanica

The relationship between moral action and spiritual knowledge is circular, as it were, and reciprocal. Selfless behaviour makes possible an accession of knowledge, and the accession of knowledge makes possible the performance of further and more genuinely selfless actions, which in their turn enhance the agent's capacity for knowing. And so on, if all goes well and there is perfect docility and obedience, indefinitely. The process is summed up in a few lines of the Maitrayana Upanishad. A man undertakes right action (which includes, of course, right recollectedness and right meditation), and this enables him to catch a glimpse of the Self that underlies his separate individuality. 'Having seen his own self as the Self, he becomes selfless (and therefore acts selflessly) and in virtue of selflessness he is to be conceived as unconditioned. This is the highest mystery, betokening emancipation; through selflessness he has no part in pleasure or

pain (in other words, he enters a state of non-attachment or holy indifference), but achieves absoluteness' (or as Albertus Magnus phrases it, 'becomes immutable and arrives at that true life which is God Himself).

When mortification is perfect, its most characteristic fruit is simplicity.

A simple heart will love all that is most precious on earth, husband or wife, parent or child, brother or friend, without marring its singleness; external things will have no attraction save inasmuch as they lead souls to Him; all exaggeration or unreality, affectation and falsehood must pass away from such a one, as the dews dry up before the sunshine. The single motive is to please God, and hence arises total indifference as to what others say and think, so that words and actions are perfectly simple and natural, as in his sight only. Such Christian simplicity is the very perfection of interior life - God, his will and pleasure, its sole object.

N. Grou

And here is a more extended account of the matter by one of the greatest masters of psychological analysis.

In the world, when people call anyone simple, they generally mean a foolish, ignorant, credulous person. But real simplicity, so far from being foolish, is almost sublime. All good men like and admire it, are conscious of sinning against it, observe it in others and know what it involves; and yet they could not precisely define it. I should say that simplicity is an uprightness of soul which prevents self-consciousness. It is not the same as sincerity, which is a much humbler virtue. Many people are sincere who are not simple. They say nothing but what they believe to be true, and do not aim at appearing anything but what they are. But they are for ever thinking about themselves, weighing their every word and thought, and dwelling upon themselves in apprehension of having done too much or too little. These people are sincere but they are not simple. They are not at their ease with others, nor others with them. There is nothing easy, frank, unrestrained or natural about them. One feels that one would like less admirable people better, who were not so stiff.

To be absorbed in the world around and never turn a thought within, as is the blind condition of some who are carried away by what is pleasant and tangible, is one extreme as opposed to simplicity. And to be self-absorbed in all matters, whether it be duty to God or man, is the other extreme, which makes a person wise in his own conceit - reserved, self-conscious, uneasy at the least thing which disturbs his inward self-complacency. Such false wisdom, in spite of its solemnity, is hardly less vain and foolish than the folly of those who plunge headlong into worldly pleasures. The one is intoxicated by his outward surroundings, the other by what he believes himself to be doing inwardly; but both are in a state of intoxication, and the last is a worse state than the first, because it seems to be wise, though it is not really, and so people do not try to be cured. Real simplicity lies in a juste milieu equally free from thoughtlessness and affectation, in which the soul is not overwhelmed by externals, so as to be unable to reflect, nor yet given up to the endless refinements, which self-consciousness induces. That soul which looks where it is going without losing time arguing over every step,

or looking back perpetually, possesses true simplicity. Such simplicity is indeed a great treasure. How shall we attain to it? I would give all I possess for it; it is the costly pearl of Holy Scripture.

The first step, then, is for the soul to put away outward things and look within so as to know its own real interest; so far all is right and natural; thus much is only a wise self-love, which seeks to avoid the intoxication of the world.

In the next step the soul must add the contemplation of God, whom it fears, to that of self. This is a faint approach to the real wisdom, but the soul is still greatly self-absorbed: it is not satisfied with fearing God; it wants to be certain that it does fear Him and fears lest it fear Him not, going round in a perpetual circle of self-consciousness. All this restless dwelling on self is very far from the peace and freedom of real love; but that is yet in the distance; the soul must needs go through a season of trial, and were it suddenly plunged into a state of rest, it would not know how to use it.

The third step is that, ceasing from a restless self-contemplation, the soul begins to dwell upon God instead, and by degrees forgets itself in Him. It becomes full of Him and ceases to feed upon self. Such a soul is not blinded to its own faults or indifferent to its own errors; it is more conscious of them than ever, and increased light shows them in plainer form, but this self-knowledge comes from God, and therefore it is not restless or uneasy.

Fénelon

How admirably acute and subtle this is! One of the most extraordinary, because most gratuitous, pieces of twentieth-century vanity is the assumption that nobody knew anything about psychology before the days of Freud. But the real truth is that most modern psychologists understand human beings less well than did the ablest of their predecessors. Fénelon and La Rochefoucauld knew all about the surface rationalization of deep, discreditable motives in the subconscious, and were fully aware that sexuality and the will to power were, all too often, the effective forces at work under the polite mask of the persona. Machiavelli had drawn Pareto's distinction between 'residues' and 'derivations' - between the real, self-interested motives for political action and the fancy theories, principles and ideals in terms of which such action is explained and justified to the credulous public. Like Buddha's and St Augustine's, Pascal's view of human virtue and rationality could not have been more realistically low. But all these men, even La Rochefoucauld, even Machiavelli, were aware of certain facts which twentieth-century psychologists have chosen to ignore - the fact that human nature is tripartite, consisting of a spirit as well as of a mind and body; the fact that we live on the border-line between two worlds, the temporal and the eternal, the physical-vital-human and the divine; the fact that, though nothing in himself, man is 'a nothing surrounded by God, indigent of God, capable of God and filled with God, if he so desires.'

The Christian simplicity, of which Grou and Fénelon write, is the same thing as the virtue so much admired by Lao Tzu and his successors. According to these Chinese

sages, personal sins and social maladjustments are all due to the fact that men have separated themselves from their divine source and live according to their own will and notions, not according to Tao - which is the Great Way, the Logos, the Nature of Things, as it manifests itself on every plane from the physical, up through the animal and the mental, to the spiritual. Enlightenment comes when we give up self-will and make ourselves docile to the workings of Tao in the world around us and in our own bodies, minds and spirits. Sometimes the Taoist philosophers write as though they believed in Rousseau's Noble Savage, and (being Chinese and therefore much more concerned with the concrete and the practical than with the merely speculative) they are fond of prescribing methods by which rulers may reduce the complexity of civilization and so preserve their subjects from the corrupting influences of man-made and therefore Tao-eclipsing conventions of thought, feeling and action. But the rulers who are to perform this task for the masses must themselves be sages; and to become a sage, one must get rid of all the rigidities of unregenerate adulthood and become again as a little child. For only that which is soft and docile is truly alive; that which conquers and outlives everything is that which adapts itself to everything, that which always seeks the lowest place - not the hard rock, but the water that wears away the everlasting hills. The simplicity and spontaneity of the perfect sage are the fruits of mortification - mortification of the will and, by recollectedness and meditation, of the mind. Only the most highly disciplined artist can recapture, on a higher level, the spontaneity of the child with its first paint-box. Nothing is more difficult than to be simple.

'May I ask,' said Yen Hui, 'in what consists the fasting of the heart?'

'Cultivate unity,' replied Confucius. 'You do your hearing, not with your ears, but with your mind; not with your mind, but with your very soul. But let the hearing stop with the ears. Let the working of the mind stop with itself. Then the soul will be a negative existence, passively responsive to externals. In such a negative existence, only Tao can abide. And that negative state is the fasting of the heart.'

'Then,' said Yen Hui, 'the reason I could not get the use of this method is my own individuality. If I could get the use of it, my individuality would have gone. Is this what you mean by the negative state?'

'Exactly so,' replied the Master. 'Let me tell you. If you can enter the domain of this prince (a bad ruler whom Yen Hui was ambitious to reform) without offending his amour propre, cheerful if he hears you, passive if he does not; without science, without drugs, simply living there in a state of complete indifference - you will be near success... Look at that window. Through it an empty room becomes bright with scenery; but the landscape stops outside. In this sense you may use your ears and eyes to communicate within, but shut out all wisdom (in the sense of conventional, copybook maxims) from your mind. This is the method for regenerating all creation.'

Chuang Tzu

Mortification may be regarded, in this context, as the process of study, by which we learn at last to have unstudied reactions to events - reactions in harmony with Tao, Suchness, the Will of God. Those who have made themselves docile to the divine

Nature of Things, those who respond to circumstances, not with craving and aversion, but with the love that permits them to do spontaneously what they like; those who can truthfully say, Not I, but God in me - such men and women are compared by the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy to children, to fools and simpletons, even sometimes, as in the following passage, to drunkards.

A drunken man who falls out of a cart, though he may suffer, does not die. His bones are the same as other people's; but he meets his accident in a different way. His spirit is in a condition of security. He is not conscious of riding in the cart; neither is he conscious of falling out of it. Ideas of life, death, fear and the like cannot penetrate his breast; and so he does not suffer from contact with objective existence. If such security is to be got from wine, how much more is it to be got from God?

Chuang Tzu

It is by long obedience and hard work that the artist comes to unforced spontaneity and consummate mastery. Knowing that he can never create anything on his own account, out of the top layers, so to speak, of his personal consciousness, he submits obediently to the workings of 'inspiration'; and knowing that the medium in which he works has its own self-nature, which must not be ignored or violently overridden, he makes himself its patient servant and, in this way, achieves perfect freedom of expression. But life is also an art, and the man who would become a consummate artist in living must follow, on all the levels of his being, the same procedure as that by which the painter or the sculptor or any other craftsman comes to his own more limited perfection.

Prince Hui's cook was cutting up a bullock. Every blow of his knife, every heave of his shoulders, every tread of his foot, every whshh of rent flesh, every chhk of the chopper, was in perfect harmony - rhythmical like the Dance of the Mulberry Grove, simultaneous like the chords of the Ching Shou.

'Well done!' cried the Prince. 'Yours is skill indeed.'

'Sire,' replied the cook, 'I have always devoted myself to Tao. It is better than skill. When I first began to cut up bullocks, I saw before me simply whole bullocks. After three years' practice I saw no more whole animals. And now I work with my mind and not with my eye. When my senses bid me stop, but my mind urges me on, I fall back upon eternal principles. I follow such openings or cavities as there may be, according to the natural constitution of the animal. I do not attempt to cut through joints, still less through large bones.

'A good cook changes his chopper once a year - because he cuts. An ordinary cook, once a month - because he hacks. But I have had this chopper nineteen years, and though I have cut up many thousands of bullocks, its edge is as if fresh from the whetstone. For at the joints there are always interstices, and the edge of a chopper being without thickness, it remains only to insert that which is without thickness into such an interstice. By these means the interstice will be enlarged, and the blade will find plenty of room. It is thus that I have kept my chopper for nineteen years, as though fresh from the whetstone.

‘Nevertheless, when I come upon a hard part, where the blade meets with a difficulty, I am all caution. I fix my eyes on it. I stay my hand, and gently apply the blade, until with a hwah the part yields like earth crumbling to the ground. Then I withdraw the blade and stand up and look around; and at last I wipe my chopper and put it carefully away.’

‘Bravo!’ cried the Prince. ‘From the words of this cook I have learnt how to take care of my life.’

Chuang Tzu

In the first seven branches of his Eightfold Path the Buddha describes the conditions that must be fulfilled by anyone who desires to come to that right contemplation which is the eighth and final branch. The fulfilment of these conditions entails the undertaking of a course of the most searching and comprehensive mortification - mortification of intellect and will, craving and emotion, thought, speech, action and, finally, means of livelihood. Certain professions are more or less completely incompatible with the achievement of man’s final end; and there are certain ways of making a living which do so much physical and, above all, so much moral, intellectual and spiritual harm that, even if they could be practised in a non-attached spirit (which is generally impossible), they would still have to be eschewed by anyone dedicated to the task of liberating, not only himself, but others. The exponents of the Perennial Philosophy are not content to avoid and forbid the practice of criminal professions, such as brothel-keeping, forgery, racketeering and the like; they also avoid themselves, and warn others against, a number of ways of livelihood commonly regarded as legitimate. Thus, in many Buddhist societies, the manufacture of arms, the concoction of intoxicating liquors and the wholesale purveying of butcher’s meat were not, as in contemporary Christendom, rewarded by wealth, peerages and political influence; they were deplored as businesses which, it was thought, made it particularly difficult for their practitioners and for other members of the communities in which they were practised to achieve enlightenment and liberation. Similarly, in medieval Europe, Christians were forbidden to make a living by the taking of interest on money or by cornering the market. As Tawney and others have shown, it was only after the Reformation that coupon-clipping, usury and gambling in stocks and commodities became respectable and received ecclesiastical approval.

For the Quakers, soldiering was and is a form of wrong livelihood - war being, in their eyes, anti-Christian, not so much because it causes suffering as because it propagates hatred, puts a premium on fraud and cruelty, infects whole societies with anger, fear, pride and uncharitableness. Such passions eclipse the Inner Light, and therefore the wars by which they are aroused and intensified must be regarded, whatever their immediate political outcome, as crusades to make the world safe for spiritual darkness.

It has been found, as a matter of experience, that it is dangerous to lay down detailed and inflexible rules for right livelihood - dangerous, because most people see no reason for being righteous overmuch and consequently respond to the imposition of too rigid a code by hypocrisy or open rebellion. In the Christian tradition, for

example, a distinction is made between the precepts, which are binding on all and sundry, and the counsels of perfection, binding only upon those who feel drawn towards a total renunciation of the world.' The precepts include the ordinary moral code and the commandment to love God with all one's heart, strength and mind, and one's neighbour as oneself. Some of those who make a serious effort to obey this last and greatest commandment find that they cannot do so whole-heartedly unless they follow the counsels and sever all connections with the world. Nevertheless it is possible for men and women to achieve that 'perfection,' which is deliverance into the unitive knowledge of God, without abandoning the married state and without selling all they have and giving the price to the poor. Effective poverty (possessing no money) is by no means always affective poverty (being indifferent to money). One man may be poor, but desperately concerned with what money can buy, full of cravings, envy and bitter self-pity. Another may have money, but no attachment to money or the things, powers and privileges that money can buy. 'Evangelical poverty' is a combination of effective with affective poverty; but a genuine poverty of spirit is possible even in those who are not effectively poor. It will be seen, then, that the problems of right livelihood, in so far as they lie outside the jurisdiction of the common moral code, are strictly personal. The way in which any individual problem presents itself and the nature of the appropriate solution depend upon the degree of knowledge, moral sensibility and spiritual insight achieved by the individual concerned. For this reason no universally applicable rules can be formulated except in the most general terms. 'Here are my three treasures,' says Lao Tzu. 'Guard and keep them! The first is pity, the second frugality, the third refusal to be foremost of all things under heaven.' And when Jesus is asked by a stranger to settle a dispute between himself and his brother over an inheritance, he refuses (since he does not know the circumstances) to be judge in the case and merely utters a general warning against covetousness.

Ga-San instructed his adherents one day: 'Those who speak against killing, and who desire to spare the lives of all conscious beings, are right. It is good to protect even animals and insects. But what about those persons who kill time, what about those who destroy wealth, and those who murder the economy of their society? We should not overlook them. Again, what of the one who preaches without enlightenment? He is killing Buddhism.' From 'One Hundred and One Zen Stories'

Once the noble Ibrahim, as he sat on his throne,
 Heard a clamour and noise of cries on the roof,
 Also heavy footsteps on the roof of his palace.
 He said to himself, 'Whose heavy feet are these?'
 He shouted from the window, 'Who goes there?'
 The guards, filled with confusion, bowed their heads, saying,
 'It is we, going the rounds in search.'
 He said, 'What seek ye?' They said, 'Our camels.'
 He said, 'Who ever searched for camels on a housetop?'
 They said, 'We follow thy example,

Who seekest union with God, while sitting on a throne.'

Jalal-uddin Rumi

Of all social, moral and spiritual problems that of power is the most chronically urgent and the most difficult of solution. Craving for power is not a vice of the body, consequently knows none of the limitations imposed by a tired or satiated physiology upon gluttony, intemperance and lust. Growing with every successive satisfaction, the appetite for power can manifest itself indefinitely, without interruption by bodily fatigue or sickness. Moreover, the nature of society is such that the higher a man climbs in the political, economic or religious hierarchy, the greater are his opportunities and resources for exercising power. But climbing the hierarchical ladder is ordinarily a slow process, and the ambitious rarely reach the top till they are well advanced in life. The older he grows, the more chances does the power lover have for indulging his besetting sin, the more continuously is he subjected to temptations and the more glamorous do those temptations become. In this respect his situation is profoundly different from that of the debauchee. The latter may never voluntarily leave his vices, but at least, as he advances in years, he finds his vices leaving him; the former neither leaves his vices nor is left by them. Instead of bringing to the power lover a merciful respite from his addictions, old age is apt to intensify them by making it easier for him to satisfy his cravings on a larger scale and in a more spectacular way. That is why, in Acton's words, 'all great men are bad.' Can we therefore be surprised if political action, undertaken, in all too many cases, not for the public good, but solely or at least primarily to gratify the power lusts of bad men, should prove so often either self-stultifying or downright disastrous?

'L'état c'est moi,' says the tyrant; and this is true, of course, not only of the autocrat at the apex of the pyramid, but of all the members of the ruling minority through whom he governs and who are, in fact, the real rulers of the nation. Moreover, so long as the policy which gratifies the power lusts of the ruling class is successful, and so long as the price of success is not too high, even the masses of the ruled will feel that the state is themselves - a vast and splendid projection of the individual's intrinsically insignificant ego. The little man can satisfy his lust for power vicariously through the activities of the imperialistic state, just as the big man does; the difference between them is one of degree, not of kind.

No infallible method for controlling the political manifestations of the lust for power has ever been devised. Since power is of its very essence indefinitely expansive, it cannot be checked except by colliding with another power. Hence, any society that values liberty, in the sense of government by law rather than by class interest or personal decree, must see to it that the power of its rulers is divided.

National unity means national servitude to a single man and his supporting oligarchy. Organized and balanced disunity is the necessary condition of liberty. His Majesty's Loyal Opposition is the loyalest, because the most genuinely useful section of any liberty-loving community. Furthermore, since the appetite for power is purely mental and therefore insatiable and impervious to disease or old age, no community

that values liberty can afford to give its rulers long tenures of office. The Carthusian Order, which was 'never reformed because never deformed' owed its long immunity from corruption to the fact that its abbots were elected for periods of only a single year. In ancient Rome the amount of liberty under law was in inverse ratio to the length of the magistrates' terms of office. These rules for controlling the lust for power are very easy to formulate, but very difficult, as history shows, to enforce in practice. They are particularly difficult to enforce at a period like the present, when time-hallowed political machinery is being rendered obsolete by rapid technological change and when the salutary principle of organized and balanced disunity requires to be embodied in new and more appropriate institutions.

Acton, the learned Catholic historian, was of the opinion that all great men are bad; Rumi, the Persian poet and mystic, thought that to seek for union with God while occupying a throne was an undertaking hardly less senseless than looking for camels among the chimney-pots. A slightly more optimistic note is sounded by St François de Sales, whose views on the matter were recorded by his Boswellizing disciple, the young Bishop of Belley.

'Mon Père,' I said one day, 'how is it possible for those who are themselves high in office to practise the virtue of obedience?'

François de Sales replied, 'They have greater and more excellent ways of doing so than their inferiors.'

As I did not understand this reply, he went on to say, 'Those who are bound by obedience are usually subject to one superior only... But those who are themselves superiors have a wider field for obedience, even while they command; for if they bear in mind that it is God who has placed them over other men, and gives them the rule they have, they will exercise it out of obedience to God, and thus, even while commanding, they will obey. Moreover, there is no position so high but that it is subject to a spiritual superior in what concerns the conscience and the soul. But there is a yet higher point of obedience to which all superiors may aspire, even that to which St Paul alludes, when he says, "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all." It is by such universal obedience to everyone that we become "all things to all men"; and serving everyone for Our Lord's sake, we esteem all to be our superiors.'

In accordance with this rule, I have often observed how François de Sales treated everyone, even the most insignificant persons who approached him, as though he were the inferior, never repulsing anyone, never refusing to enter into conversation, to speak or to listen, never betraying the slightest sign of weariness, impatience and annoyance, however importunate or ill-timed the interruption. To those who asked him why he thus wasted his time his constant reply was, 'It is God's will; it is what He requires of me; what more need I ask? While I am doing this, I am not required to do anything else. God's Holy Will is the centre from which all we do must radiate; all else is mere weariness and excitement.'

Jean Pierre Camus

We see, then, that a 'great man' can be good - good enough even to aspire to unitive knowledge of the divine Ground - provided that, while exercising power, he fulfils two conditions. First, he must deny himself all the personal advantages of power and must practise the patience and recollectedness without which there cannot be love either of man or God. And, second, he must realize that the accident of possessing temporal power does not give him spiritual authority, which belongs only to those seers, living or dead, who have achieved a direct insight into the Nature of Things. A society, in which the boss is mad enough to believe himself a prophet, is a society doomed to destruction. A viable society is one in which those who have qualified themselves to see indicate the goals to be aimed at, while those whose business it is to rule respect the authority and listen to the advice of the seers. In theory, at least, all this was well understood in India and, until the Reformation, in Europe, where 'no position was so high but that it was subject to a spiritual superior in what concerned the conscience and soul.' Unfortunately the churches tried to make the best of both worlds - to combine spiritual authority with temporal power, wielded either directly or at one remove, from behind the throne. But spiritual authority can be exercised only by those who are perfectly disinterested and whose motives are therefore above suspicion. An ecclesiastical organization may call itself the Mystical Body of Christ; but if its prelates are slave-holders and the rulers of states, as they were in the past, or if the corporation is a large-scale capitalist, as is the case today, no titles, however honorific, can conceal the fact that, when it passes judgment, it does so as an interested party with some political or economic axe to grind. True, in matters which do not directly concern the temporal powers of the corporation, individual churchmen can be, and have actually proved themselves perfectly disinterested — consequently can possess and have possessed, genuine spiritual authority. St Philip Neri's is a case in point. Possessing absolutely no temporal power, he yet exercised a prodigious influence over sixteenth-century Europe. But for that influence, it may be doubted whether the efforts of the Council of Trent to reform the Roman church from within would have met with much success.

In actual practice how many great men have ever fulfilled, or are ever likely to fulfil, the conditions which alone render power innocuous to the ruler as well as to the ruled? Obviously, very few. Except by saints, the problem of power is finally insoluble. But since genuine self-government is possible only in very small groups, societies on a national or supernational scale will always be ruled by oligarchical minorities, whose members come to power because they have a lust for power. This means that the problem of power will always arise and, since it cannot be solved except by people like François de Sales, will always make trouble. And this, in its turn, means that we cannot expect the large-scale societies of the future to be much better than were the societies of the past during the brief periods when they were at their best.

7. Truth

WHY DOST THOU prate of God? Whatever thou sayest of Him is untrue.

Eckhart

In religious literature the word 'truth' is used indiscriminately in at least three distinct and very different senses. Thus, it is sometimes treated as a synonym for 'fact,' as when it is affirmed that God is Truth - meaning that He is the primordial Reality. But this is clearly not the meaning of the word in such a phrase as 'worshipping God in spirit and in truth.' Here, it is obvious, 'truth' signifies direct apprehension of spiritual Fact, as opposed to second-hand knowledge about Reality, formulated in sentences and accepted on authority or because an argument from previously granted postulates was logically convincing. And finally there is the more ordinary meaning of the word, as in such a sentence as, 'This statement is the truth,' where we mean to assert that the verbal symbols of which the statement is composed correspond to the facts to which it refers. When Eckhart writes that 'Whatever thou sayest of God is untrue,' he is not affirming that all theological statements are false. In so far as there can be any correspondence between human symbols and divine Fact, some theological statements are as true as it is possible for us to make them. Himself a theologian, Eckhart would certainly have admitted this. But besides being a theologian, Eckhart was a mystic. And being a mystic, he understood very vividly what the modern semanticist is so busily (and, also, so unsuccessfully) trying to drum into contemporary minds - namely, that words are not the same as things and that a knowledge of words about facts is in no sense equivalent to a direct and immediate apprehension of the facts themselves. What Eckhart actually asserts is this: whatever one may say about God can never in any circumstances be the 'truth' in the first two meanings of that much abused and ambiguous word. By implication St Thomas Aquinas was saying exactly the same thing when, after his experience of infused contemplation, he refused to go on with his theological work, declaring that everything he had written up to that time was as mere straw compared with the immediate knowledge, which had been vouchsafed to him. Two hundred years earlier, in Bagdad, the great Mohammedan theologian, Al-Ghazzali, had similarly turned from the consideration of truths about God to the contemplation and direct apprehension of Truth-the-Fact, from the purely intellectual discipline of the philosophers to the moral and spiritual discipline of the Sufis.

The moral of all this is obvious. Whenever we hear or read about 'truth,' we should always pause long enough to ask ourselves in which of the three senses listed above the word is, at the moment, being used. By taking this simple precaution (and to take it

is a genuinely virtuous act of intellectual honesty) we shall save ourselves a great deal of disturbing and quite unnecessary mental confusion.

Wishing to entice the blind, The Buddha playfully let words escape from his golden mouth; Heaven and earth are filled, ever since, with entangling briars.

Dai-o Kokushi

There is nothing true anywhere, The True is nowhere to be found.

If you say you see the True, This seeing is not the true one.

When the True is left to itself, There is nothing false in it, for it is Mind itself.

When Mind in itself is not liberated from the false, There is nothing true; nowhere is the True to be found.

Hui Neng

The truth indeed has never been preached by the Buddha, seeing that one has to realize it within onself.

Sutralamkara

The further one travels, the less one knows.

Lao Tzu

‘Listen to this!’ shouted Monkey. ‘After all the trouble we had getting here from China, and after you specially ordered that we were to be given the scriptures, Anada and Kasyapa made a fraudulent delivery of goods. They gave us blank copies to take away; I ask you, what is the good of that to us?’

‘You needn’t shout,’ said the Buddha, smiling. ‘... As a matter of fact, it is such blank scrolls as these that are the true scriptures. But I quite see that the people of China are too foolish and ignorant to believe this, so there is nothing for it but to give them copies with some writing on.’

Wu Ch ‘êng-ên

The philosophers indeed are clever enough, but wanting in wisdom; As to the others, they are either ignorant or puerile!

They take an empty fist as containing something real and the pointing finger as the object pointed at.

Because the finger is adhered to as though it were the Moon, all their efforts are lost.

Yoka Daishi

What is known as the teaching of the Buddha is not the teaching of the Buddha.

Diamond Sutra

‘What is the ultimate teaching of Buddhism?’

‘You won’t understand it until you have it.’

Shih-t’ou

The subject matter of the Perennial Philosophy is the nature of eternal, spiritual Reality; but the language in which it must be formulated was developed for the purpose of dealing with phenomena in time. That is why, in all these formulations, we find an element of paradox. The nature of Truth-the-Fact cannot be described by means of

verbal symbols that do not adequately correspond to it. At best it can be hinted at in terms of non sequiturs and contradictions.

To these unavoidable paradoxes some spiritual writers have chosen to add deliberate and calculated enormities of language — hard sayings, exaggerations, ironic or humorous extravagances, designed to startle and shock the reader out of that self-satisfied complacency which is the original sin of the intellect. Of this second kind of paradox the masters of Taoism and Zen Buddhism were particularly fond. The latter; indeed, made use of paralogisms and even of nonsense as a device for ‘taking the kingdom of heaven by violence.’ Aspirants to the life of perfection were encouraged to practise discursive meditation on some completely non-logical formula. The result was a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole self-centred and world-centred discursive process, a sudden breaking through from ‘reason’ (in the language of scholastic philosophy) to intuitive ‘intellect,’ capable of a genuine insight into the divine Ground of all being. This method strikes us as odd and eccentric: but the fact remains that it worked to the extent of producing in many persons the final *metanoia*, or transformation of consciousness and character.

Zen’s use of almost comic extravagance to emphasize the philosophic truths it regarded as most important is well illustrated in the first of the extracts cited above. We are not intended seriously to imagine that an Avatar preaches in order to play a practical joke on the human race. But meanwhile what the author has succeeded in doing is to startle us out of our habitual complacency about the home-made verbal universe in which we normally do most of our living. Words are not facts, and still less are they the primordial Fact. If we take them too seriously, we shall lose our way in a forest of entangling briars. But if, on the contrary, we don’t take them seriously enough, we shall still remain unaware that there is a way to lose or a goal to be reached. If the Enlightened did not preach, there would be no deliverance for anyone. But because human minds and human languages are what they are, this necessary and indispensable preaching is beset with dangers. The history of all the religions is similar in one important respect; some of their adherents are enlightened and delivered, because they have chosen to react appropriately to the words which the founders have let fall; others achieve a partial salvation by reacting with partial appropriateness; yet others harm themselves and their fellows by reacting with a total inappropriateness - either ignoring the words altogether or, more often, taking them too seriously and treating them as though they were identical with the Fact to which they refer.

That words are at once indispensable and, in many cases, fatal has been recognized by all the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy. Thus, Jesus spoke of himself as bringing into the world something even worse than briars - a sword. St Paul distinguished between the letter that kills and the spirit that gives life. And throughout the centuries that followed, the masters of Christian spirituality have found it necessary to harp again and again upon a theme which has never been outdated because *homo loquax*, the talking animal, is still as naively delighted by his chief accomplishment,

still as helplessly the victim of his own words, as he was when the Tower of Babel was being built.

Recent years have seen the publication of numerous works on semantics and of an ocean of nationalistic, racialistic and militaristic propaganda. Never have so many capable writers warned mankind against the dangers of wrong speech - and never have words been used more recklessly by politicians or taken more seriously by the public. The fact is surely proof enough that, under changing forms, the old problems remain what they always were — urgent, unsolved and, to all appearances, insoluble.

All that the imagination can imagine and the reason conceive and understand in this life is not, and cannot be, a proximate means of union with God.

St John of the Cross

Jejune and barren speculations may unfold the plicatures of Truth's garment, but they cannot discover her lovely face.

John Smith, the Platonist

In all faces is shown the Face of faces, veiled and in a riddle. Howbeit, unveiled it is not seen, until, above all faces, a man enter into a certain secret and mystic silence, where there is no knowing or concept of a face. This mist, cloud, darkness or ignorance, into which he that seeketh thy Face entereth, when he goeth beyond all knowledge or concept, is the state below which thy Face cannot be found, except veiled; but that very darkness revealeth thy Face to be there beyond all veils. Flence I observe how needful it is for me to enter into the darkness and to admit the coincidence of opposites, beyond all the grasp of reason, and there to seek the Truth, where impossibility meeteth us.

Nicholas of Cusa

As the Godhead is nameless, and all naming is alien to Him, so also the soul is nameless; for it is here the same as God.

Eckhart

God being, as He is, inaccessible, do not rest in the consideration of objects perceptible to the senses and comprehended by the understanding. This is to be content with what is less than God; so doing, you will destroy the energy of the soul, which is necessary for walking with Him.

St John of the Cross

To find or know God in reality by any outward proofs, or by anything but by God Himself made manifest and self-evident in you, will never be your case either here or hereafter. For neither God, nor heaven, nor hell, nor the devil, nor the flesh, can be any otherwise knowable in you or by you but by their own existence and manifestation in you. And all pretended knowledge of any of these things, beyond and without this self-evident sensibility of their birth within you, is only such knowledge of them as the blind man hath of the light that hath never entered into him.

William Law What follows is a summary by an eminent scholar of the Indian doctrines concerning jnana, the liberating knowledge of Brahman or the divine Ground.

Jnana is eternal, is general, is necessary and is not a personal knowledge of this man or that man. It is there, as knowledge in the Atman itself, and lies there hidden

under all avidya (ignorance) - irremovable, though it may be obscured, unprovable, because self-evident, needing no proof, because itself giving to all proof the ground of possibility. These sentences come near to Eckhart's 'knowledge' and to the teaching of Augustine on the Eternal Truth in the soul which, itself immediately certain, is the ground of all certainty and is a possession, not of A or B, but of 'the soul.'

Rudolf Otto

The science of aesthetics is not the same as, nor even a proximate means to, the practice and appreciation of the arts. How can one learn to have an eye for pictures, or to become a good painter? Certainly not by reading Benedetto Croce. One learns to paint by painting, and one learns to appreciate pictures by going to picture galleries and looking at them.

But this is not to say that Croce and his fellows have wasted their time. We should be grateful to them for their labours in building up a system of thought, by means of which the immediately apprehended significance and value of art can be assessed in the light of general knowledge, related to other facts of experience and, in this way and to this extent, 'explained.'

What is true of aesthetics is also true of theology. Theological speculation is valuable in so far as it enables those who have had immediate experience of various aspects of God to form intelligible ideas about the nature of the divine Ground, and of their own experience of the Ground in relation to other experiences. And when a coherent system of theology has been worked out, it is useful in so far as it convinces those who study it that there is nothing inherently self-contradictory about the postulate of the divine Ground and that, for those who are ready to fulfil certain conditions, the postulate may become a realized Fact. In no circumstances, however, can the study of theology or the mind's assent to theological propositions take the place of what Law calls 'the birth of God within.' For theory is not practice, and words are not the things for which they stand.

Theology as we know it has been formed by the great mystics, especially St Augustine and St Thomas. Plenty of other great theologians - especially St Gregory and St Bernard, even down to Suarez - would not have had such insight without mystic superknowledge.

Abbot John Chapman

Against this we must set Dr Tennant's view - namely, that religious experience is something real and unique, but does not add anything to the experienter's knowledge of ultimate Reality and must always be interpreted in terms of an idea of God derived from other sources. A study of the facts would suggest that both these opinions are to some degree correct. The facts of mystical insight (together with the facts of what is taken to be historic revelation) are rationalized in terms of general knowledge and become the basis of a theology. And, reciprocally, an existing theology in terms of general knowledge exercises a profound influence upon those who have undertaken the spiritual life, causing them, if it is low, to be content with a low form of experience, if it is high, to reject as inadequate the experience of any form of reality having characteristics

incompatible with those of the God described in the books. Thus mystics make theology, and theology makes mystics.

A person who gives assent to untrue dogma, or who pays all his attention and allegiance to one true dogma in a comprehensive system, while neglecting the others (as many Christians concentrate exclusively on the humanity of the Second Person of the Trinity and ignore the Father and the Holy Ghost), runs the risk of limiting in advance his direct apprehension of Reality. In religion as in natural science, experience is determined only by experience. It is fatal to prejudge it, to compel it to fit the mould imposed by a theory which either does not correspond to the facts at all, or corresponds to only some of the facts. 'Do not strive to seek after the true,' writes a Zen master, 'only cease to cherish opinions.' There is only one way to cure the results of belief in a false or incomplete theology and it is the same as the only known way of passing from belief in even the truest theology to knowledge or primordial Fact - selflessness, docility, openness to the datum of Eternity. Opinions are things which we make and can therefore understand, formulate and argue about. But 'to rest in the consideration of objects perceptible to the sense or comprehended by the understanding is to be content,' in the words of St John of the Cross, 'with what is less than God.' Unitive knowledge of God is possible only to those who 'have ceased to cherish opinions' — even opinions that are as true as it is possible for verbalized abstractions to be.

Up then, noble soul! Put on thy jumping shoes which are intellect and love, and overleap the worship of thy mental powers, overleap thine understanding and spring into the heart of God, into his hiddenness where thou art hidden from all creatures.

Eckhart

With the lamp of word and discrimination one must go beyond word and discrimination and enter upon the path of realization.

Lankavatara Sutra

The word 'intellect' is used by Eckhart in the scholastic sense of immediate intuition. 'Intellect and reason,' says Aquinas, 'are not two powers, but distinct as the perfect from the imperfect... The intellect means, an intimate penetration of truth; the reason, enquiry and discourse.' It is by following, and then abandoning, the rational and emotional path of 'word and discrimination' that one is enabled to enter upon the intellectual or intuitive 'path of realization.' And yet, in spite of the warnings pronounced by those who, through selflessness, have passed from letter to spirit and from theory to immediate knowledge, the organized Christian churches have persisted in the fatal habit of mistaking means for ends. The verbal statements of theology's more or less adequate rationalizations of experience have been taken too seriously and treated with the reverence that is due only to the Fact they are intended to describe. It has been fancied that souls are saved if assent is given to what is locally regarded as the correct formula, lost if it is withheld. The two words, filioque, may not have been the sole cause of the schism between the Eastern and Western churches; but they were unquestionably the pretext and casus belli.

The over-valuation of words and formulae may be regarded as a special case of that over-valuation of the things of time, which is so fatally characteristic of historic Christianity. To know Truth-as-Fact and to know it unitively, 'in spirit and in truth-as-immediate-apprehension' - this is deliverance, in this 'standeth our eternal life.' To be familiar with the verbalized truths, which symbolically correspond to Truth-as-Fact in so far as it can be known in, or inferred from, truth-as-immediate-apprehension, or truth-as-historic-revelation - this is not salvation, but merely the study of a special branch of philosophy. Even the most ordinary experience of a thing or event in time can never be fully or adequately described in words. The experience of seeing the sky or having neuralgia is incommunicable; the best we can do is to say 'blue' or 'pain,' in the hope that those who hear us may have had experiences similar to our own and so be able to supply their own version of the meaning. God, however, is not a thing or event in time, and the time-bound words which cannot do justice even to temporal matters are even more inadequate to the intrinsic nature and our own unitive experience of that which belongs to an incommensurably different order. To suppose that people can be saved by studying and giving assent to formulae is like supposing that one can get to Timbuctoo by poring over a map of Africa. Maps are symbols, and even the best of them are inaccurate and imperfect symbols. But to anyone who really wants to reach a given destination, a map is indispensably useful as indicating the direction in which the traveller should set out and the roads which he must take.

In later Buddhist philosophy words are regarded as one of the prime determining factors in the creative evolution of human beings. In this philosophy five categories of being are recognized - Name, Appearance, Discrimination, Right Knowledge, Suchness. The first three are related for evil, the last two for good. Appearances are discriminated by the sense organs, then reified by naming, so that words are taken for things and symbols are used as the measure of reality. According to this view, language is a main source of the sense of separateness and the blasphemous idea of individual self-sufficiency, with their inevitable corollaries of greed, envy, lust for power, anger and cruelty. And from these evil passions there springs the necessity of an indefinitely protracted and repeated separate existence under the same, self-perpetuated conditions of craving and infatuation. The only escape is through a creative act of the will, assisted by Buddha-grace, leading through selflessness to Right Knowledge, which consists, among other things, in a proper appraisal of Names, Appearances and Discrimination. In and through Right Knowledge, one emerges from the infatuating delusion of 'I,'

'me,'

'mine,' and, resisting the temptation to deny the world in a state of premature and one-sided ecstasy, or to affirm it by living like the average sensual man, one comes at last to the transfiguring awareness that samsara and nirvana are one, to the unitive apprehension of pure Suchness - the ultimate Ground, which can only be indicated, never adequately described in verbal symbols.

In connection with the Mahayanist view that words play an important and even creative part in the evolution of unregenerate human nature, we may mention Hume's

arguments against the reality of causation. These arguments start from the postulate that all events are 'loose and separate' from one another and proceed with faultless logic to a conclusion that makes complete nonsense of all organized thought or purposive action. The fallacy, as Professor Stout has pointed out, lies in the preliminary postulate. And when we ask ourselves what it was that induced Hume to make this odd and quite unrealistic assumption that events are 'loose and separate,' we see that his only reason for flying in the face of immediate experience was the fact that things and happenings are symbolically represented in thought by nouns, verbs and adjectives, and that these words are, in effect, 'loose and separate' from one another in a way which the events and things they stand for quite obviously are not. Taking words as the measure of things, instead of using things as the measure of words, Hume imposed the discreet and, so to say, pointilliste pattern of language upon the continuum of actual experience - with the impossibly paradoxical results with which we are all familiar. Most human beings are not philosophers and care not at all for consistency in thought or action. Thus, in some circumstances they take it for granted that events are not 'loose and separate,' but coexist or follow one another within the organized and organizing field of a cosmic whole. But on other occasions, where the opposite view is more nearly in accord with their passions or interests, they adopt, all unconsciously, the Humian position and treat events as though they were as independent of one another and the rest of the world as the words by which they are symbolized. This is generally true of all occurrences involving 'I,' 'me,' 'mine.' Reifying the 'loose and separate' names, we regard the things as also loose and separate — not subject to law, not involved in the network of relationships, by which in fact they are so obviously bound up with their physical, social and spiritual environment. We regard as absurd the idea that there is no causal process in nature and no organic connection between events and things in the lives of other people; but at the same time we accept as axiomatic the notion that our own sacred ego is 'loose and separate' from the universe, a law unto itself above the moral dharma and even, in many respects, above the natural law of causality. Both in Buddhism and Catholicism, monks and nuns were encouraged to avoid the personal pronoun and to speak of themselves in terms of circumlocutions that clearly indicated their real relationship with the cosmic reality and their fellow-creatures. The precaution was a wise one. Our responses to familiar words are conditioned reflexes. By changing the stimulus, we can do something to change the response. No Pavlov bell, no salivation; no harping on words like 'me' and 'mine,' no purely automatic and unreflecting egotism. When a monk speaks of himself, not as 'I,' but as 'this sinner' or 'this unprofitable servant,' he tends to stop taking his 'loose and separate' selfhood for granted, and makes himself aware of his real, organic relationship with God and his neighbours.

In practice words are used for other purposes than for making statements about facts. Very often they are used rhetorically, in order to arouse the passions and direct the will towards some course of action regarded as desirable. And sometimes, too, they are used poetically - that is to say, they are used in such a way that, besides making a

statement about real or imaginary things and events, and besides appealing rhetorically to the will and the passions, they cause the reader to be aware that they are beautiful. Beauty in art or nature is a matter of relationships between things not in themselves intrinsically beautiful. There is nothing beautiful, for example, about the vocables 'time,' or 'syllable.' But when they are used in such a phrase as 'to the last syllabic of recorded time,' the relationship between the sound of the component words, between our ideas of the things for which they stand, and between the overtones of association with which each word and the phrase as a whole are charged, is apprehended, by a direct and immediate intuition, as being beautiful.

About the rhetorical use of words nothing much need be said. There is rhetoric for good causes and there is rhetoric for bad causes - rhetoric which is tolerably true to facts as well as emotionally moving, and rhetoric which is unconsciously or deliberately a lie. To learn to discriminate between the different kinds of rhetoric is an essential part of intellectual morality; and intellectual morality is as necessary a pre-condition of the spiritual life as is the control of the will and the guard of heart and tongue.

We have now to consider a more difficult problem. How should the poetic use of words be related to the life of the spirit? (And, of course, what applies to the poetical use of words applies equally to the pictorial use of pigments, the musical use of sounds, the sculptural use of clay or stone - in a word, to all the arts.)

'Beauty is truth, truth beauty.' But unfortunately Keats failed to specify in which of its principal meanings he was using the word 'truth.' Some critics have assumed that he was using it in the third of the senses listed at the opening of this section, and have therefore dismissed the aphorism as nonsensical. $Zn + H_2SO_4 = Zn + H_2$. This is a truth in the third sense of the word - and, manifestly, this truth is not identical with beauty. But no less manifestly Keats was not talking about this kind of 'truth.' He was using the word primarily in its first sense, as a synonym for 'fact,' and secondarily with the significance attached to it in the Johannine phrase, 'to worship God in truth.' His sentence, therefore, carries two meanings. 'Beauty is the Primordial Fact, and the Primordial Fact is Beauty, the principle of all particular beauties'; and 'Beauty is an immediate experience, and this immediate experience is identical with Beauty-as-Principle, Beauty-as-Primordial-Fact.' The first of these statements is fully in accord with the doctrines of the Perennial Philosophy. Among the trinities in which the ineffable One makes itself manifest is the trinity of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. We perceive beauty in the harmonious intervals between the parts of a whole. In this context the divine Ground might be paradoxically defined as Pure Interval, independent of what is separated and harmonized within the totality.

With Keats's statement in its secondary meaning the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy would certainly disagree. The experience of beauty in art or in nature may be qualitatively akin to the immediate, unitive experience of the divine Ground or Godhead; but it is not the same as that experience, and the particular beauty-fact experienced, though partaking in some sort of the divine nature, is at several removes from the Godhead. The poet, the nature lover, the aesthete are granted apprehensions

of Reality analogous to those vouchsafed to the selfless contemplative; but because they have not troubled to make themselves perfectly selfless, they are incapable of knowing the divine Beauty in its fullness, as it is in itself. The poet is born with the capacity of arranging words in such a way that something of the quality of the graces and inspirations he has received can make itself felt to other human beings in the white spaces, so to speak, between the lines of his verse. This is a great and precious gift; but if the poet remains content with his gift, if he persists in worshipping the beauty in art and nature without going on to make himself capable, through selflessness, of apprehending Beauty as it is in the divine Ground, then he is only an idolater. True, his idolatry is among the highest of which human beings are capable; but an idolatry, none the less, it remains.

The experience of beauty is pure, self-manifested, compounded equally of joy and consciousness, free from admixture of any other perception, the very twin brother of mystical experience, and the very life of it is supersensuous wonder... It is enjoyed by those who are competent thereto, in identity, just as the form of God is itself the joy with which it is recognized.

Visvanatha

What follows is the last composition of a Zen nun, who had been in her youth a great beauty and an accomplished poetess.

Sixty-six times have these eyes beheld the changing scenes of Autumn.

I have said enough about moonlight, Ask me no more.

Only listen to the voice of pines and cedars, when no wind stirs.

Ryo-Nen

The silence under windless trees is what Mallarmé would call a *creux néant* musicien. But whereas the music for which the poet listened was merely aesthetic and imaginative, it was to pure Suchness that the self-naughted contemplative was laying herself open. 'Be still and know that I am God.'

This truth is to be lived, it is not to be merely pronounced with the mouth...

There is really nothing to argue about in this teaching; Any arguing is sure to go against the intent of it.

Doctrines given up to controversy and argumentation lead of themselves to birth and death.

Hui Neng

Away, then, with the fictions and workings of discursive reason, either for or against Christianity! They are only the wanton spirit of the mind, whilst ignorant of God and insensible of its own nature and condition. Death and life are the only things in question; life is God living and working in the soul; death is the soul living and working according to the sense and reason of bestial flesh and blood. Both this life and this death are of their own growth, growing from their own seed within us, not as busy reason talks and directs, but as the heart turns either to the one or to the other.

William Law

Can I explain the Friend to one for whom He is no Friend?

Jalal-uddin Rumi

When a mother cries to her sucking babe, 'Come, O son, I am thy mother!'

Does the child answer, 'O mother, show a proof That I shall find comfort in taking thy milk'?

Jalal-uddin Rumi

Great truths do not take hold of the hearts of the masses. And now, as all the world is in error, how shall I, though I know the true path, how shall I guide? If I know that I cannot succeed and yet try to force success, this would be but another source of error. Better then to desist and strive no more. But if I do not strive, who will?

Chuang Tzu

Between the horns of Chuang Tzu's dilemma there is no way but that of love, peace and joy. Only those who manifest their possession, in however small a measure, of the fruits of the Spirit can persuade others that the life of the spirit is worth living. Argument and controversy are almost useless; in many cases, indeed, they are positively harmful. But this, of course, is a thing that clever men with a gift for syllogisms and sarcasm find it peculiarly hard to admit. Milton, no doubt, genuinely believed that he was working for truth, righteousness and the glory of God by exploding in torrents of learned scurrility against the enemies of his favourite dictator and his favourite brand of nonconformity. In actual fact, of course, he and other controversialists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did nothing but harm to the cause of true religion, for which, on one side or the other, they fought with an equal learning and ingenuity and with the same foul-mouthed intemperance of language. The successive controversies went on, with occasional lucid intervals, for about two hundred years — Papists arguing with anti-Papists, Protestants with other Protestants, Jesuits with Quietists and Jansenists. When the noise finally died down, Christianity (which, like any other religion, can survive only if it manifests the fruits of the Spirit) was all but dead; the real religion of most educated Europeans was now nationalistic idolatry. During the eighteenth century this change to idolatry seemed (after the atrocities committed in the name of Christianity by Wallenstein and Tilly) to be a change for the better. This was because the ruling classes were determined that the horrors of the wars of religion should not be repeated and therefore deliberately tempered power politics with gentlemanliness. Symptoms of gentlemanliness can still be observed in the Napoleonic and Crimean wars. But the national Molochs were steadily devouring the eighteenth-century ideal. During the First and Second World Wars we have witnessed the total elimination of the old checks and self-restraints. The consequences of political idolatry now display themselves without the smallest mitigation either of humanistic honour and etiquette or of transcendental religion. By its internecine quarrels over words, forms of organization, money and power, historic Christianity consummated the work of self-destruction, to which its excessive preoccupation with things in time had from the first so tragically committed it.

Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment; Cleverness is mere opinion, bewilderment is intuition.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

Reason is like an officer when the King appears; The officer then loses his power and hides himself.

Reason is the shadow cast by God; God is the sun.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

Non-rational creatures do not look before or after, but live in the animal eternity of a perpetual present; instinct is their animal grace and constant inspiration; and they are never tempted to live otherwise than in accord with their own animal dharma, or immanent law. Thanks to his reasoning powers and to the instrument of reason, language, man (in his merely human condition) lives nostalgically, apprehensively and hopefully in the past and future as well as in the present; has no instincts to tell him what to do; must rely on personal cleverness, rather than on inspiration from the divine Nature of Things; finds himself in a condition of chronic civil war between passion and prudence and, on a higher level of awareness and ethical sensibility, between egotism and dawning spirituality. But this 'wearisome condition of humanity' is the indispensable prerequisite of enlightenment and deliverance. Man must live in time in order to be able to advance into eternity, no longer on the animal, but on the spiritual level; he must be conscious of himself as a separate ego in order to be able consciously to transcend separate selfhood; he must do battle with the lower self in order that he may become identified with that higher Self within him, which is akin to the divine Not-Self; and finally he must make use of his cleverness in order to pass beyond cleverness to the intellectual vision of Truth, the immediate, unitive knowledge of the divine Ground. Reason and its works 'are not and cannot be a proximate means of union with God.' The proximate means is 'intellect,' in the scholastic sense of the word, or spirit. In the last analysis the use and purpose of reason is to create the internal and external conditions favourable to its own transfiguration by and into spirit. It is the lamp by which it finds the way to go beyond itself. We see, then, that as a means to a proximate means to an End, discursive reasoning is of enormous value. But if, in our pride and madness, we treat it as a proximate means to the divine End (as so many religious people have done and still do), or if, denying the existence of an eternal End, we regard it as at once the means to Progress and its ever-receding goal in time, cleverness becomes the enemy, a source of spiritual blindness, moral evil and social disaster. At no period in history has cleverness been so highly valued or, in certain directions, so widely and efficiently trained as at the present time. And at no time have intellectual vision and spirituality been less esteemed, or the End to which they are proximate means less widely and less earnestly sought for. Because technology advances, we fancy that we are making corresponding progress all along the line; because we have considerable power over inanimate nature, we are convinced that we are the self-sufficient masters of our fate and captains of our souls; and because cleverness has given us technology and power, we believe, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary, that we have only to go on being yet cleverer in a yet more systematic way to achieve social order, international peace and personal happiness.

In Wu Ch'êng-ên's extraordinary masterpiece (so admirably translated by Mr Arthur Waley) there is an episode, at once comical and profound, in which Monkey (who, in the allegory, is the incarnation of human cleverness) gets to heaven and there causes so much trouble that at last Buddha has to be called in to deal with him. It ends in the following passage:

'I'll have a wager with you,' said Buddha. 'If you are really so clever, jump off the palm of my right hand. If you succeed, I'll tell the Jade Emperor to come and live with me in the Western Paradise, and you shall have his throne without more ado. But if you fail, you shall go back to earth and do penance there for many a kalpa before you come back to me with your talk.'

'This Buddha,' Monkey thought to himself, 'is a perfect fool. I can jump a hundred and eight thousand leagues, while his palm cannot be as much as eight inches across. How could I fail to jump clear of it?'

'You're sure you're in a position to do this for me?' he asked.

'Of course I am,' said Buddha.

He stretched out his right hand, which looked about the size of a lotus leaf. Monkey put his cudgel behind his ear and leapt with all his might. 'That's all right,' he said to himself. 'I'm right off it now.' He was whizzing so fast that he was almost invisible, and Buddha, watching him with the eye of wisdom, saw a mere whirligig shoot along.

Monkey came at last to five pink pillars, sticking up into the air. 'This is the end of the World,' said Monkey to himself. 'All I have got to do is to go back to Buddha and claim my forfeit. The Throne is mine.'

'Wait a minute,' he said presently, 'I'd better just leave a record of some kind, in case I have trouble with Buddha.' He plucked a hair and blew on it with magic breath, crying 'Change!' It changed at once into a writing brush charged with heavy ink, and at the base of the central pillar he wrote, 'The Great Sage Equal to Heaven reached this place.' Then, to mark his disrespect, he relieved nature at the bottom of the first pillar, and somersaulted back to where he had come from. Standing on Buddha's palm, he said, 'Well, I've gone and come back. You can go and tell the Jade Emperor to hand over the palaces of Heaven.'

'You stinking ape,' said Buddha, 'you've been on the palm of my hand all the time.'

'You're quite mistaken,' said Monkey. 'I got to the end of the World, where I saw five flesh-coloured pillars sticking up into the sky. I wrote something on one of them. I'll take you there and show you, if you like.'

'No need for that,' said Buddha. 'Just look down.'

Monkey peered down with his fiery, steely eyes, and there at the base of the middle finger of Buddha's hand he saw written the words, 'The Great Sage Equal to Heaven reached this place,' and from the fork between the thumb and first finger came a smell of monkey's urine.

From Monkey And so, having triumphantly urinated on the proffered hand of Wisdom, the Monkey within us turns back and, full of a bumptious confidence in his own omnipotence, sets out to refashion the world of men and things into something nearer

to his heart's desire. Sometimes his intentions are good, sometimes consciously bad. But, whatever the intentions may be, the results of action undertaken by even the most brilliant cleverness, when it is unenlightened by the divine Nature of Things, unsubordinated to the Spirit, are generally evil. That this has always been clearly understood by humanity at large is proved by the usages of language. 'Cunning' and 'canny' are equivalent to 'knowing,' and all three adjectives pass a more or less unfavourable moral judgment on those to whom they are applied. 'Conceit' is just 'concept'; but what a man's mind conceives most clearly is the supreme value of his own ego. 'Shrewd,' which is the participial form of 'shrew,' meaning malicious, and is connected with 'beshrew,' to curse, is now applied, by way of rather dubious compliment, to astute business men and attorneys. Wizards are so called because they are wise - wise, of course, in the sense that, in American slang, a 'wise guy' is wise. Conversely, an idiot was once popularly known as an innocent. 'This use of innocent,' says Richard Trench, 'assumes that to hurt and harm is the chief employment, towards which men turn their intellectual powers; that where they are wise, they are oftenest wise to do evil.' Meanwhile it goes without saying that cleverness and accumulated knowledge are indispensable, but always as means to proximate means, and never as proximate means or, what is even worse, as ends in themselves. *Quid faceret eruditio sine dilectione?* says St Bernard. *Inflaret. Quid, absque eruditione dilectio? Erraret.* What would learning do without love? It would puff up. And love without learning? It would go astray.

Such as men themselves are, such will God Himself seem to them to be.

John Smith, the Platonist

Men's minds perceive second causes, But only prophets perceive the action of the First Cause.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

The amount and kind of knowledge we acquire depends first upon the will and, second, upon our psycho-physical constitution and the modifications imposed upon it by environment and our own choice. Thus, Professor Burkitt has pointed out that, where technological discovery is concerned 'man's desire has been the important factor. Once something is definitely 'anted, again and again it has been produced in an extremely short time... Conversely, nothing will teach the Bushmen of South Africa to plant and herd. They have no desire to do so.' The same is true in regard to ethical and spiritual discoveries. 'You are as holy as you wish to be,' was the motto given by Ruysbroeck to the students who came to visit him. And he might have added, 'You can therefore know as much of Reality as you wish to know' - for knowledge is in the knower according to the mode of the knower, and the mode of the knower is, in certain all-important respects, within the knower's control.

Liberating knowledge of God comes to the pure in heart and poor in spirit; and though such purity and poverty are enormously difficult of achievement, they are nevertheless possible to all.

She said, moreover, that if one would attain to purity of mind it was necessary to abstain altogether from any judgment on one's neighbour and from all empty talk

about his conduct. In creatures one should always seek only for the will of God. With great force she said: 'For no reason whatever should one judge the actions of creatures or their motives. Even when we see that it is an actual sin, we ought not to pass judgment on it, but have holy and sincere compassion and offer it up to God with humble and devout prayer.'

From the Testament of St Catherine of Siena, written down by Tommaso di Petra

This total abstention from judgment upon one's fellows is only one of the conditions of inward purity. The others have already been described in the section on 'Mortification.'

Learning consists in adding to one's stock day by day. The practice of Tao consists in subtracting day by day: subtracting and yet again subtracting until one has reached inactivity.

Lao Tzu

It is the inactivity of self-will and ego-centred cleverness that makes possible the activity within the empty and purified soul of the eternal Suchness. And when eternity is known in the heights within, it is also known in the fullness of experience, outside in the world.

Peter Steriy

Didst thou ever descry a glorious eternity in a winged moment of time? Didst thou ever see a bright infinite in the narrow point of an object? Then thou knowest what spirit means - the spire-top, whither all things ascend harmoniously, where they meet and sit contented in an unfathomed Depth of Life.

8. Religion and Temperament

IT SEEMS BEST at his point to turn back for a moment from ethics to psychology, where a very important problem awaits us - a problem to which the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy have given a great deal of attention. What precisely is the relation between individual constitution and temperament on the one hand and the kind and degree of spiritual knowledge on the other? The materials for a comprehensively accurate answer to this question are not available - except, perhaps, in the form of that incommunicable science, based upon intuition and long practice, that exists in the minds of experienced 'spiritual directors.' But the answer that can be given, though incomplete, is highly significant.

All knowledge, as we have seen, is a function of being. Or, to phrase the same idea in scholastic terms, the thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower. In the Introduction reference was made to the effect upon knowledge of changes of being along what may be called its vertical axis, in the direction of sanctity or its opposite. But there is also variation in the horizontal plane. Congenitally by psycho-physical constitution, each one of us is born into a certain position on this horizontal plane. It is a vast territory, still imperfectly explored, a continent stretching all the way from imbecility to genius, from shrinking weakness to aggressive strength, from cruelty to Pickwickian kindness, from self-revealing sociability to taciturn misanthropy and love of solitude, from an almost frantic lasciviousness to an almost untempted continence.

From any point on this huge expanse of possible human nature an individual can move almost indefinitely up or down, towards union with the divine Ground of his own and all other beings, or towards the last, the infernal extremes of separateness and selfhood. But where horizontal movement is concerned there is far less freedom. It is impossible for one kind of physical constitution to transform itself into another kind; and the particular temperament associated with a given physical constitution can be modified only within narrow limits. With the best will in the world and the best social environment, all that anyone can hope to do is to make the best of his congenital psychophysical make-up; to change the fundamental patterns of constitution and temperament is beyond his power.

In the course of the last thirty centuries many attempts have been made to work out a classification system in terms of which human differences could be measured and described. For example, there is the ancient Hindu method of classifying people according to the psycho-physico-social categories of caste. There are the primarily medical classifications associated with the name of Hippocrates, classifications in terms of two main 'habits' - the phthisic and the apoplectic - or of the four humours (blood,

phlegm, black bile and yellow bile) and the four qualities (hot, cold, moist and dry). More recently there have been the various physiognomic systems of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; the crude and merely psychological dichotomy of introversion and extraversion; the more complete, but still inadequate, psycho-physical classifications proposed by Kretschmer, Stockard Viola and others; and finally the system, more comprehensive, more flexibly adequate to the complex facts than all those which preceded it, worked out by Dr William Sheldon and his collaborators.

In the present section our concern is with classifications of human differences in relation to the problems of the spiritual life. Traditional systems will be described and illustrated, and the findings of the Perennial Philosophy will be compared with the conclusions reached by the most recent scientific research.

In the West, the traditional Catholic classification of human beings is based upon the Gospel anecdote of Martha and Mary. The way of Martha is the way of salvation through action, the way of Mary is the way through contemplation. Following Aristotle, who in this as in many other matters was in accord with the Perennial Philosophy, Catholic thinkers have regarded contemplation (the highest term of which is the unitive knowledge of the Godhead) as man's final end, and therefore have always held that Mary's was indeed the better way.

Significantly enough, it is in essentially similar terms that Dr Radin classifies and (by implication) evaluates primitive human beings in so far as they are philosophers and religious devotees. For him there is no doubt that the higher monotheistic forms of primitive religion are created (or should one rather say, with Plato, discovered?) by people belonging to the first of the two great psycho-physical classes of human beings - the men of thought. To those belonging to the other class, the men of action, is due the creation or discovery of the lower, unphilosophical, polytheistic kinds of religion.

This simple dichotomy is a classification of human differences that is valid so far as it goes. But like all such dichotomies, whether physical (like Hippocrates' division of humanity into those of phthisic and those of apoplectic habit) or psychological (like Jung's classification in terms of introvert and extrovert), this grouping of the religions into those who think and those who act, those who follow the way of Martha and those who follow the way of Mary, is inadequate to the facts. And of course no director of souls, no head of a religious organization, is ever, in actual practice, content with this all too simple system. Underlying the best Catholic writing on prayer and the best Catholic practice in the matter of recognizing vocations and assigning duties, we sense the existence of an implicit and unformulated classification of human differences more complete and more realistic than the explicit dichotomy of action and contemplation.

In Hindu thought the outlines of this completer and more adequate classification are clearly indicated. The ways leading to the delivering union with God are not two, but three - the way of works, the way of knowledge and the way of devotion. In the Bhagavad-Gita, Sri Krishna instructs Arjuna in all three paths - liberation through action without attachment; liberation through knowledge of the Self and the Absolute

Ground of all being with which it is identical; and liberation through intense devotion to the personal God or the divine incarnation.

Do without attachment the work you have to do; for a man who does his work without attachment attains the Supreme Goal verily. By action alone men like Janaka attained perfection.

But there is also the way of Mary.

Freed from passion, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, and purified by the fires of Knowledge, many have become one with my Being.

And again:

Those who have completely controlled their senses and are of even mind under all conditions and thus contemplate the Imperishable, the Ineffable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Incomprehensible, the Eternal - they, devoted to the welfare of all beings, attain Me alone and none else.

But the path of contemplation is not easy.

The task of those whose minds are set on the Unmanifest is the more difficult; for, to those who are in the body, the realization of the Unmanifest is hard. But those who consecrate all their actions to Me (as the personal God, or as the divine Incarnation), who regard Me as the supreme Goal, who worship Me and meditate upon Me with single-minded concentration - for those whose minds are thus absorbed in Me, I become ere long the Saviour from the world's ocean of mortality.

These three ways of deliverance are precisely correlated with the three categories, in terms of which Sheldon has worked out what is, without question, the best and most adequate classification of human differences. Human beings, he has shown, vary continuously between the viable extremes of a tri-polar system; and physical and psychological measurements can be devised, whereby any given individual may be accurately located in relation to the three co-ordinates. Or we can put the matter differently and say that any given individual is a mixture, in varying proportions, of three physical and three closely related psychological components. The strength of each component can be measured according to empirically determined procedures. To the three physical components Sheldon gives the names of endomorphy, mesomorphy and ectomorphy. The individual with a high degree of endomorphy is predominantly soft and rounded and may easily become grossly fat. The high mesomorph is hard, big-boned and strong-muscled. The high ectomorph is slender and has small bones and stringy, weak, unemphatic muscles. The endomorph has a huge gut, a gut that may be more than twice as heavy and twice as long as that of the extreme ectomorph. In a real sense his or her body is built around the digestive tract. The centrally significant fact of mesomorphic physique, on the other hand, is the powerful musculature, while that of the ectomorph is the oversensitive and (since the ratio of body surface to mass is higher in ectomorphs than in either of the other types) relatively unprotected nervous system.

With endomorphic constitution is closely correlated a temperamental pattern, which Sheldon calls viscerotonia. Significant among the viscerotonic traits are love of food

and, characteristically, love of eating in common; love of comfort and luxury; love of ceremoniousness; indiscriminate amiability and love of people as such; fear of solitude and craving for company; uninhibited expression of emotion; love of childhood, in the form of nostalgia towards one's own past and in an intense enjoyment of family life; craving for affection and social support, and need of people when in trouble. The temperament that is related to mesomorphy is called somatotonia. In this the dominating traits are love of muscular activity, aggressiveness and lust for power; indifference to pain; callousness in regard to other people's feelings; a love of combat and competitiveness; a high degree of physical courage; a nostalgic feeling, not for childhood, but for youth, the period of maximum muscular power; a need for activity when in trouble.

From the foregoing descriptions it will be seen how inadequate is the Jungian conception of extraversion, as a simple antithesis to introversion. Extraversion is not simple; it is of two radically different kinds. There is the emotional, sociable extraversion of the viscerotonic endomorph — the person who is always seeking company and telling everybody just what he feels. And there is the extraversion of the big-muscled somatotonic — the person who looks outward on the world as a place where he can exercise power, where he can bend people to his will and shape things to his heart's desire. One is the genial extraversion of the salesman, the Rotarian good mixer, the liberal Protestant clergyman. The other is the extraversion of the engineer who works off his lust for power on things, of the sportsman and the professional blood-and-iron soldier, of the ambitious business executive and politician, of the dictator, whether in the home or at the head of a state.

With cerebrotonia, the temperament that is correlated with ectomorphic physique, we leave the genial world of Pickwick, the strenuously competitive world of Hotspur, and pass into an entirely different and somewhat disquieting kind of universe — that of Hamlet and Ivan Karamazov. The extreme cerebrotonic is the over-alert, over-sensitive introvert, who is more concerned with what goes on behind his eyes — with the constructions of thought and imagination, with the variations of feeling and consciousness — than with that external world, to which, in their different ways, the viscerotonic and the somatotonic pay their primary attention and allegiance. Cerebrotonics have little or no desire to dominate, nor do they feel the viscerotonic's indiscriminate liking for people as people; on the contrary they want to live and let live, and their passion for privacy is intense. Solitary confinement, the most terrible punishment that can be inflicted on the soft, round, genial person, is, for the cerebrotonic, no punishment at all. For him the ultimate horror is the boarding school and the barracks. In company cerebrotonics are nervous and shy, tensely inhibited and unpredictably moody. (It is a significant fact that no extreme cerebrotonic has ever been a good actor or actress.) Cerebrotonics hate to slam doors or raise their voices, and suffer acutely from the unrestrained bellowing and trampling of the somatotonic. Their manner is restrained, and when it comes to expressing their feelings they are extremely reserved. The emotional gush of the viscerotonic strikes them as offensively shallow and even insincere, nor have they any patience with viscerotonic ceremoniousness and love of luxury and

magnificence. They do not easily form habits and find it hard to adapt their lives to the routines which come so naturally to somatotonics. Owing to their over-sensitiveness, cerebrotonics are often extremely, almost insanely sexual; but they are hardly ever tempted to take to drink — for alcohol, which heightens the natural aggressiveness of the somatotonic and increases the relaxed amiability of the viscerotonic, merely makes them feel ill and depressed. Each in his own way, the viscerotonic and the somatotonic are well adapted to the world they live in; but the introverted cerebrotonic is in some sort incommensurable with the things and people and institutions that surround him. Consequently a remarkably high proportion of extreme cerebrotonics fail to make good as normal citizens and average pillars of society. But if many fail, many also become abnormal on the higher side of the average. In universities, monasteries and research laboratories - wherever sheltered conditions are provided for those whose small guts and feeble muscles do not permit them to eat or fight their way through the ordinary rough and tumble — the percentage of outstandingly gifted and accomplished cerebrotonics will almost always be very high. Realizing the importance of this extreme, over-evolved and scarcely viable type of human being, all civilizations have provided in one way or another for its protection.

In the light of these descriptions we can understand more clearly the Bhagavad-Gita's classification of paths to salvation. The path of devotion is the path naturally followed by the person in whom the viscerotonic component is high. His inborn tendency to externalize the emotions he spontaneously feels in regard to persons can be disciplined and canalized, so that a merely animal gregariousness and a merely human kindness become transformed into charity - devotion to the personal God and universal goodwill and compassion towards all sentient beings.

The path of works is for those whose extraversion is of the somatotonic kind, those who in all circumstances feel the need to 'do something.' In the unregenerate somatotonic this craving for action is always associated with aggressiveness, self-assertion and the lust for power. For the born Kshatriya, or warrior-ruler, the task, as Krishna explains to Arjuna, is to get rid of those fatal accompaniments to the love of action and to work without regard to the fruits of work, in a state of complete non-attachment to self. Which is, of course, like everything else, a good deal easier said than done.

Finally, there is the way of knowledge, through the modification of consciousness, until it ceases to be ego-centred and becomes centred in and united with the divine Ground. This is the way to which the extreme cerebrotonic is naturally drawn. His special discipline consists in the mortification of his innate tendency towards introversion for its own sake, towards thought and imagination and self-analysis as ends in themselves rather than as means towards the ultimate transcendence of phantasy and discursive reasoning in the timeless act of pure intellectual intuition.

Within the general population, as we have seen, variation is continuous, and in most people the three components are fairly evenly mixed. Those exhibiting extreme predominance of any one component are relatively rare. And yet, in spite of their rarity, it is by the thought-patterns characteristic of these extreme individuals that theology

and ethics, at any rate on the theoretical side, have been mainly dominated. The reason for this is simple. Any extreme position is more uncompromisingly clear and therefore more easily recognized and understood than the intermediate positions, which are the natural thought-pattern of the person in whom the constituent components of personality are evenly balanced. These intermediate positions, it should be noted, do not in any sense contain or reconcile the extreme positions; they are merely other thought-patterns added to the list of possible systems. The construction of an all-embracing system of metaphysics, ethics and psychology is a task that can never be accomplished by any single individual, for the sufficient reason that he is an individual with one particular kind of constitution and temperament and therefore capable of knowing only according to the mode of his own being. Hence the advantages inherent in what may be called the anthological approach to truth.

The Sanskrit dharma - one of the key words in Indian formulations of the Perennial Philosophy - has two principal meanings. The dharma of an individual is, first of all, his essential nature, the intrinsic law of his being and development. But dharma also signifies the law of righteousness and piety. The implications of this double meaning are clear: a man's duty, how he ought to live, what he ought to believe and what he ought to do about his beliefs - these things are conditioned by his essential-nature, his constitution and temperament. Going a good deal further than do the Catholics, with their doctrine of vocations, the Indians admit the right of individuals with different dharmas to worship different aspects or conceptions of the divine. Hence the almost total absence, among Hindus and Buddhists, of bloody persecutions, religious wars and proselytizing imperialism.

It should, however, be remarked that, within its own ecclesiastical fold, Catholicism has been almost as tolerant as Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism. Nominally one, each of these religions consists, in fact, of a number of very different religions, covering the whole gamut of thought and behaviour from fetishism, through polytheism, through legalistic monotheism, through devotion to the sacred humanity of the Avatar, to the profession of the Perennial Philosophy and the practice of a purely spiritual religion that seeks the unitive knowledge of the Absolute Godhead. These tolerated religions-within-a-religion are not, of course, regarded as equally valuable or equally true. To worship polytheistically may be one's dharma; nevertheless the fact remains that man's final end is the unitive knowledge of the Godhead, and all the historical formulations of the Perennial Philosophy are agreed that every human being ought, and perhaps in some way or other actually will, achieve that end. 'All souls,' writes Father Garrigou-Lagrange, 'receive a general remote call to the mystical life; and if all were faithful in avoiding, as they should, not merely mortal but venial sin, if they were, each according to his condition, docile to the Holy Ghost, and if they lived long enough, a day would come when they would receive the proximate and efficacious vocation to a high perfection and to the mystical life properly so called.' With this statement Hindu and Buddhist theologians would probably agree; but they would add that every soul will in fact eventually attain this 'high perfection.' All are called, but

in any given generation few are chosen, because few choose themselves. But the series of conscious existences, corporeal or incorporeal, is indefinitely long; there is therefore time and opportunity for everyone to learn the necessary lessons. Moreover, there will always be helpers. For periodically there are 'descents' of the Godhead into physical form; and at all times there are future Buddhas ready, on the threshold of reunion with the Intelligible Light, to renounce the bliss of immediate liberation in order to return as saviours and teachers again and again into the world of suffering and time and evil, until at last every sentient being shall have been delivered into eternity.

The practical consequences of this doctrine are clear enough. The lower forms of religion, whether emotional, active or intellectual, are never to be accepted as final. True, each of them comes naturally to persons of a certain kind of constitution and temperament; but the dharma or duty of any given individual is not to remain complacently fixed in the imperfect religion that happens to suit him; it is rather to transcend it, not by impossibly denying the modes of thought, behaviour and feeling that are natural to him, but by making use of them, so that by means of nature he may pass beyond nature. Thus the introvert uses 'discrimination' (in the Indian phrase), and so learns to distinguish the mental activities of the ego from the principal consciousness of the Self, which is akin to, or identical with, the divine Ground. The emotional extravert learns to 'hate his father and mother' (in other words, to give up his selfish attachment to the pleasures of indiscriminately loving and being loved), concentrates his devotion on the personal or incarnate aspect of God, and comes at last to love the Absolute Godhead by an act, no longer of feeling, but of will illuminated by knowledge. And finally there is that other kind of extravert, whose concern is not with the pleasures of giving or receiving affection, but with the satisfaction of his lust for power over things, events and persons. Using his own nature to transcend his own nature, he must follow the path laid down in the Bhagavad-Gita for the bewildered Arjuna - the path of work without attachment to the fruits of work, the path of what St François de Sales calls 'holy indifference,' the path that leads through the forgetting of self to the discovery of the Self.

In the course of history it has often happened that one or other of the imperfect religions has been taken too seriously and regarded as good and true in itself, instead of as a means to the ultimate end of all religion. The effects of such mistakes are often disastrous. For example, many Protestant sects have insisted on the necessity, or at least the extreme desirability, of a violent conversion. But violent conversion, as Sheldon has pointed out, is a phenomenon confined almost exclusively to persons with a high degree of somatotonia. These persons are so intensely extraverted as to be quite unaware of what is happening in the lower levels of their minds. If for any reason their attention comes to be turned inwards, the resulting self-knowledge, because of its novelty and strangeness, presents itself with the force and quality of a revelation and their metanoia, or change of mind, is sudden and thrilling. This change may be to religion, or it may be to something else - for example, to psycho-analysis. To insist upon the necessity of violent conversion as the only means to salvation is about as

sensible as it would be to insist upon the necessity of having a large face, heavy bones and powerful muscles. To those naturally subject to this kind of emotional upheaval, the doctrine that makes salvation dependent on conversion gives a complacency that is quite fatal to spiritual growth, while those who are incapable of it are filled with a no less fatal despair. Other examples of inadequate theologies based upon psychological ignorance could easily be cited. One remembers, for instance, the sad case of Calvin, the cerebrotonic who took his own intellectual constructions so seriously that he lost all sense of reality, both human and spiritual. And then there is our liberal Protestantism, that predominantly viscerotonic heresy, which seems to have forgotten the very existence of the Father, Spirit and Logos and equates Christianity with an emotional attachment to Christ's humanity or (to use the currently popular phrase) 'the personality of Jesus,' worshipped idolatrously as though there were no other God. Even within all-comprehensive Catholicism we constantly hear complaints of the ignorant and self-centred directors, who impose upon the souls under their charge a religious dharma wholly unsuited to their nature - with results which writers such as St John of the Cross describe as wholly pernicious. We see, then, that it is natural for us to think of God as possessed of the qualities which our temperament tends to make us perceive in Him; but unless nature finds a way of transcending itself by means of itself, we are lost. In the last analysis Philo is quite right in saying that those who do not conceive God purely and simply as the One, injure, not God of course, but themselves and, along with themselves, their fellows.

The way of knowledge comes most naturally to persons whose temperament is predominantly cerebrotonic. By this I do not mean that the following of this way is easy for the cerebrotonic. His specially besetting sins are just as difficult to overcome as are the sins which beset the power-loving somatotonic and the extreme viscerotonic with his gluttony for food and comfort and social approval. Rather I mean that the idea that such a way exists and can be followed (either by discrimination, or through non-attached work and one-pointed devotion) is one which spontaneously occurs to the cerebrotonic. At all levels of culture he is the natural monotheist; and this natural monotheist, as Dr Radin's examples of primitive theology clearly show, is often a monotheist of the *tat tvam asi*, inner-light school. Persons committed by their temperament to one or other of the two kinds of extraversion are natural polytheists. But natural polytheists can, without much difficulty, be convinced of the theoretical superiority of monotheism. The nature of human reason is such that there is an intrinsic plausibility about any hypothesis which seeks to explain the manifold in terms of unity, to reduce apparent multiplicity to essential identity. And from this theoretical monotheism the half-converted polytheist can, if he chooses, go on (through practices suitable to his own particular temperament) to actual realization of the divine Ground of his own and all other beings. He can, I repeat, and sometimes he actually does. But very often he does not. There are many theoretical monotheists whose whole life and every action prove that in reality they are still what their temperament inclines them to be - polytheists, worshippers not of the one God they sometimes talk about, but

of the many gods, nationalistic and technological, financial and familial, to whom in practice they pay their allegiance.

In Christian art the Saviour has almost invariably been represented as slender, small-boned, unemphatically muscled. Large, powerful Christs are a rather shocking exception to a very ancient rule. Of Rubens' crucifixions William Blake contemptuously wrote:

I understood Christ was a carpenter

And not a brewer's servant, my good sir.

In a word, the traditional Jesus is thought of as a man of predominantly ectomorphic physique and therefore, by implication, of predominantly cerebrotonic temperament. The central core of primitive Christian doctrine confirms the essential correctness of the iconographie tradition. The religion of the Gospels is what we should expect from a cerebrotonic - not, of course, from any cerebrotonic, but from one who had used the psycho-physical peculiarities of his own nature to transcend nature, who had followed his particular dharma to its spiritual goal. The insistence that the Kingdom of Heaven is within; the ignoring of ritual; the slightly contemptuous attitude towards legalism, towards the ceremonial routines of organized religion, towards hallowed days and places; the general otherworldliness; the emphasis laid upon restraint, not merely of overt action, but even of desire and unexpressed intention; the indifference to the splendours of material civilization and the love of poverty as one of the greatest of goods; the doctrine that non-attachment must be carried even into the sphere of family relationships and that even devotion to the highest goals of merely human ideals, even the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, may be idolatrous distractions from the love of God — all these are characteristically cerebrotonic ideas, such as would never have occurred spontaneously to the extraverted power lover or the equally extraverted viscerotonic.

Primitive Buddhism is no less predominantly cerebrotonic than primitive Christianity, and so is Vedanta, the metaphysical discipline which lies at the heart of Hinduism. Confucianism, on the contrary, is a mainly viscerotonic system - familial, ceremonious and thoroughly this-worldly. And in Mohammedanism we find a system which incorporates strongly somatotonic elements. Hence Islam's black record of holy wars and persecutions - a record comparable to that of later Christianity, after that religion had so far compromised with unregenerate somatonia as to call its ecclesiastical organization 'the Church Militant.'

So far as the achievement of man's final end is concerned, it is as much of a handicap to be an extreme cerebrotonic or an extreme viscerotonic as it is to be an extreme somatotonic. But whereas the cerebrotonic and the viscerotonic cannot do much harm except to themselves and those in immediate contact with them, the extreme somatotonic, with his native aggressiveness, plays havoc with whole societies. From one point of view civilization may be defined as a complex of religious, legal and educational devices for preventing extreme somatonics from doing too much mischief, and for directing their irrepressible energies into socially desirable channels. Confucianism

and Chinese culture have sought to achieve this end by inculcating filial piety, good manners and an amiably viscerotonic epicureanism - the whole reinforced somewhat incongruously by the cerebrotonic spirituality and restraints of Buddhism and classical Taoism. In India the caste system represents an attempt to subordinate military, political and financial power to spiritual authority; and the education given to all classes still insists so strongly upon the fact that man's final end is unitive knowledge of God that even at the present time, even after nearly two hundred years of gradually accelerating Europeanization, successful somatotonics will, in middle life, given up wealth, position and power to end their days as humble seekers after enlightenment. In Catholic Europe, as in India, there was an effort to subordinate temporal power to spiritual authority; but since the Church itself exercised temporal power through the agency of political prelates and mitred business men, the effort was never more than partially successful. After the Reformation even the pious wish to limit temporal power by means of spiritual authority was completely abandoned. Henry VIII made himself, in Stubbs's words 'the Pope, the whole Pope, and something more than the Pope,' and his example has been followed by most heads of states ever since. Power has been limited only by other powers, not by an appeal to first principles as interpreted by those who are morally and spiritually qualified to know what they are talking about. Meanwhile, the interest in religion has everywhere declined and even among believing Christians the Perennial Philosophy has been to a great extent replaced by a metaphysic of inevitable progress and an evolving God, by a passionate concern, not with eternity, but with future time. And almost suddenly, within the last quarter of a century, there has been consummated what Sheldon calls 'a somatotonic revolution,' directed against all that is characteristically cerebrotonic in the theory and practice of traditional Christian culture. Here are a few symptoms of this somatotonic revolution.

In traditional Christianity, as in all the great religious formulations of the Perennial Philosophy, it was axiomatic that contemplation is the end and purpose of action. Today the great majority even of professed Christians regard action (directed towards material and social progress) as the end, and analytic thought (there is no question any longer of integral thought, or contemplation) as the means to that end.

In traditional Christianity, as in the other formulations of the Perennial Philosophy, the secret of happiness and the way to salvation were to be sought, not in the external environment, but in the individual's state of mind with regard to the environment. Today the all-important thing is not the state of the mind but the state of the environment. Happiness and moral progress depend, it is thought, on bigger and better gadgets and a higher standard of living.

In traditional Christian education the stress was all on restraint; with the recent rise of the 'progressive school' it is all on activity and 'self-expression.'

Traditionally Christian good manners outlawed all expressions of pleasure in the satisfaction of physical appetites. 'You may love a screeching owl, but you must not love a roasted fowl' - such was the rhyme on which children were brought up in the nurseries of only fifty years ago. Today the young unceasingly proclaim how much they

'love' and 'adore' different kinds of food and drink; adolescents and adults talk about the 'thrills' they derive from the stimulation of their sexuality. The popular philosophy of life has ceased to be based on the classics of devotion and the rules of aristocratic good breeding, and is now moulded by the writers of advertising copy, whose one idea is to persuade everybody to be as extraverted and uninhibitedly greedy as possible, since of course it is only the possessive, the restless, the distracted, who spend money on the things that advertisers want to sell. Technological progress is in part the product of the somatotonic revolution, in part the producer and sustainer of that revolution. The extraverted attention results in technological discoveries. (Significantly enough, a high degree of material civilization has always been associated with the large-scale and officially sanctioned practice of polytheism.) In their turn, technological discoveries have resulted in mass-production; and mass-production, it is obvious, cannot be kept going at full blast except by persuading the whole population to accept the somatotonic Weltanschauung and act accordingly.

Like technological progress, with which it is so closely associated in so many ways, modern war is at once a cause and a result of the somatotonic revolution. Nazi education, which was specifically education for war, had two principal aims: to encourage the manifestation of somatotonia in those most richly endowed with that component of personality, and to make the rest of the population feel ashamed of its relaxed amiability or its inward-looking sensitiveness and tendency towards self-restraint and tender-mindedness. During the war the enemies of Nazism have been compelled, of course, to borrow from the Nazis' educational philosophy. All over the world millions of young men and even of young women are being systematically educated to be 'tough' and to value 'toughness' beyond every other moral quality. With this system of somatotonic ethics is associated the idolatrous and polytheistic theology of nationalism - a pseudo-religion far stronger at the present time for evil and division than is Christianity, or any other monotheistic religion, for unification and good. In the past most societies tried systematically to discourage somatotonia. This was a measure of self-defence; they did not want to be physically destroyed by the power-loving aggressiveness of their most active minority, and they did not want to be spiritually blinded by an excess of extraversion. During the last few years all this has been changed. What, we may apprehensively wonder, will be the result of the current world-wide reversal of an immemorial social policy? Time alone will show.

9. Self-Knowledge

IN OTHER LIVING creatures ignorance of self is nature; in man it is vice.

Boethius

Vice may be defined as a course of behaviour consented to by the will and having results which are bad, primarily because they are God-eclipsing and, secondarily, because they are physically or psychologically harmful to the agent or his fellows. Ignorance of self is something that answers to this description. In its origins it is voluntary; for by introspection and by listening to other people's judgments of our character we can all, if we so desire, come to a very shrewd understanding of our flaws and weaknesses and the real, as opposed to the avowed and advertised, motives of our actions. If most of us remain ignorant of ourselves, it is because self-knowledge is painful and we prefer the pleasures of illusion. As for the consequences of such ignorance, these are bad by every criterion, from the utilitarian to the transcendental. Bad because self-ignorance leads to unrealistic behaviour and so causes every kind of trouble for everyone concerned; and bad because, without self-knowledge, there can be no true humility, therefore no effective self-naughting, therefore no unitive knowledge of the divine Ground underlying the self and ordinarily eclipsed by it.

The importance, the indispensable necessity, of self-knowledge has been stressed by the saints and doctors of every one of the great religious traditions. To us in the West, the most familiar voice is that of Socrates. More systematically than Socrates the Indian exponents of the Perennial Philosophy harped on the same theme. There is, for example, the Buddha, whose discourse on 'The Setting-Up of Mindfulness' expounds (with that positively inexorable exhaustiveness characteristic of the Pali scriptures) the whole art of self-knowledge in all its branches - knowledge of one's body, one's senses, one's feelings, one's thoughts. This art of self-knowledge is practised with two aims in view. The proximate aim is that 'a brother, as to the body, continues so to look upon the body, that he remains ardent, self-possessed and mindful, having overcome both the hankering and dejection common in the world. And in the same way as to feelings, thoughts and ideas, he so looks upon each that he remains ardent, self-possessed and mindful, without hankering or dejection.' Beyond and through this desirable psychological condition lies the final end of man, knowledge of that which underlies the individualized self. In their own vocabulary, Christian writers express the same ideas.

A man has many skins in himself, covering the depths of his heart. Man knows so many things; he does not know himself. Why, thirty or forty skins or hides, just like

an ox's or a bear's, so thick and hard, cover the soul. Go into your own ground and learn to know yourself there.

Eckhart

Fools regard themselves as awake now — so personal is their knowledge. It may be as a prince or it may be as a herdsman, but so cock-sure of themselves!

Chuang Tzu

This metaphor of waking from dreams recurs again and again in the various expositions of the Perennial Philosophy. In this context liberation might be defined as the process of waking up out of the nonsense, nightmares and illusory pleasures of what is ordinarily called real life into the awareness of eternity. The 'sober certainty of waking bliss' - that wonderful phrase in which Milton described the experience of the noblest kind of music - comes, I suppose, about as near as words can get to enlightenment and deliverance.

Thou (the human being) art that which is not. I am that I am. If thou perceivest this truth in thy soul, never shall the enemy deceive thee; thou shalt escape all his snares.

St Catherine of Siena Knowledge of ourselves teaches us whence we come, where we are and whither we are going. We come from God and we are in exile; and it is because our potency of affection tends towards God that we are aware of this state of exile.

Ruysbroeck

Spiritual progress is through the growing knowledge of the self as nothing and of the Godhead as all-embracing Reality. (Such knowledge, of course, is worthless if it is merely theoretical; to be effective, it must be realized as an immediate, intuitive experience and appropriately acted upon.) Of one great master of the spiritual life Professor Étienne Gilson writes: 'The displacement of fear by Charity by way of the practice of humility — in that consists the whole of St Bernard's asceticism, its beginning, its development and its term.' Fear, worry, anxiety - these form the central core of individualized selfhood. Fear cannot be got rid of by personal effort, but only by the ego's absorption in a cause greater than its own interests. Absorption in any cause will rid the mind of some of its fears; but only absorption in the loving and knowing of the divine Ground can rid it of all fear. For when the cause is less than the highest, the sense of fear and anxiety is transferred from the self to the cause - as when heroic self-sacrifice for a loved individual or institution is accompanied by anxiety in regard to that for which the sacrifice is made. Whereas if the sacrifice is made for God, and for others for God's sake, there can be no fear or abiding anxiety, since nothing can be a menace to the divine Ground and even failure and disaster are to be accepted as being in accord with the divine will. In few men and women is the love of God intense enough to cast out this projected fear and anxiety for cherished persons and institutions. The reason is to be sought in the fact that few men and women are humble enough to be capable of loving as they should. And they lack the necessary humility because they are without the fully realized knowledge of their own personal nothingness.

Humility does not consist in hiding our talents and virtues, in thinking ourselves worse and more ordinary than we are, but in possessing a clear knowledge of all that is lacking in us and in not exalting ourselves for that which we have, seeing that God has freely given it us and that, with all His gifts, we are still of infinitely little importance.

Lacordaire

As the light grows, we see ourselves to be worse than we thought. We are amazed at our former blindness as we see issuing from our heart a whole swarm of shameful feelings, like filthy reptiles crawling from a hidden cave. But we must be neither amazed nor disturbed. We are not worse than we were; on the contrary, we are better. But while our faults diminish, the light we see them by waxes brighter, and we are filled with horror. So long as there is no sign of cure, we are unaware of the depth of our disease; we are in a state of blind presumption and hardness, the prey of self-delusion. While we go with the stream, we are unconscious of its rapid course; but when we begin to stem it ever so little, it makes itself felt.

Fénelon

My daughter, build yourself two cells. First a real cell so that you do not run about much and talk, unless it is needful, or you can do it out of love for your neighbour. Next build yourself a spiritual cell, which you can always take with you, and that is the cell of true self-knowledge; you will find there the knowledge of God's goodness to you. Here there are really two cells in one, and if you live in one you must also live in the other; otherwise the soul will either despair or be presumptuous. If you dwelt in self-knowledge alone, you would despair; if you dwelt in the knowledge of God alone, you would be tempted to presumption. One must go with the other, and thus you will reach perfection.

St Catherine of Siena

10. Grace and Free Will

DELIVERANCE IS OUT of time into eternity, and is achieved by obedience and docility to the eternal Nature of Things. We have been given free will, in order that we may will our self-will out of existence and so come to live continuously in a 'state of grace.' All our actions must be directed, in the last analysis, to making ourselves passive in relation to the activity and the being of divine Reality. We are, as it were, aeolian harps, endowed with the power either to expose themselves to the wind of the Spirit or to shut themselves away from it.

The Valley Spirit never dies.

It is called the Mysterious Female.

And the doorway of the Mysterious Female

Is the base from which Heaven and Earth spring.

It is there within us all the time.

Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry.

Lao Tzu

In every exposition of the Perennial Philosophy the human soul is regarded as feminine in relation to the Godhead, the personal God and even the Order of Nature. Hubris, which is the original sin, consists in regarding the personal ego as self-sufficiently masculine in relation to the Spirit within and to Nature without, and in behaving accordingly.

St Paul drew a very useful and illuminating distinction between the psyche and the pneuma. But the latter word never achieved any degree of popularity, and the hopelessly ambiguous term, psyche, came to be used indifferently for either the personal consciousness or the spirit. And why, in the Western church, did devotional writers choose to speak of man's anima (which for the Romans signified the lower, animal soul) instead of using the word traditionally reserved for the rational soul, namely animus? The answer, I suspect, is that they were anxious to stress by every means in their power the essential femininity of the human spirit in its relations with God. Pneuma, being grammatically neuter, and animus, being masculine, were felt to be less suitable than anima and psyche. Consider this concrete example; given the structure of Greek and Latin, it would have been very difficult for the speakers of these languages to identify anything but a grammatically feminine soul with the heroine of the Song of Songs - an allegorical figure who, for long centuries, played the same part in Christian thought and sentiment as the Gopi Maidens played in the theology and devotion of the Hindus.

Take note of this fundamental truth. Everything that works in nature and creature, except sin, is the working of God in nature and creature. The creature has nothing else in its power but the free use of its will, and its free will hath no other power but that of concurring with, or resisting, the working of God in nature. The creature with its free will can bring nothing into being, nor make any alteration in the working of nature; it can only change its own state or place in the working of nature, and so feel or find something in its state that it did not feel or find before.

William Law

Defined in psychological terms, grace is something other than our self-conscious personal self, by which we are helped. We have experience of three kinds of such helps - animal grace, human grace and spiritual grace. Animal grace comes when we are living in full accord with our own nature on the biological level - not abusing our bodies by excess, not interfering with the workings of our indwelling animal intelligence by conscious cravings and aversions, but living wholesomely and laying ourselves open to the 'virtue of the sun and the spirit of the air.' The reward of being thus in harmony with Tao or the Logos in its physical and physiological aspects is a sense of wellbeing, an awareness of life as good, not for any reason, but just because it is life. There is no question, when we are in a condition of animal grace, of *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas*; for in this state there is no distinction between the reasons for living and life itself. Life, like virtue, is then its own reward. But, of course, the fullness of animal grace is reserved for animals. Man's nature is such that he must live a self-conscious life in time, not in a blissful subrational eternity on the hither side of good and evil. Consequently animal grace is something that he knows only spasmodically in an occasional holiday from self-consciousness, or as an accompaniment to other states, in which life is not its own reward but has to be lived for a reason outside itself.

Human grace comes to us either from persons, or from social groups, or from our own wishes, hopes and imaginings projected outside ourselves and persisting somehow in the psychic medium in a state of what may be called second-hand objectivity. We have all had experience of the different types of human grace. There is, for example, the grace which, during childhood, comes from mother, father, nurse or beloved teacher. At a later stage we experience the grace of friends; the grace of men and women morally better and wiser than ourselves; the grace of the guru, or spiritual director. Then there is the grace which comes to us because of our attachment to country, party, church or other social organization - a grace which has helped even the feeblest and most timid individuals to achieve what, without it, would have been impossible. And finally there is the grace which we derive from our ideals, whether low or high, whether conceived of in abstract terms or bodied forth in imaginary personifications. To this last type, it would seem, belong many of the graces experienced by the pious adherents of the various religions. The help received by those who devotedly adore or pray to some personal saint, deity or Avatar is often, we may guess, not a genuinely spiritual grace, but a human grace, coming back to the worshipper from the vortex of psychic power set up by repeated acts (his own and other people's) of faith, yearning and imagination.

Spiritual grace cannot be received continuously or in its fullness, except by those who have willed away their self-will to the point of being able truthfully to say, 'Not I, but God in me.' There are, however, few people so irremediably self-condemned to imprisonment within their own personality as to be wholly incapable of receiving the graces which are from instant to instant being offered to every soul. By fits and starts most of us contrive to forget, if only partially, our preoccupation with 'I,'

'me,'

'mine,' and so become capable of receiving, if only partially, the graces which, in that moment, are being offered us.

Spiritual grace originates from the divine Ground of all being, and it is given for the purpose of helping man to achieve his final end, which is to return out of time and selfhood to that Ground. It resembles animal grace in being derived from a source wholly other than our self-conscious, human selves; indeed, it is the same thing as animal grace, but manifesting itself on a higher level of the ascending spiral that leads from matter to the Godhead. In any given instance, human grace may be wholly good, inasmuch as it helps the recipient in the task of achieving the unitive knowledge of God; but because of its source in the individualized self, it is always a little suspect and, in many cases, of course, the help it gives is help towards the achievement of ends very different from the true end of our existence.

All our goodness is a loan; God is the owner. God works and his work is God.

St John of the Cross

Perpetual inspiration is as necessary to the life of goodness, holiness and happiness as perpetual respiration is necessary to animal life.

William Law

Conversely, of course, the life of goodness, holiness and beatitude is a necessary condition of perpetual inspiration. The relations between action and contemplation, ethics and spirituality are circular and reciprocal. Each is at once; cause and effect.

It was when the Great Way declined that human kindness and morality arose.

Lao Tzu

Chinese verbs are tenseless. This statement as to a hypothetical event in history refers at the same time to the present and the future. It means simply this: that with the rise of self-consciousness, animal grace is no longer sufficient for the conduct of life, and must be supplemented by conscious and deliberate choices between right and wrong — choices which have to be made in the light of a clearly formulated ethical code. But, as the Taoist sages are never tired of repeating, codes of ethics and deliberate choices made by the surface will are only a second best. The individualized will and the superficial intelligence are to be used for the purpose of recapturing the old animal relation to Tao, but on a higher, spiritual level. The goal is perpetual inspiration from sources beyond the personal self; and the means are 'human kindness and morality,' leading to the charity, which is unitive knowledge of Tao, as at once the Ground and Logos.

Lord, Thou hast given me my being of such a nature that it can continually make itself more able to receive thy grace and goodness. And this power, which I have of Thee, wherein I have a living image of Thine almighty power, is free will. By this I can either enlarge or restrict my capacity for Thy grace.

Nicholas of Cusa

Shun asked Ch'eng, saying, 'Can one get Tao so as to have it for oneself?'

'Your very body,' replied Ch'eng, 'is not your own. How should Tao be?'

'If my body,' said Shun, 'is not my own, pray whose is it?'

'It is the delegated image of God,' replied Ch'eng. 'Your life is not your own. It is the delegated harmony of God. Your individuality is not your own. It is the delegated adaptability of God. Your posterity is not your own. It is the delegated exuviae of God. You move, but know not how. You are at rest, but know not why. You taste, but know not the cause. These are the operations of God's laws. How then should you get Tao so as to have it for your own?'

Chuang Tzu

It is within my power either to serve God, or not to serve Him. Serving Him I add to my own good and the good of the whole world. Not serving Him, I forfeit my own good and deprive the world of that good, which was in my power to create.

Leo Tolstoy

God did not deprive thee of the operation of his love, but thou didst deprive Him of thy co-operation. God would never have rejected thee, if you hadst not rejected his love. O all-good God, thou dost not forsake unless forsaken, thou never takest away thy gifts until we take away our hearts.

St François de Sales Ch'ing, the chief carpenter, was carving wood into a stand for musical instruments. When finished, the work appeared to those who saw it as though of supernatural execution; and the Prince of Lu asked him, saying, 'What mystery is there in your art?'

'No mystery, Your Highness,' replied Ch'ing. 'And yet there is something. When I am about to make such a stand, I guard against any diminution of my vital power. I first reduce my mind to absolute quiescence. Three days in this condition and I become oblivious of any reward to be gained. Five days, and I become oblivious of any fame to be acquired. Seven days, and I become unconscious of my four limbs and my physical frame. Then, with no thought of the Court present in my mind, my skill becomes concentrated, and all disturbing elements from without are gone. I enter some mountain forest, I search for a suitable tree. It contains the form required, which is afterwards elaborated. I see the stand in my mind's eye, and then set to work. Beyond that there is nothing. I bring my own native capacity into relation with that of the wood. What was suspected to be of supernatural execution in my own work was due solely to this.

Chuang Tzu

The artist's inspiration may be either a human or a spiritual grace, or a mixture of both. High artistic achievement is impossible without at least those forms of intel-

lectual, emotional and physical mortification appropriate to the kind of art which is being practised. Over and above this course of what may be called professional mortification, some artists have practised the kind of self-naughting which is the indispensable pre-condition of the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground. Fra Angelico, for example, prepared himself for his work by means of prayer and meditation; and from the foregoing extract from Chuang Tzu we see how essentially religious (and not merely professional) was the Taoist craftsman's approach to his art.

Here we may remark in passing that mechanization is incompatible with inspiration. The artisan could do and often did do a thoroughly bad job. But if, like Ch'ing, the chief carpenter, he cared for his art and were ready to do what was necessary to make himself docile to inspiration, he could and sometimes did do a job so good that it seemed 'as though of supernatural execution.' Among the many and enormous advantages of efficient automatic machinery is this: it is completely fool-proof. But every gain has to be paid for. The automatic machine is fool-proof; but just because it is fool-proof it is also grace-proof. The man who tends such a machine is impervious to every form of aesthetic inspiration, whether of human or of genuinely spiritual origin. 'Industry without art is brutality.' But actually Ruskin maligns the brutes. The industrious bird or insect is inspired, when it works, by the infallible animal grace of instinct - by Tao as it manifests itself on the level immediately above the physiological. The industrial worker at his fool-proof and grace-proof machine does his job in a man-made universe of punctual automata — a universe that lies entirely beyond the pale of Tao on any level, brutal, human or spiritual.

In this context we may mention those sudden theophanies which are sometimes vouchsafed to children and sometimes to adults, who may be poets or Philistines, learned or unsophisticated, but who have this in common, that they have done nothing at all to prepare for what has happened to them. These gratuitous graces, which have inspired much literary and pictorial art, some splendid and some (where inspiration was not seconded by native talent) pathetically inadequate, seem generally to belong to one or other of two main classes — sudden and profoundly impressive perception of ultimate Reality as Love, Light and Bliss, and a no less impressive perception of it as dark, aweinspiring and inscrutable Power. In memorable forms, Wordsworth has recorded his own experience of both these aspects of the divine Ground.

There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
The earth and every common sight,
To me did seem Apparelled in celestial light.

And so on. But that was not the only vision.

Lustily I dipped my oars into the silent lake,

And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat

Went heaving through the water like a swan;

When, from behind that craggy steep, till then

The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,

As if with voluntary power instinct,

Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,

And growing still in stature, the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars...
But after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude,
Or blank desertion.

Significantly enough, it is to this second aspect of Reality that primitive minds seem to have been most receptive. The formidable God, to whom Job at last submits, is an 'unknown mode of Being,' whose most characteristic creations are Behemoth and Leviathan. He is the sort of God who calls, in Kierkegaard's phrase, for 'teleological suspensions of morality,' chiefly in the form of blood sacrifices, even human sacrifices. The Hindu goddess, Kali, in her more frightful aspects, is another manifestation of the same unknown mode of Being. And by many contemporary savages the underlying Ground is apprehended and theologically rationalized as sheer, unmitigated Power, which has to be propitiatively worshipped and, if possible, turned to profitable use by means of a compulsive magic-

To think of God as mere Power, and not also, at the same time as Power, Love and Wisdom, comes quite naturally to the ordinary, unregenerate human mind. Only the totally selfless are in a position to know experimentally that, in spite of everything, 'all will be well' and, in some way, already is well. 'The philosopher who denies divine providence,' says Rumi, 'is a stranger to the perception of the saints.' Only those who have the perception of the saints can know all the time and by immediate experience that divine Reality manifests itself as a Power that is loving, compassionate and wise. The rest of us are not yet in a spiritual position to do more than accept their findings on faith. If it were not for the records they have left behind, we should be more inclined to agree with Job and the primitives.

Inspirations prevent us, and even before they are thought of make themselves felt; but after we have felt them it is ours either to consent to them, so as to second and follow their attractions, or else to dissent and repulse them. They make themselves felt without us, but they do not make us consent without us.

St François de Sales

Our free will can hinder the course of inspiration, and when the favourable gale of God's grace swells the sails of our soul, it is in our power to refuse consent and thereby hinder the effect of the wind's favour; but when our spirit sails along and makes its voyage prosperously, it is not we who make the gale of inspiration blow for us, nor we who make our sails swell with it, nor we who give motion to the ship of our heart; but we simply receive the gale, consent to its motion and let our ship sail under it, not hindering it by our resistance.

St François de Sales

Grace is necessary to salvation, free will equally so — but grace in order to give salvation, free will in order to receive it. Therefore we should not attribute part of the good work to grace and part to free will; it is performed in its entirety by the common and inseparable action of both; entirely by grace, entirely by free will, but springing from the first in the second.

St Bernard

St Bernard distinguishes between *voluntas communis* and *voluntas propria*. *Voluntas communis* is common in two senses; it is the will to share, and it is the will common to man and God. For practical purposes it is equivalent to charity. *Voluntas propria* is the will to get and hold for oneself, and is the root of all sin. In its cognitive aspect, *voluntas propria* is the same as *sensum proprium*, which is one's own opinion, cherished because it is one's own and therefore always morally wrong, even though it may be theoretically correct.

Two students from the University of Paris came to visit Ruysbroeck and asked him to furnish them with a short phrase or motto, which might serve them as a rule of life.

Vos estis tam sancti sicut vultis, Ruysbroeck answered. 'You are as holy as you will to be.'

God is bound to act, to pour Himself into thee as soon as He shall find thee ready.
Eckhart

The will is that which has all power; it makes heaven and it makes hell; for there is no hell but where the will of the creature is turned from God, nor any heaven but where the will of the creature worketh with God.

William Law O man, consider thyself! Here thou standest in the earnest perpetual strife of good and evil; all nature is continually at work to bring forth the great redemption; the whole creation is travailing in pain and laborious working to be delivered from the vanity of time; and wilt thou be asleep? Everything thou hearest or seest says nothing, shows nothing to thee but what either eternal light or eternal darkness has brought forth; for as day and night divide the whole of our time, so heaven and hell divide all our thoughts, words and actions. Stir which way thou wilt, do or design what thou wilt, thou must be an agent with the one or the other. Thou canst not stand still, because thou livest in the perpetual workings of temporal and eternal nature; if thou workest not with the good, the evil that is in nature carries thee along with it. Thou hast the height and depth of eternity in thee and therefore, be doing what thou wilt, either in the closet, the field, the shop or the church, thou art sowing that which grows and must be reaped in eternity.

William Law

God expects but one thing of you, and that is that you should come out of yourself in so far as you are a created being and let God be God in you.

Eckhart

For those who take pleasure in theological speculations based upon scriptural texts and dogmatic postulates, there are the thousands of pages of Catholic and Protestant controversy upon grace, works, faith and justification. And for students of compar-

ative religion there are scholarly commentaries on the Bhagavad-Gita, on the works of Ramanuja and those later Vaishnavites, whose doctrine of grace bears a striking resemblance to that of Luther; there are histories of Buddhism which duly trace the development of that religion from the Hinayanist doctrine that salvation is the fruit of strenuous self-help to the Mahayanist doctrine that it cannot be achieved without the grace of the Primordial Buddha, whose inner consciousness and 'great compassionate heart' constitute the eternal Suchness of things. For the rest of us, the foregoing quotations from writers within the Christian and early Taoist tradition provide, it seems to me, an adequate account of the observable facts of grace and inspiration and their relation to the observable facts of free will.

11. Good and Evil

DESIRE IS THE first datum of our consciousness; we are born into sympathy and antipathy, wishing and willing. Unconsciously at first, then consciously, we evaluate: 'This is good, that is bad.' And a little later we discover obligation. 'This, being good, ought to be done; that, being bad, ought not to be done.'

All evaluations are not equally valid. We are called upon to pass judgment on what our desires and dislikes affirm to be good or bad. Very often we discover that the verdict of the higher court is at variance with the decision reached so quickly and lightly in the court of first instance. In the light of what we know about ourselves, our fellow-beings and the world at large, we discover that what at first seemed good may, in the long run or in the larger context, be bad, and that what first seemed bad may be a good which we feel ourselves under obligation to accomplish.

When we say that a man is possessed of penetrating moral insight we mean that his judgment of value-claims is sound; that he knows enough to be able to say what is good in the longest run and the largest context. When we say that a man has a strong moral character, we mean that he is ready to act upon the findings of his insight, even when these findings are unpleasantly or even excruciatingly at variance with his first, spontaneous valuations.

In actual practice moral insight is never a strictly personal matter. The judge administers a system of law and is guided by precedent. In other words, every individual is the member of a community, which has a moral code based upon past findings of what in fact is good in the longer run and the wider context. In most circumstances most of the members of any given society permit themselves to be guided by the generally accepted code of morals; a few reject the code, either in its entirety or in part; and a few choose to live by another, higher and more exacting code. In Christian phraseology, there are the few who stubbornly persist in living in a state of mortal sin and anti-social lawlessness; there are the many who obey the laws, make the Precepts of Morality their guide, repent of mortal sins when they commit them, but do not make much effort to avoid venial sins; and finally there are the few whose righteousness 'exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees,' who are guided by the Counsels of Perfection and have the insight to perceive and the character to avoid venial sins and even imperfections.

Philosophers and theologians have sought to establish a theoretical basis for the existing moral codes, by whose aid individual men and women pass judgment on their spontaneous evaluations. From Moses to Bentham, from Epicurus to Calvin, from the Christian and Buddhist philosophies of universal love to the lunatic doctrines of

nationalism and racial superiority - the list is long and the span of thought enormously wide. But fortunately there is no need for us to consider these various theories. Our concern is only with the Perennial Philosophy and with the system of ethical principles which those who believe in that philosophy have used, when passing judgment on their own and other people's evaluations. The questions that we have to ask in this section are simple enough, and simple too are the answers. As always, the difficulties begin only when we pass from theory to practice, from ethical principle to particular application.

Granted that the ground of the individual soul is akin to, or identical with, the divine Ground of all existence, and granted that this divine Ground is an ineffable Godhead that manifests itself as personal God or even as the incarnate Logos, what is the ultimate nature of good and evil, and what the true purpose and last end of human life?

The answers to these questions will be given to a great extent in the words of that most surprising product of the English eighteenth century, William Law. (How very odd our educational system is! Students of English literature are forced to read the graceful journalism of Steele and Addison, are expected to know all about the minor novels of Defoe and the tiny elegances of Matthew Prior. But they can pass all their examinations summa cum laude without having so much as looked into the writings of a man who was not only a master of English prose, but also one of the most interesting thinkers of his period and one of the most endearingly saintly figures in the whole history of Anglicanism.) Our current neglect of Law is yet another of the many indications that twentieth-century educators have ceased to be concerned with questions of ultimate truth or meaning and (apart from mere vocational training) are interested solely in the dissemination of a rootless and irrelevant culture, and the fostering of the solemn foolery of scholarship for scholarship's sake.

Nothing burns in hell but the self.

Theologia Germanica

The mind is on fire, thoughts are on fire. Mind-consciousness and the impressions received by the mind, and the sensations that arise from the impressions that the mind receives - these too are on fire.

And with what are they on fire? With the fire of greed, with the fire of resentment, with the fire of infatuation; with birth, old age and death, with sorrow and lamentation, with misery and grief and despair they are on fire.

From the Buddha's Fire Sermon If thou hast not seen the devil, look at thine own self.

Jalal-uddin Rumi

Your own self is your own Cain that murders your own Abel. For every action and motion of self has the spirit of Anti-Christ and murders the divine life within you.

William Law

The city of God is made by the love of God pushed to the contempt of self; the earthly city, by the love of self pushed to the contempt of God.

St Augustine

The difference between a good and a bad man does not lie in this, that the one wills that which is good and the other does not, but solely in this, that the one concurs with the living inspiring spirit of God within him, and the other resists it, and can be chargeable with evil only because he resists it.

William Law

People should think less about what they ought to do and more about what they ought to be. If only their being were good, their works would shine forth brightly. Do not imagine that you can ground your salvation upon actions; it must rest on what you are. The ground upon which good character rests is the very same ground from which man's work derives its value, namely a mind wholly turned to God. Verily, if you were so minded, you might tread on a stone and it would be more pious work than if you, simply for your own profit, were to receive the Body of the Lord and were wanting in spiritual detachment.

Eckhart

Man is made by his belief. As he believes, so he is.

Bhagavad-Gita

It is mind which gives to things their quality, their foundation and their being. Whoever speaks or acts with impure mind, him sorrow follows, as the wheel follows the steps of the ox that draws the cart.

Dhammapada

The nature of a man's being determines the nature of his actions; and the nature of his being comes to manifestation first of all in the mind. What he craves and thinks, what he believes and feels - this is, so to speak, the Logos, by whose agency an individual's fundamental character performs its creative acts. These acts will be beautiful and morally good if the being is God-centred, bad and ugly if it is centred in the personal self. 'The stone,' says Eckhart, 'performs its work without ceasing, day and night.' For even when it is not actually falling the stone has weight. A man's being is his potential energy directed towards or away from God; and it is by this potential energy that he will be judged as good or evil — for it is possible, in the language of the Gospel, to commit adultery and murder in the heart, even while remaining blameless in action.

Covetousness, envy, pride and wrath are the four elements of self, or nature, or hell, all of them inseparable from it. And the reason why it must be thus, and cannot be otherwise, is because the natural life of the creature is brought forth for the participation of some high supernatural good in the Creator. But it could have no fitness, no possible capacity to receive such good, unless it was in itself both an extremity of want and an extremity of desire for some high good. When therefore this natural life is deprived of or fallen from God, it can be nothing else in itself but an extremity of want continually desiring, and an extremity of desire continually wanting. And because it is that, its whole life can be nothing else but a plague and torment of covetousness, envy, pride and wrath, all which is precisely nature, self, or hell. Now covetousness, pride and envy are not three different things, but only three different names for the restless workings of one and the same will or desire. Wrath, which is a fourth birth

from these three, can have no existence till one or all of these three are contradicted, or have something done to them that is contrary to their will. These four properties generate their own torment. They have no outward cause, nor any inward power of altering themselves. And therefore all self or nature must be in this state until some supernatural good comes into it, or gets a birth in it. Whilst man indeed lives among the vanities of time, his covetousness, envy, pride and wrath may be in a tolerable state, may hold him to a mixture of peace and trouble; they may have at times their gratifications as well as their torments. But when death has put an end to the vanity of all earthly cheats, the soul that is not born again of the Supernatural Word and Spirit of God, must find itself unavoidably devoured or shut up in its own insatiable, unchangeable, self-tormenting covetousness, envy, pride and wrath.

William Law

It is true that you cannot properly express the degree of your sinfulness; but that is because it is impossible, in this life, to represent sins in all their true ugliness; nor shall we ever know them as they really are except in the light of God. God gives to some souls an impression of the enormity of sin, by which He makes them feel that sin is incomparably greater than it seems. Such souls must conceive their sins as faith represents them (that is, as they are in themselves), but must be content to describe them in such human words as their mouth is able to utter.

Charles de Condren

Lucifer, when he stood in his natural nobility, as God had created him, was a pure noble creature. But when he kept to self, when he possessed himself and his natural nobility as a property, he fell and became, instead of an angel, a devil. So it is with man. If he remains in himself and possesses himself of his natural nobility as a property, he falls and becomes, instead of a man, a devil.

The Following of Christ

If a delicious fragrant fruit had a power of separating itself from the rich spirit, fine taste, smell and colour, which it receives from the virtue of the air and the spirit of the sun, or if it could, in the beginning of its growth, turn away from the sun and receive no virtue from it, then it would stand in its own first birth of wrath, sourness, bitterness, astringency, just as the devils do, who have turned back into their own dark root and have rejected the Light and Spirit of God. So that the hellish nature of a devil is nothing but its own first forms of life withdrawn or separated from the heavenly Light and Love; just as the sourness, bitterness and astringency of a fruit are nothing else but the first form of its vegetable life, before it has reached the virtue of the sun and the spirit of the air. And as a fruit, if it had a sensibility of itself, would be full of torment as soon as it was shut up in the first forms of its life, in its own astringency, sourness and stinging bitterness, so the angels, when they had turned back into these very same first forms of their own life, and broke off from the heavenly Light and Love of God, became their own hell. No hell was made for them, no new qualities came into them, no vengeance or pains from the Lord of Love fell on them; they only stood in that state of division and separation from the Son and Holy Spirit of God, which by

their own motion they had made for themselves. They had nothing in them but what they had from God, the first forms of a heavenly life; but they had them in a state of self-torment, because they had separated them from birth of Love and Light.

William Law

In all the possibility of things there is and can be but one happiness and one misery. The one misery is nature and creature left to itself, the one happiness is the Life, the Light, the Spirit of God, manifested in nature and creature. This is the true meaning of the words of Our Lord: There is but one that is good, and that is God.

William Law

Men are not in hell because God is angry with them; they are in wrath and darkness because they have done to the light, which infinitely flows forth from God, as that man does to the light of the sun, who puts out his own eyes.

William Law

Though the light and comfort of the outward world keeps even the worst of men from any constant strong sensibility of that wrathful, fiery, dark and self-tormenting nature that is the very essence of every fallen unregenerate soul, yet every man in the world has more or less frequent and strong intimations given him that so it is with him in the inmost ground of his soul. How many inventions are some people forced to have recourse to in order to keep off a certain inward uneasiness, which they are afraid of and know not whence it comes? Alas, it is because there is a fallen spirit, a dark aching fire within them, which has never had its proper relief and is trying to discover itself and calling out for help at every cessation of worldly joy.

William Law

In the Hebrew-Christian tradition the Fall is subsequent to creation and is due exclusively to the egocentric use of a free will, which ought to have remained centred in the divine Ground and not in the separate selfhood. The myth of Genesis embodies a very important psychological truth, but falls short of being an entirely satisfactory symbol, because it fails to mention, much less to account for, the fact of evil and suffering in the non-human world. To be adequate to our experience the myth would have to be modified in two ways. In the first place, it would have to make clear that creation, the incomprehensible passage from the unmanifested One into the manifest multiplicity of nature, from eternity into time, is not merely the prelude and necessary condition of the Fall; to some extent it is the Fall. And in the second place, it would have to indicate that something analogous to free will may exist below the human level.

That the passage from the unity of spiritual to the manifoldness of temporal being is an essential part of the Fall is clearly stated in the Buddhist and Hindu renderings of the Perennial Philosophy. Pain and evil are inseparable from individual existence in a world of time; and, for human beings, there is an intensification of this inevitable pain and evil when the desire is turned towards the self and the many, rather than towards the divine Ground. To this we might speculatively add the opinion that perhaps even sub-human existences may be endowed (both individually and collectively, as kinds and

species) with something resembling the power of choice. There is the extraordinary fact that 'man stands alone' - that, so far as we can judge, every other species is a species of living fossils, capable only of degeneration and extinction, not of further evolutionary advance. In the phraseology of Scholastic Aristotelianism, matter possesses an appetite for form - not necessarily for the best form, but for form as such. Looking about us in the world of living things, we observe (with a delighted wonder, touched occasionally, it must be admitted, with a certain questioning dismay) the innumerable forms, always beautiful, often extravagantly odd and sometimes even sinister, in which the insatiable appetite of matter has found its satisfaction. Of all this living matter only that which is organized as human beings has succeeded in finding a form capable, at any rate on the mental side, of further development. All the rest is now locked up in forms that can only remain what they are or, if they change, only change for the worse. It looks as though, in the cosmic intelligence test, all living matter, except the human, had succumbed, at one time or another during its biological career, to the temptation of assuming, not the ultimately best, but the immediately most profitable form. By an act of something analogous to free will every species, except the human, has chosen the quick returns of specialization, the present rapture of being perfect, but perfect on a low level of being. The result is that they all stand at the end of evolutionary blind alleys. To the initial cosmic Fall of creation, of multitudinous manifestation in time, they have added the obscurely biological equivalent of man's voluntary Fall. As species, they have chosen the immediate satisfaction of the self rather than the capacity for reunion with the divine Ground. For this wrong choice, the non-human forms of life are punished negatively, by being debarred from realizing the supreme good, to which only the unspecialized and therefore freer, more highly conscious human form is capable. But it must be remembered, of course, that the capacity for supreme good is achieved only at the price of becoming also capable of extreme evil. Animals do not suffer in so many ways, nor, we feel pretty certain, to the same extent as do men and women. Further, they are quite innocent of that literally diabolic wickedness which, together with sanctity, is one of the distinguishing marks of the human species.

We see then that, for the Perennial Philosophy, good is the separate self's conformity to, and finally annihilation in, the divine Ground which gives it being; evil, the intensification of separateness, the refusal to know that the Ground exists. This doctrine is, of course, perfectly compatible with the formulation of ethical principles as a series of negative and positive divine commandments, or even in terms of social utility. The crimes which are everywhere forbidden proceed from states of mind which are everywhere condemned as wrong; and these wrong states of mind are, as a matter of empirical fact, absolutely incompatible with that unitive knowledge of the divine Ground, which, according to the Perennial Philosophy, is the supreme good.

12. Time and Eternity

THE UNIVERSE IS an everlasting succession of events; but its ground, according to the Perennial Philosophy, is the timeless now of the divine Spirit. A classical statement of the relationship between time and eternity may be found in the later chapters of the *Consolations of Philosophy*, where Boethius summarizes the conceptions of his predecessors, notably of Plotinus.

It is one thing to be carried through an endless life, another thing to embrace the whole presence of an endless life together, which is manifestly proper to the divine Mind.

The temporal world seems to emulate in part that which it cannot fully obtain or express, tying itself to whatever presence there is in this exiguous and fleeting moment - a presence which, since it carries a certain image of that abiding Presence, gives to whatever may partake of it the quality of seeming to have being. But because it could not stay, it undertook an infinite journey of time; and so it came to pass that, by going, it continued that life, whose plenitude it could not comprehend by staying.

Boethius Since God hath always an eternal and present state, His knowledge, surpassing time's notions, remaineth in the simplicity of His presence and, comprehending the infinite of what is past and to come, considereth all things as though they were in the act of being accomplished.

Boethius Knowledge of what is happening now does not determine the event. What is ordinarily called God's foreknowledge is in reality a timeless now-knowledge, which is compatible with the freedom of the human creature's will in time.

The manifest world and whatever is moved in any sort take their causes, order and forms from the stability of the divine Mind. This hath determined manifold ways for doing things; which ways being considered in the purity of God's understanding are named Providence; but being referred to those things which He moveth and disposeth are called Fate... Providence is the very divine Reason itself, which disposeth all things. But Fate is a disposition inherent in changeable things, by which Providence connecteth all things in their due order. For Providence equally embraceth all things together, though diverse, though infinite; but Fate puts into motion all things, distributed by places, forms and times; so that the unfolding of the temporal order, being united in the foresight of the divine Mind, is Providence, and the same uniting, being digested and unfolded in time, is called Fate... As a workman conceiving the form of anything in his mind, taketh his work in hand and executeth by order of time that which he had simply and in a moment foreseen, so God by his Providence disposeth whatever is to be done with simplicity and stability, and by Fate effecteth by manifold ways and

in the order of time, those very things which He disposeth... All that is under Fate is also subject to Providence. But some things which are under Providence are above the course of Fate. For they are those things which, being stably fixed in virtue of their nearness to the first divinity, exceed the order of Fate's mobility.

Boethius

The concept of a clock enfolds all succession in time. In the concept the sixth hour is not earlier than the seventh or eighth, although the clock never strikes the hour, save when the concept biddeth.

Nicholas of Cusa

From Hobbes onwards, the enemies of the Perennial Philosophy have denied the existence of an eternal now. According to these thinkers, time and change are fundamental; there is no other reality. Moreover, future events are completely indeterminate, and even God can have no knowledge of them. Consequently God cannot be described as Alpha and Omega - merely as Alpha and Lambda, or whatever other intermediate letter of the temporal alphabet is now in process of being spelled out. But the anecdotal evidence collected by the Society for Psychical Research and the statistical evidence accumulated during many thousands of laboratory tests for extra-sensory perception point inescapably to the conclusion that even human minds are capable of foreknowledge. And if a finite consciousness can know what card is going to be turned up three seconds from now, or what shipwreck is going to take place next week, then there is nothing impossible or even intrinsically improbable in the idea of an infinite consciousness that can know now events indefinitely remote in what, for us, is future time. The 'specious present' in which human beings live may be, and perhaps always is, something more than a brief section of transition from known past to unknown future, regarded, because of the vividness of memory, as the instant we call 'now'; it may and perhaps always does contain a portion of the immediate and even of the relatively distant future. For the Godhead, the specious present may be precisely that *interminabilis vitae tota simul et perpétua possessio*, of which Boethius speaks.

The existence of the eternal now is sometimes denied on the ground that a temporal order cannot co-exist with another order which is non-temporal; and that it is impossible for a changing substance to be united with a changeless substance. This objection, it is obvious, would be valid if the non-temporal order were of a mechanical nature, or if the changeless substance were possessed of spatial and material qualities. But according to the Perennial Philosophy, the eternal now is a consciousness; the divine Ground is spirit; the being of Brahman is chit, or knowledge. That a temporal world should be known and, in being known, sustained and perpetually created by an eternal consciousness is an idea which contains nothing self-contradictory.

Finally we come to the arguments directed against those who have asserted that the eternal Ground can be unitively known by human minds. This claim is regarded as absurd because it involves the assertion, 'At one time I am eternal, at another time I am in time.' But this statement is absurd only if man is a being of a twofold nature, capable of living on only one level. But if, as the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy

have always maintained, man is not only a body and a psyche, but also a spirit, and if he can at will live either on the merely human plane or else in harmony and even in union with the divine Ground of his being, then the statement makes perfectly good sense. The body is always in time, the spirit is always timeless and the psyche is an amphibious creature compelled by the laws of man's being to associate itself to some extent with its body, but capable, if it so desires, of experiencing and being identified with its spirit and, through its spirit, with the divine Ground. The spirit remains always what it eternally is; but man is so constituted that his psyche cannot always remain identified with the spirit. In the statement, 'At one time I am eternal, at another time I am in time,' the word 'I' stands for the psyche, which passes from time to eternity when it is identified with the spirit and passes again from eternity to time, either voluntarily or by involuntary necessity, when it chooses or is compelled to identify itself with the body.

'The Sufi,' says Jalal-uddin Rumi, 'is the son of time present.' Spiritual progress is a spiral advance. We start as infants in the animal eternity of life in the moment, without anxiety for the future or regret for the past; we grow up into the specifically human condition of those who look before and after, who live to a great extent, not in the present but in memory and anticipation, not spontaneously but by rule and with prudence, in repentance and fear and hope; and we can continue, if we so desire, up and on in a returning sweep towards a point corresponding to our starting place in animality, but incommensurably above it. Once more life is lived in the moment - the life now, not of a sub-human creature, but of a being in whom charity has cast out fear, vision has taken the place of hope, selflessness has put a stop to the positive egotism of complacent reminiscence and the negative egotism of remorse. The present moment is the only aperture through which the soul can pass out of time into eternity, through which grace can pass out of eternity into the soul, and through which charity can pass from one soul in time to another soul in time. That is why the Sufi and, along with him, every other practising exponent of the Perennial Philosophy is, or tries to be, a son of time present.

Past and future veil God from our sight;
 Burn up both of them with fire. How long
 Wilt thou be partitioned by these segments, like a reed?
 So long as a reed is partitioned, it is not privy to secrets,
 Nor is it vocal in response to lip and breathing.
 Jalal-uddin Rumi

This emptying of the memory, though the advantages of it are not so great as those of the state of union, yet merely because it delivers souls from much sorrow, grief and sadness, besides imperfections and sins, is in reality a great good.

St John of the Cross

In the idealistic cosmology of Mahayana Buddhism memory plays the part of a rather maleficent demiurge. 'When the triple world is surveyed by the Bodhisattva, he perceives that its existence is due to memory that has been accumulated since

the beginningless past, but wrongly interpreted' (Lankavatara Sutra). The word here translated as 'memory' means literally 'perfuming.' The mind-body carries with it the ineradicable smell of all that has been thought and done, desired and felt, throughout its racial and personal past. The Chinese translate the Sanskrit term by two symbols, signifying 'habit-energy.' The world is what (in our eyes) it is, because of all the consciously or unconsciously and physiologically remembered habits formed by our ancestors or by ourselves, either in our present life or in previous existences. These remembered bad habits cause us to believe that multiplicity is the sole reality and that the idea of 'I,'

'me,'

'mine' represents the ultimate truth. Nirvana consists in 'seeing into the abode of reality as it is,' and not reality quoad nos, as it seems to us. Obviously, this cannot be achieved so long as there is an 'us,' to which reality can be relative. Hence the need, stressed by every exponent of the Perennial Philosophy, for mortification, for dying to self. And this must be a mortification not only of the appetites, the feelings and the will, but also of the reasoning powers, of consciousness itself and of that which makes our consciousness what it is - our personal memory and our inherited habit-energies. To achieve complete deliverance, conversion from sin is not enough; there must also be a conversion of the mind, a paravritti, as the Mahayanists call it, or revulsion in the very depths of consciousness. As the result of this revulsion, the habit-energies of accumulated memory are destroyed and, along with them, the sense of being a separate ego. Reality is no longer perceived quoad nos (for the good reason that there is no longer a nos to perceive it), but as it is in itself. In Blake's words, 'If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would be seen as it is, infinite.' By those who are pure in heart and poor in spirit, samsara and nirvana, appearance and reality, time and eternity are experienced as one and the same.

Time is what keeps the light from reaching us. There is no greater obstacle to God than time. And not only time but temporalities, not only temporal things but temporal affections; not only temporal affections but the very taint and smell of time.

Eckhart

Rejoice in God all the time, says St Paul. He rejoices all the time who rejoices above time and free from time. Three things prevent a man from knowing God. The first is time, the second is corporeality, the third is multiplicity. That God may come in these things must go out - except thou have them in a higher, better way: multitude summed up to one in thee.

Eckhart

Whenever God is thought of as being wholly in time, there is a tendency to regard Him as a 'numinous' rather than a moral being, a God of mere unmitigated Power rather than a God of Power, Wisdom and Love, an inscrutable and dangerous potentate to be propitiated by sacrifices, not a Spirit to be worshipped in spirit. All this is only natural; for time is a perpetual perishing and a God who is wholly in time is a God who destroys as fast as He creates. Nature is as incomprehensibly appalling as it is

lovely and bountiful. If the Divine does not transcend the temporal order in which it is immanent, and if the human spirit does not transcend its time-bound soul, then there is no possibility of 'justifying the ways of God to man.' God as manifested in the universe is the irresistible Being who speaks to Job out of the whirlwind, and whose emblems are Behemoth and Leviathan, the war horse and the eagle. It is this same Being who is described in the apocalyptic eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita. 'O Supreme Spirit,' says Arjuna, addressing himself to the Krishna whom he now knows to be the incarnation of the Godhead, 'I long to see your Isvara-form' - that is to say, his form as God of the world, Nature, the temporal order. Krishna answers, 'You shall behold the whole universe, with all things animate and inanimate, within this body of mine.' Arjuna's reaction to the revelation is one of amazement and fear.

Ah, my God, I see all gods within your body;
Each in his degree, the multitude of creatures;
See Lord Brahma seated upon his lotus,
See all the sages and the holy serpents.
Universal Form, I see you without limit,
Infinite of eyes, arms, mouths, and bellies -
See, and find no end, midst or beginning.

There follows a long passage, enlarging on the omnipotence and all-comprehensiveness of God in his Isvara-form. Then the quality of the vision changes, the Arjuna realizes, with fear and trembling, that the God of the universe is a God of destruction as well as of creation.

Now with frightful tusks your mouths are gnashing,
Flaring like the fires of Doomsday morning - North, south, east and west seem all confounded -

Lord of devas, world's abode, have mercy!...
Swift as many rivers streaming to the ocean,
Rush the heroes to your fiery gullets,
Moth-like to meet the flame of their destruction.
Headlong these plunge into you and perish...
Tell me who you are, and were from the beginning,
You of aspect grim. O God of gods, be gracious.
Take my homage, Lord. From me your ways are hidden.
'Tell me who you are.' The answer is clear and unequivocal.
I am come as Time, the waster of the peoples,
Ready for the hour that ripens to their ruin.

But the God who comes so terribly as Time also exists timelessly as the Godhead, as Brahman, whose essence is Sat, Chit, Ananda, Being, Awareness, Bliss; and within and beyond man's time-tortured psyche is his spirit, 'uncreated and uncreatable,' as Eckhart says, the Atman which is akin to or even identical with Brahman. The Gita, like all other formulations of the Perennial Philosophy, justifies God's ways to man by affirming - and the affirmation is based upon observation and immediate experience

- that man can, if he so desires, die to his separate temporal selfness and so come to union with timeless Spirit. It affirms, too, that the Avatar becomes incarnate in order to assist human beings to achieve this union. This he does in three ways - by teaching the true doctrine in a world blinded by voluntary ignorance; by inviting souls to a 'carnal love' of his humanity, not indeed as an end in itself, but as the means to spiritual love-knowledge of Spirit; and finally by serving as a channel of grace.

God who is Spirit can only be worshipped in spirit and for his own sake; but God in time is normally worshipped by material means with a view of achieving temporal ends. God in time is manifestly the destroyer as well as the creator; and because this is so, it has seemed proper to worship him by methods which are as terrible as the destructions he himself inflicts. Hence, the India, the blood sacrifices to Kali, in her aspect as Nature-the-Destroyer; hence those offerings of children to 'the Molochs,' denounced by the Hebrew prophets; hence the human sacrifices practised, for example, by the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the Druids, the Aztecs. In all such cases the divinity addressed was a god in time, or a personification of Nature, which is nothing else but Time itself, the devourer of its own offspring; and in all cases the purpose of the rite was to obtain a future benefit or to avoid one of the enormous evils which Time and Nature for ever hold in store. For this it was thought to be worth while to pay a high price in that currency of suffering, which the Destroyer so evidently valued. The importance of the temporal end justified the use of means that were intrinsically terrible, because intrinsically time-like. Sublimated traces of these ancient patterns of thought and behaviour are still to be found in certain theories of the Atonement, and in the conception of the Mass as a perpetually repeated sacrifice of the God-Man.

In the modern world the gods to whom human sacrifice is offered are personifications, not of Nature, but of man's own, home-made political ideals. These, of course, all refer to events in time - actual events in the past or the present, fancied events in the future. And here it should be noted that the philosophy which affirms the existence and the immediate realizableness of eternity is related to one kind of political theory and practice; the philosophy which affirms that what goes on in time is the only reality, results in a different kind of theory and justifies quite another kind of political practice. This has been clearly recognized by Marxist writers, who point out that when Christianity is mainly preoccupied with events in time, it is a 'revolutionary religion,' and that when, under mystical influences, it stresses the Eternal Gospel, of which the historical or pseudo-historical facts recorded in Scripture are but-symbols, it becomes politically 'static' and 'reactionary.'

This Marxian account of the matter is somewhat oversimplified. It is not quite true to say that all theologies and philosophies whose primary concern is with time, rather than eternity, are necessarily revolutionary. The aim of all revolutions is to make the future radically different from and better than the past. But some time-obsessed philosophies are primarily concerned with the past, not the future, and their politics are entirely a matter of preserving or restoring the status quo and getting back to the good old days. But the retrospective time-worshippers have one thing

in common with the revolutionary devotees of the bigger and better future; they are prepared to use unlimited violence to achieve their ends. It is here that we discover the essential difference between the politics of eternity-philosophers and the politics of time-philosophers. For the latter, the ultimate good is to be found in the temporal world - in a future, where everyone will be happy because all are doing and thinking something either entirely new and unprecedented or, alternatively, something old, traditional and hallowed. And because the ultimate good lies in time, they feel justified in making use of any temporal means for achieving it. The Inquisition burns and tortures in order to perpetuate a creed, a ritual and an ecclesiastico-politico-financial organization regarded as necessary to men's eternal salvation. Bible-worshipping Protestants fight long and savage wars, in order to make the world safe for what they fondly imagine to be the genuinely antique Christianity of apostolic times. Jacobins and Bolsheviks are ready to sacrifice millions of human lives for the sake of a political and economic future gorgeously unlike the present. And now all Europe and most of Asia has had to be sacrificed to a crystal-gazer's vision of a perpetual Co-Prosperity and the Thousand-Year Reich. From the records of history it seems to be abundantly clear that most of the religions and philosophies which take time too seriously are correlated with political theories that inculcate and justify the use of large-scale violence. The only exceptions are those simple Epicurean faiths, in which the reaction to an all too real time is 'Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.' This is not a very noble, nor even a very realistic kind of morality. But it seems to make a good deal more sense than the revolutionary ethic: 'Die (and kill), for tomorrow someone else will eat, drink and be merry.' In practice, of course, the prospect even of somebody else's future merriment is extremely precarious. For the process of wholesale dying and killing creates material, social and psychological conditions that practically guarantee the revolution against the achievement of its beneficent ends.

For those whose philosophy does not compel them to take time with an excessive seriousness the ultimate good is to be sought neither in the revolutionary's progressive social apocalypse, nor in the reactionary's revived and perpetuated past, but in an eternal divine now which those who sufficiently desire this good can realize as a fact of immediate experience. The mere act of dying is not in itself a passport to eternity; nor can wholesale killing do anything to bring deliverance either to the slayers or the slain or their posterity. The peace that passes all understanding is the fruit of liberation into eternity; but in its ordinary everyday form peace is also the root of liberation. For where there are violent passions and compelling distractions, this ultimate good can never be realized. That is one of the reasons why the policy correlated with eternity-philosophies is tolerant and non-violent. The other reason is that the eternity, whose realization is the ultimate good, is a kingdom of heaven within. Thou art That; and though That is immortal and impassible, the killing and torturing of individual 'thous' is a matter of cosmic significance, inasmuch as it interferes with the normal and natural relationship between individual souls and the divine eternal Ground of all being. Every

violence is, over and above everything else, a sacrilegious rebellion against the divine order.

Passing now from theory to historical fact, we find that the religions, whose theology has been least preoccupied with events in time and most concerned with eternity, have been consistently the least violent and the most humane in political practice. Unlike early Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism (all of them obsessed with time), Hinduism and Buddhism have never been persecuting faiths, have preached almost no holy wars and have refrained from that proselytizing religious imperialism, which has gone hand in hand with the political and economic oppression of the coloured peoples. For four hundred years, from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth, most of the Christian nations of Europe have spent a good part of their time and energy in attacking, conquering and exploiting their non-Christian neighbours in other continents. In the course of these centuries many individual churchmen did their best to mitigate the consequences of such iniquities; but none of the major Christian churches officially condemned them. The first collective protest against the slave system, introduced by the English and the Spaniards into the New World, was made in 1688 by the Quaker Meeting of Germantown. This fact is highly significant. Of all Christian sects in the seventeenth century, the Quakers were the least obsessed with history, the least addicted to the idolatry of things in time. They believed that the inner light was in all human beings and that salvation came to those who lived in conformity with that light and was not dependent on the profession of belief in historical or pseudo-historical events, nor on the performance of certain rites, nor on the support of a particular ecclesiastical organization. Moreover, their eternity-philosophy preserved them from the materialistic apocalypticism of that progress-worship which in recent times has justified every kind of iniquity from war and revolution to sweated labour, slavery and the exploitation of savages and children - has justified them on the ground that the supreme good is in future time and that any temporal means, however intrinsically horrible, may be used to achieve that good. Because Quaker theology was a form of eternity-philosophy, Quaker political theory rejected war and persecution as means to ideal ends, denounced slavery and proclaimed racial equality. Members of other denominations had done good work for the African victims of the white man's rapacity. One thinks, for example, of St Peter Claver at Cartagena. But this heroically charitable 'slave of the slaves' never raised his voice against the institution of slavery or the criminal trade by which it was sustained; nor, so far as the extant documents reveal, did he ever, like John Woolman, attempt to persuade the slave-owners to free their human chattels. The reason, presumably, was that Claver was a Jesuit, vowed to perfect obedience and constrained by his theology to regard a certain political and ecclesiastical organization as being the mystical body of Christ. The heads of this organization had not pronounced against slavery or the slave trade. Who was he, Pedro Claver, to express a thought not officially approved by his superiors?

Another practical corollary of the great historical eternity-philosophies, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, is a morality inculcating kindness to animals. Judaism and

orthodox Christianity taught that animals might be used as things, for the realization of man's temporal ends. Even St Francis' attitude towards the brute creation was not entirely unequivocal. True, he converted a wolf and preached sermons to birds; but when Brother Juniper hacked the feet off a living pig in order to satisfy a sick man's craving for fried trotters, the saint merely blamed his disciple's intemperate zeal in damaging a valuable piece of private property. It was not until the nineteenth century, when orthodox Christianity had lost much of its power over European minds, that the idea that it might be a good thing to behave humanely towards animals began to make headway. This new morality was correlated with the new interest in Nature, which had been stimulated by the romantic poets and the men of science. Because it was not founded upon an eternity-philosophy, a doctrine of divinity dwelling in all living creatures, the modern movement in favour of kindness to animals was and is perfectly compatible with intolerance, persecution and systematic cruelty towards human beings. Young Nazis are taught to be gentle with dogs and cats, ruthless with Jews. That is because Nazism is a typical time-philosophy, which regards the ultimate good as existing, not in eternity, but in the future. Jews are, *ex hypothesi*, obstacles in the way of realization of the supreme good; dogs and cats are not. The rest follows logically.

Selfishness and partiality are very inhuman and base qualities even in the things of this world; but in the doctrines of religion they are of a baser nature. Now, this is the greatest evil that the division of the church has brought forth; it raises in every communion a selfish, partial orthodoxy, which consists in courageously defending all that it has, and condemning all that it has not. And thus every champion is trained up in defence of their own truth, their own learning and their own church, and he has the most merit, the most honour, who likes everything, defends everything, among themselves, and leaves nothing uncensored in those that are of a different communion. Now, how can truth and goodness and union and religion be more struck at than by such defenders of it? If you ask why the great Bishop of Meaux wrote so many learned books against all parts of the Reformation, it is because he was born in France and bred up in the bosom of Mother Church. Had he been born in England, had Oxford or Cambridge been his Alma Mater, he might have rivalled our great Bishop Stillingfleet, and would have wrote as many learned folios against the Church of Rome as he has done. And yet I will venture to say that if each Church could produce but one man apiece that had the piety of an apostle and the impartial love of the first Christians in the first Church at Jerusalem, that a Protestant and a Papist of this stamp would not want half a sheet of paper to hold their articles of union, nor be half an hour before they were of one religion. If, therefore, it should be said that churches are divided, estranged and made unfriendly to one another by a learning, a logic, a history, a criticism in the hands of partiality, it would be saying that which each particular church too much proves to be true. Ask why even the best amongst the Catholics are very shy of owning the validity of the orders of our Church; it is because they are afraid of removing any odium from the Reformation. Ask why no Protestants anywhere

touch upon the benefit or necessity of celibacy in those who are separated from worldly business to preach the gospel; it is because that would be seeming to lessen the Roman error of not suffering marriage in her clergy. Ask why even the most worthy and pious among the clergy of the Established Church are afraid to assert the sufficiency of the Divine Light, the necessity of seeking only the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit; it is because the Quakers, who have broke off from the church, have made this doctrine their corner-stone. If we loved truth as such, if we sought for it for its own sake, if we loved our neighbour as ourselves, if we desired nothing by our religion but to be acceptable to God, if we equally desired the salvation of all men, if we were afraid of error only because of its harmful nature to us and our fellow-creatures, then nothing of this spirit could have any place in us.

There is therefore a catholic spirit, a communion of saints in the love of God and all goodness, which no one can learn from that which is called orthodoxy in particular churches, but is only to be had by a total dying to all worldly views, by a pure love of God, and by such an unction from above as delivers the mind from all selfishness and makes it love truth and goodness with an equality of affection in every man, whether he is Christian, Jew or Gentile. He that would obtain this divine and catholic spirit in this disordered, divided state of things, and live in a divided part of the church without partaking of its division, must have these three truths deeply fixed in his mind. First, that universal love, which gives the whole strength of the heart to God, and makes us love every man as we love ourselves, is the noblest, the most divine, the Godlike state of the soul, and is the utmost perfection to which the most perfect religion can raise us; and that no religion does any man any good but so far as it brings this perfection of love into him. This truth will show us that true orthodoxy can nowhere be found but in a pure disinterested love of God and our neighbour. Second, that in this present divided state of the church, truth itself is torn and divided asunder; and that, therefore, he can be the only true catholic who has more of truth and less of error than is hedged in by any divided part. This truth will enable us to live in a divided part unhurt by its division, and keep us in a true liberty and fitness to be edified and assisted by all the good that we hear or see in any other part of the church... Thirdly, he must always have in mind this great truth, that it is the glory of the Divine Justice to have no respect of parties or persons, but to stand equally disposed to that which is right and wrong as well in the Jew as in the Gentile. He therefore that would like as God likes, and condemn as God condemns, must have neither the eyes of the Papist nor the Protestant; he must like no truth the less because Ignatius Loyola or John Bunyan were very zealous for it, nor have the less aversion to any error, because Dr Trapp or George Fox had brought it forth.

William Law

Dr Trapp was the author of a religious tract entitled 'On the Nature, Folly, Sin and Danger of Being Righteous Overmuch.' One of Law's controversial pieces was an answer to this work.

Benares is to the East, Mecca to the West; but explore your own heart, for there are both Rama and Allah.

Kabir

Like the bee gathering honey from different flowers, the wise man accepts the essence of different Scriptures and sees only the good in all religions.

From the Srimad Bhagavatam

His Sacred Majesty the King does reverence to men of all sects, whether ascetics or householders, by gifts and various forms of reverence. His Sacred Majesty, however, cares not so much for gifts of external reverence as that there should be a growth in the essence of the matter in all sects. The growth of the essence of the matter assumes various forms, but the root of it is restraint of speech, to wit, a man must not do reverence to his own sect or disparage that of another without reason. Depreciation should be for specific reasons only; for the sects of other people all deserve reverence for one reason or another... He who does deserve reverence to his own sect, while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the glory of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect. Concord therefore is meritorious, to wit, hearkening and hearkening willingly to the Law of Piety, as accepted by other people.

Edict of Asoka

It would be difficult, alas, to find any edict of a Christian king to match Asoka's. In the West the good old rule, the simple plan, was glorification of one's own sect, disparagement and even persecution of all others. Recently, however, governments have changed their policy. Proselytizing and persecuting zeal is reserved for the political pseudoreligions, such as Communism, Fascism and nationalism; and unless they are thought to stand in the way of advance towards the temporal ends professed by such pseudo-religions, the various manifestations of the Perennial Philosophy are treated with a contemptuously tolerant indifference.

The children of God are very dear but very queer, very nice but very narrow.

Sadhu Sundar Singh

Such was the conclusion to which the most celebrated of Indian converts was forced after some years of association with his fellow Christians. There are many honourable exceptions, of course; but the rule even among learned Protestants and Catholics is a certain blandly bumptious provincialism which, if it did not constitute such a grave offence against charity and truth, would be just uproariously funny. A hundred years ago, hardly anything was known of Sanskrit, Pali or Chinese. The ignorance of European scholars was sufficient reason for their provincialism. Today, when more or less adequate translations are available in plenty, there is not only no reason for it, there is no excuse. And yet most European and American authors of books about religion and metaphysics write as though nobody had ever thought about these subjects, except the Jews, the Greeks and the Christians of the Mediterranean basin and western Europe. This display of what, in the twentieth century, is an entirely voluntary and deliberate ignorance is not only absurd and discreditable; it is also socially dangerous.

Like any other form of imperialism, theological imperialism is a menace to permanent world peace. The reign of violence will never come to an end until, first, most human beings accept the same, true philosophy of life; until, second, this Perennial Philosophy is recognized as the highest factor common to all the world religions; until, third, the adherents of every religion renounce the idolatrous time-philosophies, with which, in their own particular faith, the Perennial Philosophy of eternity has been overlaid; until, fourth, there is a worldwide rejection of all the political pseudo-religions, which place man's supreme good in future time and therefore justify and commend the commission of every sort of present iniquity as a means to that end. If these conditions are not fulfilled, no amount of political planning, no economic blue-prints however ingeniously drawn, can prevent the recrudescence of war and revolution.

13. Salvation, Deliverance, Enlightenment

SALVATION - BUT from what? Deliverance - out of which particular situation into what other situation? Men have given many answers to these questions, and because human temperaments are of such profoundly different kinds, because social situations are so various and fashions of thought and feeling so compelling while they last, the answers are many and mutually incompatible.

There is first of all material salvationism. In its simplest form this is merely the will to live expressing itself in a formulated desire to escape from circumstances that menace life. In practice, the effective fulfilment of such a wish depends on two things: the application of intelligence to particular economic and political problems, and the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere of goodwill, in which intelligence can do its work to the best advantage. But men are not content to be merely kind and clever within the limits of a concrete situation. They aspire to relate their actions, and the thoughts and feelings accompanying those actions, to general principles and a philosophy on the cosmic scale. When this directing and explanatory philosophy is not the Perennial Philosophy or one of the historical theologies more or less closely connected with the Perennial Philosophy, it takes the form of a pseudo-religion, a system of organized idolatry. Thus, the simple wish not to starve, the well-founded conviction that it is very difficult to be good or wise or happy when one is desperately hungry, comes to be elaborated, under the influence of the metaphysic of Inevitable Progress, into prophetic Utopianism; the desire to escape from oppression and exploitation comes to be explained and guided by a belief in apocalyptic revolutionism, combined, not always in theory, but invariably in practice, with the Moloch-worship of the nation as the highest of all goods. In all these cases salvation is regarded as a deliverance, by means of a variety of political and economic devices, out of the miseries and evils associated with bad material conditions into another set of future material conditions so much better than the present that, somehow or other, they will cause everybody to be perfectly happy, wise and virtuous. Officially promulgated in all the totalitarian countries, whether of the right or the left, this confession of faith is still only semi-official in the nominally Christian world of capitalistic democracy, where it is drummed into the popular mind, not by the representatives of state or church, but by those most influential of popular moralists and philosophers, the writers of advertising copy (the only authors in all the history of literature whose works are read every day by every member of the population).

In the theologies of the various religions, salvation is also regarded as a deliverance out of folly, evil and misery into happiness, goodness and wisdom. But political and economic means are held to be subsidiary to the cultivation of personal holiness, to the acquiring of personal merit and to the maintenance of personal faith in some divine principle or person having power, in one way or another, to forgive and sanctify the individual soul. Moreover, the end to be achieved is not regarded as existing in some Utopian future period, beginning, say, in the twenty-second century or perhaps even a little earlier, if our favourite politicians remain in power and make the right laws; the end exists in heaven.' This last phrase has two very different meanings. For what is probably the majority of those who profess the great historical religions, it signifies and has always signified a happy posthumous condition of indefinite personal survival, conceived of as a reward for good behaviour and correct belief and a compensation for the miseries inseparable from life in a body. But for those who, within the various religious traditions, have accepted the Perennial Philosophy as a theory and have done their best to live it out in practice, 'heaven' is something else. They aspire to be delivered out of separate selfhood in time into eternity as realized in the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground. Since the Ground can and ought to be unitively known in the present life (whose ultimate end and purpose is nothing but this knowledge), 'heaven' is not an exclusively posthumous condition. He only is completely 'saved' who is delivered here and now. As to the means to salvation, these are simultaneously ethical, intellectual and spiritual and have been summed up with admirable clarity and economy in the Buddha's Eightfold Path. Complete deliverance is conditional on the following: first, Right Belief in the all too obvious truth that the cause of pain and evil is craving for separative, egocentred existence, with its corollary that there can be no deliverance from evil, whether personal or collective, except by getting rid of such craving and the obsession of 'I,' 'me,' 'mine'; second, Right Will, the will to deliver oneself and others; third, Right Speech, directed by compassion and charity towards all sentient beings; fourth, Right Action, with the aim of creating and maintaining peace and goodwill; fifth, Right Means of Livelihood, or the choice only of such professions as are not harmful, in their exercise, to any human being or, if possible, any living creature; sixth, Right Effort towards Self-control; seventh, Right Attention or Recollectedness, to be practised in all the circumstances of life, so that we may never do evil by mere thoughtlessness, because 'we know not what we do'; and, eighth, Right Contemplation, the unitive knowledge of the Ground, to which recollectedness and the ethical self-naughting prescribed in the first six branches of the Path give access. Such then are the means which it is within the power of the human being to employ in order to achieve man's final end and be 'saved'. Of the means which are employed by the divine Ground for helping human beings to reach their goal, the Buddha of the Pali scriptures (a teacher whose dislike of 'footless questions' is no less intense than that of the severest experimental physicist of the twentieth century) declines to speak. All he is prepared to talk about is 'sorrow and the ending of sorrow' - the huge brute fact of pain and evil and the other, no less empirical fact that there is a method by which the

individual can free himself from evil and do something to diminish the sum of evil in the world around him. It is only in Mahayana Buddhism that the mysteries of grace are discussed with anything like the fullness of treatment accorded to the subject in the speculations of Hindu and especially Christian theology. The primitive, Hinayana teaching on deliverance is simply an elaboration of the Buddha's last recorded words: 'Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your own salvation with diligence.' As in the well-known passage quoted below, all the stress is upon personal effort.

Therefore, Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves, be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp; hold fast to the Truth as a refuge. Look not for a refuge in anyone beside yourselves. And those, Ananda, who either now or after I am dead shall be a lamp unto themselves, shall betake themselves to no external refuge, but holding fast to the Truth as their lamp, and holding fast to the Truth as their refuge, shall not look for refuge to anyone beside themselves - it is they who shall reach the very topmost Height. But they must be anxious to learn.

What follows is a passage freely translated from the Chandogya Upanishad. The truth which this little myth is meant to illustrate is that there are as many conceptions of salvation as there are degrees of spiritual knowledge and that the kind of liberation (or enslavement) actually achieved by any individual soul depends upon the extent to which that soul chooses to dissipate its essentially voluntary ignorance.

That Self who is free from impurities, from old age and death, from grief and thirst and hunger, whose desire is true and whose desires come true - that Self is to be sought after and enquired about, that Self is to be realized.

The Devas (gods or angels) and the Asuras (demons or titans) both heard of this Truth. They thought: 'Let us seek after and realize this Self, so that we can obtain all worlds and the fulfilment of all desires.'

Thereupon Indra from the Devas and Virochana from the Asuras approached Prajapati, the famous teacher. They lived with him as pupils for thirty-two years. Then Prajapati asked them: 'For what reason have you both lived here all this time?' They replied: 'We have heard that one who realizes the Self obtains all the worlds and all his desires. We have lived here because we want to be taught the Self.'

Prajapati said to them: 'The person who is seen in the eye - that is the Self. That is immortal, that is fearless and that is Brahman.'

'Sir,' enquired the disciples, 'who is seen reflected in water or in a mirror?'

'He, the Atman,' was the reply. 'He indeed is seen in all these.' Then Prajapati added: 'Look at yourselves in the water, and whatever you do not understand, come and tell me.'

Indra and Virochana pored over their reflections in the water, and when they were asked what they had seen of the Self, they replied: 'Sir, we see the Self; we see even the hair and nails.'

Then Prajapati ordered them to put on their finest clothes and look again at their 'selves' in the water. This they did and when asked again what they had seen, they answered: 'We see the Self, exactly like ourselves, well adorned and in our finest clothes.'

Then said Prajapati: 'The Self is indeed seen in these. That Self is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.' And the pupils went away, pleased at heart.

But looking after them, Prajapati lamented thus: 'Both of them departed without analysing or discriminating, and without comprehending the true Self. Whoever follows this false doctrine of the Self must perish.'

Satisfied that he had found the Self, Virochana returned to the Asuras and began to teach them that the bodily self alone is to be worshipped, that the body alone is to be served, and that he who worships the ego and serves the body gains both worlds, this and the next. And this in effect is the doctrine of the Asuras.

But Indra, on his way back to the Devas, realized the uselessness of this knowledge. 'As this Self,' he reflected, 'seems to be well adorned when the body is well adorned, well dressed when the body is well dressed, so too will it be blind if the body is blind, lame if the body is lame, deformed if the body is deformed. Nay more, this same Self will die when the body dies. I see no good in such knowledge.' So Indra returned to Prajapati for further instruction. Prajapati compelled him to live with him for another span of thirty-two years; after which he began to instruct him, step by step, as it were.

Prajapati said: 'He who moves about in dreams, enjoying and glorified - he is the Self. That is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.'

Pleased at heart, Indra again departed. But before he had rejoined the other angelic beings, he realized the uselessness of that knowledge also. 'True it is,' he thought within himself, 'that this new Self is not blind if the body is blind, not lame, nor hurt, if the body is lame or hurt. But even in dreams the Self is conscious of many sufferings. So I see no good in this teaching.'

Accordingly he went back to Prajapati for more instruction, and Prajapati made him live with him for thirty-two years more. At the end of that time Prajapati taught him thus: 'When a person is asleep, resting in perfect tranquillity, dreaming no dreams, then he realizes the Self. That is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.'

Satisfied, Indra went away. But even before he had reached home, he felt the uselessness of this knowledge also. 'When one is asleep,' he thought, 'one does not know oneself as "This is I."

One is not in fact conscious of any existence. That state is almost annihilation. I see no good in this knowledge either.'

So Indra went back once again to be taught. Prajapati made him stay with him for five years more. At the end of that time Prajapati taught him the highest truth of the Self.

'This body,' he said, 'is mortal, forever in the clutch of death. But within it resides the Self, immortal, and without form. This Self, when associated in consciousness with the body, is subject to pleasure and pain; and so long as this association continues, no man can find freedom from pains and pleasures. But when the association comes to an end, there is an end also of pain and pleasure. Rising above physical consciousness, knowing the Self as distinct from the sense-organs and the mind, knowing Him in his true light, one rejoices and one is free.'

From the Chandogya Upanishad

Having realized his own self as the Self, a man becomes selfless; and in virtue of selflessness he is to be conceived as unconditioned. This is the highest mystery, betokening emancipation; through selflessness he has no part in pleasure or pain, but attains absoluteness.

Maitrayana Upanishad

We should mark and know of a very truth that all manner of virtue and goodness, and even that Eternal Good, which is God Himself, can never make a man virtuous, good or happy so long as it is outside the soul, that is, so long as the man is holding converse with outward things through his senses and reason, and does not withdraw into himself and learn to understand his own life, who and what he is.

Theologia Germanica

Indeed, the saving truth has never been preached by the Buddha, seeing that one has to realize it within oneself.

Sutralamkara

In what does salvation consist? Not in any historical faith or knowledge of anything absent or distant, not in any variety of restraints, rules and methods of practising virtue, not in any formality of opinion about faith and works, repentance, forgiveness of sins, or justification and sanctification, not in any truth or righteousness that you can have from yourself, from the best of men and books, but solely and wholly from the life of God, or Christ of God, quickened and born again in you, in other words in the restoration and perfect union of the first twofold life in humanity.

William Law

Law is using here the phraseology of Boehme and those other 'Spiritual Reformers,' whom the orthodox Protestants, Lutheran, Calvinistic and Anglican, agreed (it was one of the very few points they were able to agree on) either to ignore or to persecute. But it is clear that what he and they call the new birth of God within the soul is essentially the same fact of experience as that which the Hindus, two thousand and more years before, described as the realization of the Self as within and yet transcendentally other than the individual ego.

Not by the slothful, nor the fool, the undiscerning, is that Nirvana to be reached, which is the untying of all knots.

Iti-vuttaka

This seems sufficiently self-evident. But most of us take pleasure in being lazy, cannot be bothered to be constantly recollected and yet passionately desire to be saved from the results of sloth and unawareness. Consequently there has been a widespread wish for and belief in Saviours who will step into our lives, above all at the hour of their termination, and, like Alexander, cut the Gordian knots which we have been too lazy to untie. But God is not mocked. The nature of things is such that the unitive knowledge of the Ground which is contingent upon the achievement of a total selflessness cannot possibly be realized, even with outside help, by those who are not yet selfless. The salvation obtained by belief in the saving power of Amida, say, or Jesus is not the total

deliverance described in the Upanishads, the Buddhist scriptures and the writings of the Christian mystics. It is something different, not merely in degree, but in kind.

Talk as much philosophy as you please, worship as many gods as you like, observe all ceremonies, sing devoted praises to any number of divine beings - liberation never comes, even at the end of a hundred aeons, without the realization of the Oneness of Self.

Shankara

This Self is not realizable by study nor even by intelligence and learning. The Self reveals its essence only to him who applies himself to the Self. He who has not given up the ways of vice, who cannot control himself, who is not at peace within, whose mind is distracted, can never realize the Self, though full of all the learning in the world.

Katha Upanishad

Nirvana is where there is no birth, no extinction; it is seeing into the state of Suchness, absolutely transcending all the categories constructed by mind; for it is the Tathagata's inner consciousness.

Lankavatara Sutra

The false or at best imperfect salvations described in the Chandogya Upanishad are of three kinds. There is first the pseudo-salvation associated with the belief that matter is the ultimate Reality. Virochana, the demonic being who is the apotheosis of power-loving, extraverted somatonia, finds it perfectly natural to identify himself with his body, and he goes back to the other Titans to seek a purely material salvation. Incarnated in the present century, Virochana would have been an ardent Communist, Fascist or nationalist. Indra sees through material salvationism and is then offered dream-salvation, deliverance out of bodily existence into the intermediate world between matter and spirit — that fascinatingly odd and exciting psychic universe, out of which miracles and foreknowledge, 'spirit communications' and extra-sensory perceptions make their startling irruptions into ordinary life. But this freer kind of individualized existence is still all too personal and egocentric to satisfy a soul conscious of its own incompleteness and eager to be made whole. Indra accordingly goes further and is tempted to accept the undifferentiated consciousness of deep sleep, of false samadhi and quietistic trance, as the final deliverance. But he refuses, in Brahmananda's words, to mistake *tamas* for *sattvas*, sloth and sub-consciousness for poise and super-consciousness. And so, by discrimination, he comes to the realization of the Self, which is the enlightenment of the darkness that is ignorance and the deliverance from the mortal consequences of that ignorance.

The illusory salvations, against which we were warned in the other extracts, are of a different kind. The emphasis here is upon idolatry and superstition - above all the idolatrous worship of the analytical reason and its notions, and the superstitious belief in rites, dogmas and confessions of faith as being somehow magically efficacious in themselves. Many Christians, as Law implies, have been guilty of these idolatries and superstitions. For them, complete deliverance into union with the divine Ground is impossible, either in this world or posthumously. The best they can hope for is a

meritorious but still egocentric life in the body and some sort of happy posthumous 'longevity,' as the Chinese call it, some form of survival, paradisaal perhaps, but still involved in time, separateness and multiplicity.

The beatitude into which the enlightened soul is delivered is something quite different from pleasure. What, then, is its nature? The quotations which follow provide at least a partial answer. Blessedness depends on nonattachment and selflessness, therefore can be enjoyed without satiety and without revulsion; is a participation in eternity, and therefore remains itself without diminution or fluctuation.

Henceforth in the real Brahman, he (the liberated spirit) becomes perfected and another. His fruit is the untying of bonds. Without desires, he attains to bliss eternal and immeasurable, and therein abides.

Maitrayana Upanishad

God is to be enjoyed, creatures only used as means to That which is to be enjoyed.

St Augustine

There is this difference between spiritual and corporal pleasures, that corporal ones beget a desire before we have obtained them and, after we have obtained them, a disgust; but spiritual pleasures, on the contrary, are not cared for when we have them not, but are desired when we have them.

St Gregory the Great

When a man is in one of these two states (beatitude or dark night of the soul) all is right with him, and he is as safe in hell as in heaven. And so long as a man is on earth, it is possible for him to pass often-times from one to the other — nay, even within the space of a day and night, and all without his own doing. But when a man is in neither of these two states, he holds converse with the creatures, and wavereth hither and thither and knoweth not what manner of man he is.

Theologia Germanica

Much of the literature of Sufism is poetical. Sometimes this poetry is rather strained and extravagant, sometimes beautiful with a luminous simplicity, sometimes darkly and almost disquietingly enigmatic. To this last class belong the utterances of that Moslem saint of the tenth century, Niffari the Egyptian. This is what he wrote on the subject of salvation.

God made me behold the sea, and I saw the ships sinking and the planks floating; then the planks too were submerged. And God said to me, 'Those who voyage are not saved.' And He said to me, 'Those who, instead of voyaging, cast themselves into the sea, take a risk.' And He said to me, 'Those who voyage and take no risk shall perish.' And He said to me, 'The surface of the sea is a gleam that cannot be reached. And the bottom is a darkness impenetrable. And between the two are great fishes, which are to be feared.'

The allegory is fairly clear. The ships that bear the individual voyagers across the sea of life are sects and churches, collections of dogmas and religious organizations. The planks which also sink at last are all good works falling short of total self-surrender and all faith less absolute than the unitive knowledge of God. Liberation into eternity is the

result of 'throwing oneself into the sea'; in the language of the Gospels, one must lose one's life in order to save it. But throwing oneself into the sea is a risky business - not so risky, of course, as travelling in a vast Queen Mary, fitted up with the very latest in dogmatic conveniences and liturgical decorations, and bound either for Davy Jones's locker or at best, the wrong port, but still quite dangerous enough. For the surface of the sea - the divine Ground as it is manifested in the world of time and multiplicity - gleams with a reflected radiance that can no more be seized than the image of beauty in a mirror; while the bottom, the Ground as it is eternally in itself, seems merely darkness to the analytic mind, as it peers down into the depths; and when the analytic mind decides to join the will in the final necessary plunge into self-naughting it must run the gauntlet, as it sinks down, of those devouring pseudo-salvations described in the Chandogya Upanishad - dream-salvation into that fascinating psychic world, where the ego still survives, but with a happier and more untrammelled kind of life, or else the sleep-salvation of false samadhi, of unity in sub-consciousness instead of unity in super-consciousness.

Niffari's estimate of any individual's chances of achieving man's final end does not err on the side of excessive optimism. But then no saint or founder of a religion, no exponent of the Perennial Philosophy, has ever been optimistic. 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' Those who do not choose to be chosen cannot hope for anything better than some form of partial salvation under conditions that will permit them to advance towards complete deliverance.

14. Immortality and Survival

IMMORTALITY IS PARTICIPATION in the eternal now of the divine Ground; survival is persistence in one of the forms of time. Immortality is the result of total deliverance. Survival is the lot of those who are partially delivered into some heaven, or who are not delivered at all, but find themselves, by the law of their own untranscended nature, compelled to choose some purgatorial or embodied servitude even more painful than the one they have just left.

Goodness and virtue make men know and love, believe and delight in their immortality. When the soul is purged and enlightened by true sanctity, it is more capable of those divine irradiations, whereby it feels itself in conjunction with God. It knows that almighty Love, by which it lives, is stronger than death. It knows that God will never forsake His own life, which He has quickened in the soul. Those breathings and gaspings after an eternal participation of Him are but the energy of His own breath within us.

John Smith the Platonist

I have maintained ere this and I still maintain that I already possess all that is granted to me in eternity. For God in the fullness of his Godhead dwells eternally in his image - the soul.

Eckhart

Troubled or still, water is always water. What difference can embodiment or disembodiment make to the Liberated? Whether calm or in tempest, the sameness of the Ocean suffers no change.

Yogavasistha

To the question 'Where does the soul go, when the body dies?'

Jacob Boehme answered: 'There is no necessity for it-to go anywhere.'

The word Tathagata (one of the names of the Buddha) signifies one who does not go to anywhere and does not come from anywhere; and therefore is he called Tathagata (Thus-gone), holy and fully enlightened.

Diamond Sutra

Seeing Him alone, one transcends death; there is no other way.

Svetasvatara Upanishad God, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life...

Book of Common Prayer

I died a mineral and became a plant.

I died a plant and rose an animal.

I died an animal and I was man.

Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?

Yet once more I shall die as man, to soar
With the blessed angels; but even from angelhood
I must pass on. All except God perishes.
When I have sacrificed my angel soul,
I shall become that which no mind ever conceived.
O, let me not exist! for Non-Existence proclaims,
'To Him we shall return.'

Jalal-uddin Rumi

There is a general agreement, East and West, that life in a body provides uniquely good opportunities for achieving salvation or deliverance. Catholic and Mahayana Buddhist doctrine is alike in insisting that the soul in its disembodied state after death cannot acquire merit, but merely suffers in purgatory the consequences of its past acts. But whereas Catholic orthodoxy declares that there is no possibility of progress in the next world, and that the degree of the soul's beatitude is determined solely by what it has done and thought in its earthly life, the eschatologists of the Orient affirm that there are certain posthumous conditions in which meritorious souls are capable of advancing from a heaven of happy personal survival to genuine immortality in union with the timeless, eternal Godhead. And, of course, there is also the possibility (indeed, for most individuals, the necessity) of returning to some form of embodied life, in which the advance towards complete beatification, or deliverance through enlightenment, can be continued. Meanwhile, the fact that one has been born in a human body is one of the things for which, says Shankara, one should daily give thanks to God.

The spiritual creature which we are has need of a body, without which it could nowise attain that knowledge which it obtains as the only approach to those things, by knowledge of which it is made blessed.

St Bernard

Having achieved human birth, a rare and blessed incarnation, the wise man, leaving all vanity to those who are vain, should strive to know God, and Him only, before life passes into death.

Srimad Bhagavatam Good men spiritualize their bodies; bad men incarnate their souls.

Benjamin Whichcote

More precisely, good men spiritualize their mind-bodies; bad men incarnate and mentalize their spirits. The completely spiritualized mind-body is a Tathagata, who doesn't go anywhere when he dies, for the good reason that he is already, actually and consciously, where everyone has always potentially been without knowing. The person who has not, in this life, gone into Thusness, into the eternal principle of all states of being, goes at death into some particular state, either purgatorial or paradisal. In the Hindu scriptures and their commentaries several different kinds of posthumous salvation are distinguished. The 'thus-gone' soul is completely delivered into complete union with the divine Ground; but it is also possible to achieve other kinds of mukti, or liberation, even while retaining a form of purified I-consciousness. The nature of

any individual's deliverance after death depends upon three factors: the degree of holiness achieved by him while in the body, the particular aspect of the divine Reality to which he gave his primary allegiance, and the particular path he chose to follow. Similarly, in the Divine Comedy, Paradise has its various circles; but whereas in the oriental eschatologies the saved soul can go out of even sublimated individuality, out of survival even in some kind of celestial time, to a complete deliverance into the eternal, Dante's souls remain for ever where (after passing through the unmeritorious sufferings of purgatory) they find themselves as the result of their single incarnation in a body. Orthodox Christian doctrine does not admit the possibility, either in the posthumous state or in some other embodiment, of any further growth towards the ultimate perfection of a total union with the Godhead. But in the Hindu and Buddhist versions of the Perennial Philosophy the divine mercy is matched by the divine patience: both are infinite. For oriental theologians there is no eternal damnation; there are only purgatories and then an indefinite series of second chances to go forward towards not only man's, but the whole creation's final end — total reunion with the Ground of all being.

Preoccupation with posthumous deliverance is not one of the means to such deliverance, and may easily, indeed, become an obstacle in the way of advance towards it. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that ardent spiritualists are more likely to be saved than those who have never attended a séance or familiarized themselves with the literature, speculative or evidential. My intention here is not to add to that literature, but rather to give the baldest summary of what has been written about the subject of survival within the various religious traditions.

In oriental discussions of the subject, that which survives death is not the personality. Buddhism accepts the doctrine of reincarnation; but it is not a soul that passes on (Buddhism denies the existence of a soul); it is the character. What we choose to make our mental and physical constitution in the course of our life on earth affects the psychic medium within which individual minds lead a part at least of their amphibious existence, and this modification of the medium results, after the body's death, in the initiation of a new existence either in a heaven, or a purgatory, or another body.

In the Vedanta cosmology there is, over and above the Atman or spiritual Self, identical with the divine Ground, something in the nature of a soul that reincarnates in a gross or subtle body, or manifests itself in some incorporeal state. This soul is not the personality of the defunct, but rather the particularized I-consciousness out of which a personality arises.

Either one of these conceptions of survival is logically self-consistent and can be made to 'save the appearances' - in other words, to fit the odd and obscure facts of psychical research. The only personalities with which we have any direct acquaintance are incarnate beings, compounds of a body and some unknown *x*. But if *x* plus a body equals a personality, then, obviously, it is impossible for *x* minus a body to equal the same thing. The apparently personal entities which psychical research sometimes

seems to discover can only be regarded as temporary pseudopersonalities compounded of x and the medium's body.

These two conceptions are not mutually exclusive, and survival may be the joint product of a persistent consciousness and a modification of the psychic medium. If this is so, it is possible for a given human being to survive in more than one posthumous form. His 'soul' - the nonpersonal ground and principle of past and future personalities - may go marching on in one mode of being, while the traces left by his thoughts and volitions in the psychic medium may become the origin of new individualized existences, having quite other modes of being.

15. Silence

THE FATHER UTTERED one Word; that Word is His Son, and He utters Him for ever in everlasting silence; and in silence the soul has to hear it.

St John of the Cross

The spiritual life is nothing else but the working of the Spirit of God within us, and therefore our own silence must be a great part of our preparation for it, and much speaking or delight in it will be often no small hindrance of that good which we can only have from hearing what the Spirit and voice of God speaketh within us... Rhetoric and fine language about the things of the spirit is a vainer babble than in other matters; and he that thinks to grow in true goodness by hearing or speaking flaming words or striking expressions, as is now much the way of the world, may have a great deal of talk, but will have little of his conversation in heaven.

William Law

He who knows does not speak;

He who speaks does not know.

Lao Tzu

Unrestrained and indiscriminate talk is morally evil and spiritually dangerous. 'But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' This may seem a very hard saying. And yet if we pass in review the words we have given vent to in the course of the average day, we shall find that the greater number of them may be classified under three main heads: words inspired by malice and uncharitableness towards our neighbours; words inspired by greed, sensuality and self-love; words inspired by pure imbecility and uttered without rhyme or reason, but merely for the sake of making a distracting noise. These are idle words; and we shall find, if we look into the matter, that they tend to outnumber the words that are dictated by reason, charity or necessity. And if the unspoken words of our mind's endless, idiot monologue are counted, the majority for idleness becomes, for most of us, overwhelmingly large.

All these idle words, the silly no less than the self-regarding and the uncharitable, are impediments in the way of the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground, a dance of dust and flies obscuring the inward and the outward Light. The guard of the tongue (which is also, of course, a guard of the mind) is not only one of the most difficult and searching of all mortifications; it is also the most fruitful.

When the hen has laid, she must needs cackle. And what does she get by it? Straightway comes the chough and robs her of her eggs, and devours all that of which she should have brought forth her live birds. And just so that wicked chough, the devil, beareth

away from the cackling anchoresses, and swalloweth up all the goods they have brought forth, and which ought, as birds, to bear them up towards heaven, if it had not been cackled.

Modernized from the Ancren Riwele You cannot practise too rigid a fast from the charms of worldly talk.

Fénelon

What need of so much news from abroad, when all that concerns either life or death is all transacting and at work within us?

William Law

My dear Mother, heed well the precepts of the saints, who have all warned those who would become holy to speak little of themselves and their own affairs.

St François de Sales (in a letter to St Jeanne de Chantai)

A dog is not considered a good dog because he is a good barker.

A man is not considered a good man because he is a good talker.

Chuang Tzu

The dog barks; the Caravan passes.

Arabic Proverb

It was not from want of will that I have refrained from writing to you, for truly do I wish you all good; but because it seemed to me that enough has been said already to effect all that is needful, and that what is wanting (if indeed anything be wanting) is not writing or speaking - whereof ordinarily there is more than enough - but silence and work. For whereas speaking distracts, silence and work collect thoughts and strengthen the spirit. As soon therefore as a person understands what has been said to him for his good, there is no further need to hear or to discuss; but to set himself in earnest to practise what he has learnt with silence and attention, in humility, charity and contempt of self.

St John of the Cross

Molinos (and doubtless he was not the first to use this classification) distinguished three degrees of silence - silence of the mouth, silence of the mind and silence of the will. To refrain from idle talk is hard; to quiet the gibbering of memory and imagination is much harder; hardest of all is to still the voices of craving and aversion within the will.

The twentieth century is, among other things, the Age of Noise. Physical noise, mental noise and noise of desire - we hold history's record for all of them. And no wonder; for all the resources of our almost miraculous technology have been thrown into the current assault against silence. That most popular and influential of all recent inventions, the radio, is nothing but a conduit through which prefabricated din can flow into our homes. And this din goes far deeper, of course, than the ear-drums. It penetrates the mind, filling it with a babel of distractions - news items, mutually irrelevant bits of information, blasts of corybantic or sentimental music, continually repeated doses of drama that bring no catharsis, but merely create a craving for daily or even hourly emotional enemas. And where, as in most countries, the broadcasting stations support themselves by selling time to advertisers, the noise is carried from

the ears, through the realms of phantasy, knowledge and feeling to the ego's central core of wish and desire. Spoken or printed, broadcast over the ether or on wood-pulp, all advertising copy has but one purpose - to prevent the will from ever achieving silence. Desirelessness is the condition of deliverance and illumination. The condition of an expanding and technologically progressive system of mass-production is universal craving. Advertising is the organized effort to extend and intensify craving - to extend and intensify, that is to say, the workings of that force, which (as all the saints and teachers of all the higher religions have always taught) is the principal cause of suffering and wrong-doing and the greatest obstacle between the human soul and its divine Ground.

16. Prayer

THE WORD 'PRAYER' is applied to at least four distinct procedures - petition, intercession, adoration, contemplation. Petition is the asking of something for ourselves. Intercession is the asking of something for other people. Adoration is the use of intellect, feeling, will and imagination in making acts of devotion directed towards God in his personal aspect or as incarnated in human form. Contemplation is that condition of alert passivity in which the soul lays itself open to the divine Ground within and without, the immanent and transcendent Godhead.

Psychologically, it is all but impossible for a human being to practise contemplation without preparing for it by some kind of adoration and without feeling the need to revert at more or less frequent intervals to intercession and some form at least of petition. On the other hand, it is both possible and easy to practise petition apart not only from contemplation, but also from adoration and, in rare cases of extreme and unmitigated egotism, even from intercession. Petitionary and intercessory prayer may be used - and used, what is more, with what would ordinarily be regarded as success - without any but the most perfunctory and superficial reference to God in any of his aspects. To acquire the knack of getting his petitions answered, a man does not have to know or love God, or even to know or love the image of God in his own mind. All that he requires is a burning sense of the importance of his own ego and its desires, coupled with a firm conviction that there exists, out there in the universe, something not himself which can be wheedled or dragooned into satisfying those desires. If I repeat 'My will be done,' with the necessary degree of faith and persistency, the chances are that, sooner or later and somehow or other, I shall get what I want. Whether my will coincides with the will of God, and whether in getting what I want I shall get what is spiritually, morally or even materially good for me, are questions which I cannot answer in advance. Only time and eternity will show. Meanwhile we shall be well advised to heed the warnings of folk-lore. Those anonymous realists who wrote the world's fairy stories knew a great deal about wishes and their fulfilment. They knew, first of all, that in certain circumstances petitions actually get themselves answered; but they also knew that God is not the only answerer and that if one asks for something in the wrong spirit, it may in effect be given - but given with a vengeance and not by a divine Giver. Getting what one wants by means of self-regarding petition is a form of hubris, which invites its condign and appropriate nemesis. Thus, the folk-lore of the North American Indian is full of stories about people who fast and pray egotistically, in order to get more than a reasonable man ought to have, and who, receiving what they ask for, thereby bring about their own downfall. From the other side of the world come

all the tales of the men and women who make use of some kind of magic to get their petitions answered - always with farcical or catastrophic consequence. Hardly ever do the Three Wishes of our traditional fairy lore lead to anything but a bad end for the successful wisher.

Picture God as saying to you, 'My son, why is it that day by day you rise and pray, and genuflect, and even strike the ground with your forehead, nay, sometimes even shed tears, while you say to Me: "My Father, my God, give me wealth!" If I were to give it to you, you would think yourself of some importance, you would fancy you had gained something very great. Because you asked for it, you have it. But take care to make good use of it. Before you had it you were humble; now that you have begun to be rich you despise the poor. What kind of a good is that which only makes you worse? For worse you are, since you were bad already. And that it would make you worse you knew not; hence you asked it of Me. I gave it you and I proved you; you have found - and you are found out! Ask of Me better things than these, greater things than these. Ask of Me spiritual things. Ask of Me Myself.'

St Augustine

O Lord, I, a beggar, ask of Thee more than a thousand kings may ask of Thee. Each one has something he needs to ask of Thee; I have come to ask Thee to give me Thyself.

Ansari of Herat

In the words of Aquinas, it is legitimate for us to pray for anything which it is legitimate for us to desire. There are some things that nobody has the right to desire — such as the fruits of crime or wrong-doing. Other things may be legitimately desired by people on one level of spiritual development, but should not be desired (and indeed cease to be desired) by those on another, higher level. Thus, St François de Sales had reached a point where he could say, 'I have hardly any desires, but if I were to be born again I should have none at all. We should ask nothing and refuse nothing, but leave ourselves in the arms of divine Providence without wasting time in any desire, except to will what God wills of us.' But meanwhile the third clause of the Lord's Prayer is repeated daily by millions, who have not the slightest intention of letting any will be done, except their own.

The savour of wandering in the ocean of deathless life has rid me of all my asking; As the tree is in the seed, so all diseases are in this asking.

Kabir

Lord, I know not what to ask of thee. Thou only knowest what I need. Thou lovest me better than I know how to love myself. Father, give to thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask. Smite or heal, depress me or raise me up: I adore all thy purposes without knowing them. I am silent; I offer myself up in a sacrifice; I yield myself to Thee; I would have no other desire than to accomplish thy will. Teach me to pray. Pray Thyself in me.

Fénelon

(A dervish was tempted by the devil to cease calling upon Allah, on the ground that Allah never answered, 'Here am I.' The Prophet Khadir appeared to him in a vision with a message from God.)

Was it not I who summoned thee to my service?

Was it not I who made thee busy with my name?

Thy calling 'Allah!' was my 'Here am I.'

Jalal-uddin Rumi

I pray God the Omnipotent to place us in the ranks of his chosen, among the number of those whom He directs to the path of safety; in whom He inspires fervour lest they forget Him; whom He cleanses from all defilement, that nothing may remain in them except Himself; yea, of those whom He indwells completely, that they may adore none beside Him.

Al-Ghazzali

About intercession, as about so many other subjects, it is William Law who writes most clearly, simply and to the point.

By considering yourself as an advocate with God for your neighbours and acquaintances, you would never find it hard to be at peace with them yourself. It would be easy for you to bear with and forgive those, for whom you particularly implored the divine mercy and forgiveness.

William Law

Intercession is the best arbitrator of all differences, the best promoter of true friendship, the best cure and preservative against all unkind tempers, all angry and haughty passions.

William Law

You cannot possibly have any ill-temper, or show any unkind behaviour to a man for whose welfare you are so much concerned, as to be his advocate with God in private. For you cannot possibly despise and ridicule that man whom your private prayers recommend to the love and favour of God.

William Law

Intercession, then, is at once the means to, and the expression of, the love of one's neighbour. And in the same way adoration is the means to, and the expression of, the love of God - a love that finds its consummation in the unitive knowledge of the Godhead which is the fruit of contemplation. It is to these higher forms of communion with God that the authors of the following extracts refer whenever they use the word 'prayer.'

The aim and end of prayer is to revere, to recognize and to adore the sovereign majesty of God, through what He is in Himself rather than what He is in regard to us, and rather to love his goodness by the love of that goodness itself than for what it sends us.

Bourgoing

In prayer he (Charles de Condren) did not stop at the frontiers of his knowledge and his reasoning. He adored God and his mysteries as they are in themselves and not as he understood them.

Amelote

‘What God is in Himself,’

‘God and his mysteries as they are in themselves’ — the phrases have a Kantian ring. But if Kant was right and the Thing in itself is unknowable, Bourgoing, De Condren and all the other masters of the spiritual life were engaged in a wild-goose chase. But Kant was right only as regards minds that have not yet come to enlightenment and deliverance. To such minds Reality, whether material, psychic or spiritual, presents itself as it is darkened, tinged and refracted by the medium of their own individual natures. But in those who are pure in heart and poor in spirit there is no distortion of Reality, because there is no separate selfhood to obscure or refract, no painted lantern slide of intellectual beliefs and hallowed imagery to give a personal and historical colouring to the ‘white radiance of Eternity.’ For such minds, as Olier says, ‘even ideas of the saints, of the Blessed Virgin, and the sight of Jesus Christ in his humanity are impediments in the way of the sight of God in his purity.’ The Thing in itself can be perceived - but only by one who, in himself, is no-thing.

By prayer I do not understand petition or supplication which, according to the doctrines of the schools, is exercised principally by the understanding, being a signification of what the person desires to receive from God. But prayer here specially meant is an offering and giving to God whatsoever He may justly require from us.

Now prayer, in its general notion, may be defined to be an elevation of the mind to God, or more largely and expressly thus: prayer is an actuation of an intellective soul towards God, expressing, or at least implying, an entire dependence on Him as the author and fountain of all good, a will and readiness to give Him his due, which is no less than all love, all obedience, adoration, glory and worship, by humbling and annihilating the self and all creatures in his presence; and lastly, a desire and intention to aspire to an union of spirit with Him.

Hence it appears that prayer is the most perfect and most divine action that a rational soul is capable of. It is of all actions and duties the most indispensably necessary.

Augustine Baker

Lord, teach me to seek Thee and reveal Thyself to me when I seek Thee. For I cannot seek Thee except Thou teach me, nor find Thee except Thou reveal Thyself. Let me seek Thee in longing, let me long for Thee in seeking: let me find Thee in love and love Thee in finding. Lord, I acknowledge and I thank Thee that Thou hast created me in this Thine image, in order that I may be mindful of Thee, may conceive of Thee and love Thee: but that image has been so consumed and wasted away by vices and obscured by the smoke of wrong-doing that it cannot achieve that for which it was made, except Thou renew it and create it anew. Is the eye of the soul darkened by its infirmity, or dazzled by Thy glory? Surely, it is both darkened in itself and dazzled by Thee. Lord, this is the unapproachable light in which Thou dwellest. Truly I see it not,

because it is too bright for me; and yet whatever I see, I see through it, as the weak eye sees what it sees through the light of the sun, which in the sun itself it cannot look upon. Oh supreme and unapproachable light, oh holy and blessed truth, how far art Thou from me who am so near to Thee, how far art Thou removed from my vision, though I am so near to Thine! Everywhere Thou art wholly present, and I see Thee not. In Thee I move and in Thee I have my being, and cannot come to Thee, Thou art within me and about me, and I feel Thee not.

St Anselm

Oh Lord, put no trust in me; for I shall surely fail if Thou uphold me not.

St Philip Neri

To pretend to devotion without great humility and renunciation of all worldly tempers is to pretend to impossibilities. He that would be devout must first be humble, have a full sense of his own miseries and wants and the vanity of the world, and then his soul will be full of desire after God. A proud, or vain, or worldly-minded man may use a manual of prayers, but he cannot be devout, because devotion is the application of an humble heart to God as its only happiness.

William Law

The spirit, in order to work, must have all sensible images, both good and bad, removed. The beginner in a spiritual course commences with the use of good sensible images, and it is impossible to begin in a good spiritual course with the exercises of the spirit... Those souls who have not a propensity to the interior must abide always in the exercises, in which sensible images are used, and these souls will find the sensible exercises very profitable to themselves and to others, and pleasing to God. And this is the way of the active life. But others, who have the propensity to the interior, do not always remain in the exercises of the senses, but after a time these will give place to the exercises of the spirit, which are independent of the senses and the imagination and consist simply in the elevation of the will of the intellective soul to God... The soul elevates her will towards God, apprehended by the understanding as a spirit, and not as an imaginary thing, the human spirit in this way aspiring to a union with the Divine Spirit.

Augustine Baker

You tell me you do nothing in prayer. But what do you want to do in prayer except what you are doing, which is, presenting and representing your nothingness and misery to God? When beggars expose their ulcers and their necessities to our sight, that is the best appeal they can make. But from what you tell me, you sometimes do nothing of this, but lie there like a shadow or a statue. They put statues in palaces simply to please the prince's eyes. Be content to be that in the presence of God: He will bring the statue to life when He pleases.

St François de Sales

I have come to see that I do not limit my mind enough simply to prayer, that I always want to do something myself in it, wherein I do very wrong... I wish most definitely to cut off and separate my mind from all that, and to hold it with all my

strength, as much as I can, to the sole regard and simple unity. By allowing the fear of being ineffectual to enter into the state of prayer, and by wishing to accomplish something myself, I spoilt it all.

St Jeanne Chantal

So long as you seek Buddhahood, specifically exercising yourself for it, there is no attainment for you.

Yung-chia Ta-shih 'How does a man set himself in harmony with the Tao?'

Shih-t'ou 'I am already out of harmony.'

How shall I grasp it? Do not grasp it. That which remains when there is no more grasping is the Self.

Panchadasi

I order you to remain simply either in God or close to God, without trying to do anything there, and without asking anything of Him, unless He urges it.

St François de Sales

Adoration is an activity of the loving, but still separate, individuality. Contemplation is the state of union with the divine Ground of all being. The highest prayer is the most passive. Inevitably; for the less there is of self, the more there is of God. That is why the path to passive or infused contemplation is so hard and, for many, so painful — a passage through successive or simultaneous Dark Nights, in which the pilgrim must die to the life of sense as an end in itself, to the life of private and even of traditionally hallowed thinking and believing, and finally to the deep source of all ignorance and evil, the life of the separate, individualized will.

17. Suffering

THE GODHEAD IS impassible; for where there is perfection and unity, there can be no suffering. The capacity to suffer arises where there is imperfection, disunity and separation from an embracing totality; and the capacity is actualized to the extent that imperfection, disunity and separateness are accompanied by an urge towards the intensification of these creaturely conditions. For the individual who achieves unity within his own organism and union with the divine Ground, there is an end of suffering. The goal of creation is the return of all sentient beings out of separateness and that infatuating urge-to-separateness which results in suffering, through unitive knowledge, into the wholeness of eternal Reality.

The elements which make up man produce a capacity for pain.

The cause of pain is the craving for individual life.

Deliverance from craving does away with pain.

The way of deliverance is the Eightfold Path.

The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism

The urge-to-separateness, or craving for independent and individualized existence, can manifest itself on all the levels of life, from the merely cellular and physiological, through the instinctive, to the fully conscious. It can be the craving of a whole organism for the intensification of its separateness from the environment and the divine Ground. Or it can be the urge of a part within an organism for an intensification of its own partial life as distinct from (and consequently at the expense of) the life of the organism as a whole. In the first case we speak of impulse, passion, desire, self-will, sin; in the second, we describe what is happening as illness, injury, functional or organic disorder. In both cases the craving for separateness results in suffering, not only for the craver, but also for the craver's sentient environment - other organisms in the external world, or other organs within the same organism. In one way suffering is entirely private; in another, fatally contagious. No living creature is able to experience the suffering of another creature. But the craving for separateness which, sooner or later, directly or indirectly, results in some form of private and unshareable suffering for the craver, also results, sooner or later, directly or indirectly, in suffering (equally private and unshareable) for others. Suffering and moral evil have the same source — a craving for the intensification of the separateness which is the primary datum of all creatureliness.

It will be as well to illustrate these generalizations by a few examples. Let us consider first the suffering inflicted by living organisms on themselves and on other living organisms in the mere process of keeping alive. The cause of such suffering is the craving for individual existence, expressing itself specifically in the form of hunger. Hunger

is entirely natural - a part of every creature's dharma. The suffering it causes alike to the hungry and to those who satisfy their hunger is inseparable from the existence of sentient creatures. The existence of sentient creatures has a goal and purpose which is ultimately the supreme good of every one of them. But meanwhile the suffering of creatures remains a fact and is a necessary part of creatureliness. In so far as this is the case, creation is the beginning of the Fall. The consummation of the Fall takes place when creatures seek to intensify their separateness beyond the limits prescribed by the law of their being. On the biological level the Fall would seem to have been consummated very frequently during the course of evolutionary history. Every species, except the human, chose immediate, short-range success by means of specialization. But specialization always leads into blind alleys. It is only by remaining precariously generalized that an organism can advance towards that rational intelligence which is its compensation for not having a body and instincts perfectly adapted to one particular kind of life in one particular kind of environment. Rational intelligence makes possible unparalleled worldly success on the one hand and, on the other, a further advance towards spirituality and a return, through unitive knowledge, to the divine Ground.

Because the human species refrained from consummating the Fall on the biological level, human individuals now possess the momentous power of choosing either selflessness and union with God, or the intensification of separate selfhood in ways and to a degree, which are entirely beyond the ken of the lower animals. Their capacity for good is infinite, since they can, if they so desire, make room within themselves for divine Reality. But at the same time their capacity for evil is, not indeed infinite (since evil is always ultimately self-destructive and therefore temporary), but uniquely great. Hell is total separation from God, and the devil is the will to that separation. Being rational and free, human beings are capable of being diabolic. This is a feat which no animal can duplicate, for no animal is sufficiently clever, sufficiently purposeful, sufficiently strong-willed or sufficiently moral to be a devil. (We should note that, to be diabolic on the grand scale, one must, like Milton's Satan, exhibit in a high degree all the moral virtues, except only charity and wisdom.)

Man's capacity to crave more violently than any animal for the intensification of his separateness results not only in moral evil and the sufferings which moral evil inflicts, in one way or another, upon the victims of evil and the perpetrators of it, but also in certain characteristically human derangements of the body. Animals suffer mainly from contagious diseases, which assume epidemic proportions whenever the urge to reproduction combines with exceptionally favourable circumstances to produce overcrowding, and from diseases due to infestation by parasites. (These last are simply a special case of the sufferings that must inevitably arise when many species of creatures coexist and can only survive at one another's expense.) Civilized man has been fairly successful in protecting himself against these plagues, but in their place he has called up a formidable array of degenerative diseases hardly known among the lower animals. Most of these degenerative diseases are due to the fact that civilized human beings

do not, on any level of their being, live in harmony with Tao, or the divine Nature of Things. They love to intensify their selfhood through gluttony, therefore eat the wrong food and too much of it; they inflict upon themselves chronic anxiety over money and, because they crave excitement, chronic over-stimulation; they suffer, during their working hours, from the chronic boredom and frustration imposed by the sort of jobs that have to be done in order to satisfy the artificially stimulated demand for the fruits of fully mechanized mass-production. Among the consequences of these wrong uses of the psycho-physical organism are degenerative changes in particular organs, such as the heart, kidneys, pancreas, intestines and arteries. Asserting their partial selfhood in a kind of declaration of independence from the organism as a whole, the degenerating organs cause suffering to themselves and their physiological environment. In exactly the same way the human individual asserts his own partial selfhood and his separateness from his neighbours, from Nature and from God - with disastrous consequences to himself, his family, his friends and society in general. And, reciprocally, a disordered society, professional group or family, living by a false philosophy, influences its members to assert their individual selfhood and separateness, just as the wrongliving and wrong-thinking individual influences his own organs to assert, by some excess or defect of function, their partial selfhood at the expense of the total organism.

The effects of suffering may be morally and spiritually bad, neutral or good, according to the way in which the suffering is endured and reacted to. In other words, it may stimulate in the sufferer a conscious or unconscious craving for the intensification of his separateness; or it may leave the craving such as it was before the suffering; or, finally, it may mitigate it and so become a means for advance towards self-abandonment and the love and knowledge of God. Which of these three alternatives shall be realized depends, in the last analysis, upon the sufferer's choice. This seems to be true even on the sub-human level. The higher animals, at any rate, often seem to resign themselves to pain, sickness and death with a kind of serene acceptance of what the divine Nature of Things has decreed for them. But in other cases there is panic, fear and struggle, a frenzied resistance to those decrees. To some extent, at least, the embodied animal self appears to be free, in the face of suffering, to choose self-abandonment or self-assertion. For embodied human selves, this freedom of choice is unquestionable. The choice of self-abandonment in suffering makes possible the reception of grace - grace on the spiritual level, in the form of an accession of the love and knowledge of God, and grace in the mental and physiological levels, in the form of a diminution of fear, self-concern and even of pain.

When we conceive the love of suffering, we lose the sensibility of the senses and dead, dead we will live in that garden.

St Catherine of Siena

He who suffers for love does not suffer, for all suffering is forgot.

Eckhart

In this life there is not purgatory, but only heaven or hell; for he who bears afflictions with patience has paradise, and he who does not has hell.

St Philip Neri

Many sufferings are the immediate consequence of moral evil, and these cannot have any good effects upon the sufferer, so long as the causes of his distress are not eradicated.

Each sin begetteth a special spiritual suffering. A suffering of this kind is like unto that of hell, for the more you suffer, the worse you become. This happeneth to sinners; the more they suffer through their sins, the more wicked they become; and they fall continually more and more into their sins in order to get free from their suffering.

The Following of Christ

The idea of vicarious suffering has too often been formulated in crudely juridical and commercial terms. A has committed an offence for which the law decrees a certain punishment; B voluntarily undergoes the punishment; justice and the law-giver's honour are satisfied; consequently A may go free. Or else it is a matter of debts and repayments. A owes C a sum which he cannot pay; B steps in with the cash and so prevents C from foreclosing on the mortgage. Applied to the facts of man's suffering and his relations to the divine Ground, these conceptions are neither enlightening nor edifying. The orthodox doctrine of the Atonement attributes to God characteristics that would be discreditable even to a human potentate, and its model of the universe is not the product of spiritual insight rationalized by philosophic reflection, but rather the projection of a lawyer's phantasy. But in spite of these deplorable crudities in their formulation, the idea of vicarious suffering and the other, closely related idea of the transferability of merit are based upon genuine facts of experience. The selfless and God-filled person can and does act as a channel through which grace is able to pass into the unfortunate being who has made himself impervious to the divine by the habitual craving for intensifications of his own separateness and selfhood. It is because of this that the saints are able to exercise authority, all the greater for being entirely non-compulsive, over their fellow-beings. They 'transfer merit' to those who are in need of it; but that which converts the victims of self-will and puts them on the path of liberation is not the merit of the saintly individual - a merit that consists in his having made himself capable of eternal Reality, as a pipe, by being cleaned out, is made capable of water; it is rather the divine charge he carries, the eternal Reality for which he has become the conduit. And similarly, in vicarious suffering, it is not the actual pains experienced by the saint which are redemptive - for to believe that God is angry at sin and that his anger cannot be propitiated except by the offer of a certain sum of pain is to blaspheme against the divine Nature. No, what saves is the gift from beyond the temporal order, brought to those imprisoned in selfhood by these selfless and God-filled persons, who have been ready to accept suffering, in order to help their fellows. The Bodhisattva's vow is a promise to forgo the immediate fruits of enlightenment and to accept rebirth and its inevitable concomitants, pain and death, again and again, until such time as, thanks to his labours and the graces of which, being selfless, he is the channel, all sentient beings shall have come to final and complete deliverance.

I saw a mass of matter of a dull gloomy colour between the North and the East, and was informed that this mass was human beings, in as great misery as they could be, and live; and that I was mixed up with them and henceforth I must not consider myself as a distinct or separate being.

John Woolman

Why must the righteous and the innocent endure undeserved suffering? For anyone who conceives of human individuals as Hume conceived of events and things, as 'loose and separate,' the question admits of no acceptable answer. But, in fact, human individuals are not loose and separate, and the only reason why we think they are is our own wrongly interpreted self-interest. We want to 'do what we damned well like,' to have 'a good time' and no responsibilities. Consequently, we find it convenient to be misled by the inadequacies of language and to believe (not always, of course, but just when it suits us) that things, persons and events are as completely distinct and separate one from another as the words by means of which we think about them. The truth is, of course, that we are all organically related to God, to Nature and to our fellowmen. If every human being were constantly and consciously in a proper relationship with his divine, natural and social environments there would be only so much suffering as Creation makes inevitable. But actually most human beings are chronically in an improper relation to God, Nature and some at least of their fellows. The results of these wrong relationships are manifest on the social level as wars, revolutions, exploitation and disorder; on the natural level, as waste and exhaustion of irreplaceable resources; on the biological level, as degenerative diseases and the deterioration of racial stocks; on the moral level, as an overweening bumptiousness; and on the spiritual level, as blindness to divine Reality and complete ignorance of the reason and purpose of human existence. In such circumstances it would be extraordinary if the innocent and righteous did not suffer—just as it would be extraordinary if the innocent kidneys and the righteous heart were not to suffer for the sins of a licorous palate and overloaded stomach, sins, we may add, imposed upon those organs by the will of the gluttonous individual to whom they belong, as he himself belongs to a society which other individuals, his contemporaries and predecessors, have built up into a vast and enduring incarnation of disorder, inflicting suffering upon its members and infecting them with its own ignorance and wickedness. The righteous man can escape suffering only by accepting it and passing beyond it; and he can accomplish this only by being converted from righteousness to total selflessness and God-centredness, by ceasing to be just a Pharisee, or good citizen, and becoming 'perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' The difficulties in the way of such a transfiguration are, obviously, enormous. But of those who 'speak with authority,' who has ever said that the road to complete deliverance was easy or the gate anything but 'straight and narrow'?

18. Faith

THE WORD 'FAITH' has a variety of meanings, which it is important to distinguish. In some contexts it is used as a synonym for 'trust,' as when we say that we have faith in Dr X's diagnostic skill or in lawyer Y's integrity. Analogous to this is our 'faith' in authority - the belief that what certain persons say about certain subjects is likely, because of their special qualifications, to be true. On other occasions 'faith' stands for belief in propositions which we have not had occasion to verify for ourselves, but which we know that we could verify if we had the inclination, the opportunity and the necessary capacities. In this sense of the word we have 'faith,' even though we may never have been to Australia, that there is such a creature as a duck-billed platypus; we have 'faith' in the atomic theory even though we may never have performed the experiments on which that theory rests, and be incapable of understanding the mathematics by which it is supported. And finally there is the 'faith,' which is a belief in propositions which we know we cannot verify, even if we should desire to do so - propositions such as those of the Athanasian Creed or those which constitute the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. This kind of 'faith' is defined by the Scholastics as an act of the intellect moved to assent by the will.

Faith in the first three senses of the word plays a very important part, not only in the activities of everyday life, but even in those of pure and applied science. *Credo ut intelligam* - and also, we should add, *ut agam* and *ut vivam*. Faith is a pre-condition of all systematic knowing, all purposive doing and all decent living. Societies are held together, not primarily by the fear of the many for the coercive power of the few, but by a widespread faith in the other fellow's decency. Such a faith tends to create its own object, while the widespread mutual mistrust, due, for example, to war or domestic dissension, creates the object of mistrust. Passing now from the moral to the intellectual sphere, we find faith lying at the root of all organized thinking. Science and technology could not exist unless we had faith in the reliability of the universe - unless, in Clerk Maxwell's words, we implicitly believed that the book of Nature is really a book and not a magazine, a coherent work of art and not a hodge-podge of mutually irrelevant snippets. To this general faith in the reasonableness and trustworthiness of the world the searcher after truth must add two kinds of special faith - faith in the authority of qualified experts, sufficient to permit him to take their word for statements which he personally has not verified; and faith in his own working hypotheses, sufficient to induce him to test his provisional beliefs by means of appropriate action. This action may confirm the belief which inspired it. Alternatively it may bring proof that the original working hypothesis was ill founded, in which case it will have to be modified

until it becomes conformable to the facts and so passes from the realm of faith to that of knowledge.

The fourth kind of faith is the thing which is commonly called 'religious faith.' The usage is justifiable, not because the other kinds of faith are not fundamental in religion just as they are in secular affairs, but because this willed assent to propositions which are known to be unverifiable occurs in religion, and only in religion, as a characteristic addition to faith as trust, faith in authority and faith in unverified but verifiable propositions. This is the kind of faith which, according to Christian theologians, justifies and saves. In its extreme and most uncompromising form, such a doctrine can be very dangerous. Here, for example, is a passage from one of Luther's letters. *Esto peccator, et pecca fortiter; sed fortius crede et gaude in Christo, qui victor est peccati, mortis et mundi. Peccandum est quam diu sic sumus; vita haec non est habitatio iustitiae.* ('Be a sinner and sin strongly; but yet more strongly believe and rejoice in Christ, who is the conqueror of sin, death and the world. So long as we are as we are, there must be sinning; this life is not the dwelling place of righteousness.') To the danger that faith in the doctrine of justification by faith may serve as an excuse for and even an invitation to sin must be added another danger, namely, that the faith which is supposed to save may be faith in propositions not merely unverifiable, but repugnant to reason and the moral sense, and entirely at variance with the findings of those who have fulfilled the conditions of spiritual insight into the Nature of Things. 'This is the acme of faith,' says Luther in his *De Servo Arbitrio*, 'to believe that God who saves so few and condemns so many, is merciful; that He is just who, at his own pleasure, has made us necessarily doomed to damnation, so that He seems to delight in the torture of the wretched and to be more deserving of hate than of love. If by any effort of reason I could conceive how God, who shows so much anger and harshness, could be merciful and just, there would be no need of faith.' Revelation (which, when it is genuine, is simply the record of the immediate experience of those who are pure enough in heart and poor enough in spirit to be able to see God) says nothing at all of these hideous doctrines, to which the will forces the quite naturally and rightly reluctant intellect to give assent. Such notions are the product, not of the insight of saints, but of the busy phantasy of jurists, who were so far from having transcended selfness and the prejudices of education that they had the folly and presumption to interpret the universe in terms of the Jewish and Roman law with which they happened to be familiar. 'Woe unto you lawyers,' said Christ. The denunciation was prophetic and for all time.

The core and spiritual heart of all the higher religions is the Perennial Philosophy; and the Perennial Philosophy can be assented to and acted upon without resort to the kind of faith about which Luther was writing in the foregoing passages. There must, of course, be faith as trust - for confidence in one's fellows is the beginning of charity towards men, and confidence not only in the material, but also the moral and spiritual reliability of the universe, is the beginning of charity or love-knowledge in relation to God. There must also be faith in authority - the authority of those whose selflessness has qualified them to know the spiritual Ground of all being by

direct acquaintance as well as by report. And finally there must be faith in such propositions about Reality as are enunciated by philosophers in the light of genuine revelation-propositions which the believer knows that he can, if he is prepared to fulfil the necessary conditions, verify for himself. But, so long as the Perennial Philosophy is accepted in its essential simplicity, there is no need of willed assent to propositions known in advance to be unverifiable. Here it is necessary to add that such unverifiable propositions may become verifiable to the extent that intense faith affects the psychic substratum and so creates an existence, whose derived objectivity can actually be discovered 'out there.' Let us, however, remember that an existence which derives its objectivity from the mental activity of those who intensely believe in it cannot possibly be the spiritual Ground of the world, and that a mind busily engaged in the voluntary and intellectual activity, which is 'religious faith,' cannot possibly be in the state of selflessness and alert passivity which is the necessary condition of the unitive knowledge of the Ground. That is why the Buddhists affirm that 'loving faith leads to heaven; but obedience to the Dharma leads to Nirvana.' Faith in the existence and power of any supernatural entity which is less than ultimate spiritual Reality, and in any form of worship that falls short of self-naughting, will certainly, if the object of faith is intrinsically good, result in improvement of character, and probably in posthumous survival of the improved personality under 'heavenly' conditions. But this personal survival within what is still the temporal order is not the eternal life of timeless union with the Spirit. This eternal life 'stands in the knowledge' of the Godhead, not in faith in anything less than the Godhead.

The immortality attained through the acquisition of any objective condition (e g., the condition - merited through good works, which have been inspired by love of, and faith in, something less than the supreme Godhead - of being united in act to what is worshipped) is liable to end; for it is distinctly stated in the Scriptures that karma is never the cause of emancipation.

Shankara

Karma is the causal sequence in time, from which we are delivered solely by 'dying to' the temporal self and becoming united with the eternal, which is beyond time and cause. For 'as to the notion of a First Cause, or a Causa Sui' (to quote the words of an eminent theologian and philosopher, Dr F. R. Tennant), 'we have, on the one hand, to bear in mind that we refute ourselves in trying to establish it by extension of the application of the causal category, for causality when universalized contains a contradiction; and, on the other, to remember that the ultimate Ground simply "is."' Only when the individual also 'simply is,' by reason of his union through love-knowledge with the Ground, can there be any question of complete and eternal liberation.

19. God is not mocked

WHY HAST THOU said, 'I have sinned so much, And God in His mercy has not punished my sins'?

How many times do I smite thee, and thou knowest not!

Thou art bound in my chains from head to foot.

On thy heart is rust on rust collected So that thou art blind to divine mysteries.

When a man is stubborn and follows evil practices, He casts dust in the eyes of his discernment.

Old shame for sin and calling on God quit him; Dust five layers deep settles on his mirror, Rust spots begin to gnaw his iron, The colour of his jewel grows less and less.

Julal-uddin Rumi

If there is freedom (and even Determinists consistently act as if they were certain of it) and if (as everyone who has qualified himself to talk about the subject has always been convinced) there is a spiritual Reality, which it is the final end and purpose of consciousness to know; then all life is in the nature of an intelligence test, and the higher the level of awareness and the greater the potentialities of the creature, the more searchingly difficult will be the questions asked. For, in Bagehot's words, 'we could not be what we ought to be, if we lived in the sort of universe we should expect... A latent Providence, a confused life, an odd material world, an existence broken short in the midst and on a sudden, are not real difficulties, but real helps; for they, or something like them, are essential conditions of a moral life in a subordinate being.' Because we are free, it is possible for us to answer life's questions either well or badly. If we answer them badly, we shall bring down upon ourselves self-stultification. Most often this self-stultification will take subtle and not immediately detectable forms, as when our failure to answer properly makes it impossible for us to realize the higher potentialities of our being. Sometimes, on the contrary, the self-stultification is manifest on the physical level, and may involve not only individuals as individuals, but entire societies, which go down in catastrophe or sink more slowly into decay. The giving of correct answers is rewarded primarily by spiritual growth and progressive realization of latent potentialities, and secondarily (when circumstances make it possible) by the adding of all the rest to the realized kingdom of God. Karma exists; but its equivalence of act and award is not always obvious and material, as the earlier Buddhist and Hebrew writers ingenuously imagined that it should be. The bad man in prosperity may, all unknown to himself, be darkened and corroded with inward rust, while the good man under afflictions may be in the rewarding process of spiritual growth. No, God is not mocked; but also, let us always remember, He is not understood.

Perd nella giustizia sempiterna la vista che riceve vostro mondo, com'occhioper lo mar, dentro s'interna, chè, benchi dalla proda veggia il fonda, in pelago nol vede, e non di meno è li, ma cela lui l'esser profondo.

(‘Wherefore, in the eternal justice, such sight as your earth receives is engulfed, like the eye in the sea; for though by the shore it can see the bottom, in the ocean it cannot see it; yet none the less the bottom is there, but the depth hides it.’) Love is the plummet as well as the astrolabe of God’s mysteries, and the pure in heart can see far down into the depths of the divine justice, to catch a glimpse, not indeed of the details of the cosmic process, but at least of its principle and nature. These insights permit them to say, with Juliana of Norwich, that all shall be well, that, in spite of time, all is well, and that the problem of evil has its solution in the eternity, which men can, if they so desire, experience, but can never describe.

But, you urge, if men sin from the necessity of their nature, they are excusable; you do not explain, however, what you would infer from this fact. Is it perhaps that God will be prevented from growing angry with them? Or is it rather that they have deserved that blessedness which consists in the knowledge and love of God? If you mean the former, I altogether agree that God does not grow angry and that all things happen by his decree. But I deny that, for this reason, all men ought to be happy. Surely men may be excusable and nevertheless miss happiness, and be tormented in many ways. A horse is excusable for being a horse and not a man; but nevertheless he must needs be a horse and not a man. One who goes mad from the bite of a dog is excusable; yet it is right that he should die of suffocation. So, too, he who cannot rule his passions, nor hold them in check out of respect for the law, while he may be excusable on the ground of weakness, is incapable of enjoying conformity of spirit and knowledge and love of God; and he is lost inevitably.

Spinoza

Horizontally and vertically, in physical and temperamental kind as well as in degree of inborn ability and native goodness, human beings differ profoundly one from another. Why? To what end and for what past causes? ‘Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.’ The man of science, on the contrary, would say that the responsibility rested with the parents who had caused the blindness of their child either by having the wrong kind of genes, or by contracting some avoidable disease. Hindu or Buddhist believers in reincarnation according to the laws of karma (the destiny which, by their actions, individuals and groups of individuals impose upon themselves, one another and their descendants) would give another answer and say that, owing to what he had done in previous existences, the blind man had predestined himself to choose the sort of parents from whom he would have to inherit blindness.

These three answers are not mutually incompatible. The parents are responsible for making the child what, by heredity and upbringing, he turns out to be. The soul or character incarnated in the child is of such a nature, owing to past behaviour, that it

is forced to select those particular parents. And collaborating with the material and efficient causes is the final cause, the teleological pull from in front. This teleological pull is a pull from the divine Ground of things acting upon that part of the timeless now, which a finite mind must regard as the future. Men sin and their parents sin; but the works of God have to be manifested in every sentient being (either by exceptional ways, as in this case of supernormal healing, or in the ordinary course of events) - have to be manifested again and again, with the infinite patience of eternity, until at last the creature makes itself fit for the perfect and consummate manifestation of unitive knowledge, of the state of not I, but God in me.'

'Karma,' according to the Hindus, 'never dispels ignorance, being under the same category with it. Knowledge alone dispels ignorance, just as light alone dispels darkness.'

In other words, the causal process takes place within time and cannot possibly result in deliverance from time. Such a deliverance can only be achieved as a consequence of the intervention of eternity in the temporal domain; and eternity cannot intervene unless the individual will makes a creative act of self-denial, thus producing, as it were, a vacuum into which eternity can flow. To suppose that the causal process in time can of itself result in deliverance from time is like supposing that water will rise into a space from which the air has not been previously exhausted.

The right relation between prayer and conduct is not that conduct is supremely important and prayer may help it, but that prayer is supremely important and conduct tests it.

Archbishop Temple The aim and purpose of human life is the unitive knowledge-of God. Among the indispensable means to that end is right conduct, and by the degree and kind of virtue achieved, the degree of liberating knowledge may be assessed and its quality evaluated. In a word, the tree is known by its fruits; God is not mocked.

Religious beliefs and practices are certainly not the only factors determining the behaviour of a given society. But, no less certainly, they are among the determining factors. At least to some extent, the collective conduct of a nation is a test of the religion prevailing within it, a criterion by which we may legitimately judge the doctrinal validity of that religion and its practical efficiency in helping individuals to advance towards the goal of human existence.

In the past the nations of Christendom persecuted in the name of their faith, fought religious wars and undertook crusades against infidels and heretics; today they have ceased to be Christian in anything but name, and the only religion they profess is some brand of local idolatry, such as nationalism, state-worship, boss-worship and revolutionism. From these fruits of (among other things) historic Christianity, what inferences can we draw as to the nature of the tree? The answer has already been given in the section on 'Time and Eternity.' If Christians used to be persecutors and are now no longer Christians, the reason is that the Perennial Philosophy incorporated in their religion was overlaid by wrong beliefs that led inevitably, since God is never mocked, to wrong actions. These wrong beliefs had one element in common - namely,

an overvaluation of happenings in time and an under-valuation of the everlasting, timeless fact of eternity. Thus, belief in the supreme importance for salvation of remote historical events resulted in bloody disputes over the interpretation of the not very adequate and often conflicting records. And belief in the sacredness, nay, the actual divinity, of the ecclesiastico-politico-financial organizations, which developed after the fall of the Roman Empire, not only added bitterness to the all too human struggles for their control, but served to rationalize and justify the worst excesses of those who fought for place, wealth and power within and through the Church. But this is not the whole story. The same over-valuation of events in time, which once caused Christians to persecute and fight religious wars, led at last to a widespread indifference to a religion that, in spite of everything, was still in part preoccupied with eternity. But nature abhors a vacuum, and into the yawning void of this indifference there flowed the tide of political idolatry. The practical consequences of such idolatry, as we now see, are total war, revolution and tyranny.

Meanwhile, on the credit side of the balance sheet, we find such items as the following: an immense increase in technical and governmental efficiency and an immense increase in scientific knowledge - each of them a result of the general shift of Western man's attention from the eternal to the temporal order, first within the sphere of Christianity and then, inevitably, outside it.

20. Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum

WOULD YOU KNOW whence it is that so many false spirits have appeared in the world, who have deceived themselves and others with false fire and false light, laying claim to information, illumination and openings of the divine Life, particularly to do wonders under extraordinary calls from God? It is this: they have turned to God without turning from themselves; would be alive to God before they are dead to their own nature. Now religion in the hands of self, or corrupt nature, serves only to discover vices of a worse kind than in nature left to itself. Hence are all the disorderly passions of religious men, which burn in a worse flame than passions only employed about worldly matters; pride, selfexaltation, hatred and persecution, under a cloak of religious zeal, will sanctify actions which nature, left to itself, would be ashamed to own.

William Law 'Turning to God without turning from self - the formula is absurdly simple; and yet, simple as it is, it explains all the follies and iniquities committed in the name of religion. Those who turn to God without turning from themselves are tempted to evil in several characteristic and easily recognizable ways. They are tempted, first of all, to practise magical rites, by means of which they hope to compel God to answer their petitions and, in general, to serve their private or collective ends. All the ugly business of sacrifice, incantation and what Jesus called 'vain repetition' is a product of this wish to treat God as a means to indefinite self-aggrandizement, rather than as an end to be reached through total self-denial. Next, they are tempted to use the name of God to justify what they do in pursuit of place, power and wealth. And because they believe themselves to have divine justification for their actions, they proceed, with a good conscience, to perpetrate abominations, 'which nature, left to itself, would be ashamed to own.' Throughout recorded history an incredible sum of mischief has been done by ambitious idealists, self-deluded by their own verbiage and a lust for power into a conviction that they were acting for the highest good of their fellow-men. In the past, the justification for such wickedness was 'God' or 'the Church,' or 'the True Faith'; today idealists kill and torture and exploit in the name of 'the Revolution,'

'the New Order,'

'the World of the Common Man,' or simply 'the Future.' Finally there are the temptations which arise when the falsely religious begin to acquire the powers which are the fruit of their pious and magical practices. For, let there be no mistake, sacrifice, incantation and 'vain repetition' actually do produce fruits, especially when practised

in conjunction with physical austerities. Men who turn towards God without turning away from themselves do not, of course, reach God; but if they devote themselves energetically enough to their pseudo-religion, they will get results. Some of these results are doubtless the product of auto-suggestion. (It was through 'vain repetition' that Coué got his patients to cure themselves of their diseases.) Others are due, apparently, to that 'something not ourselves' in the psychic medium - that something which makes, not necessarily for righteousness, but always for power. Whether this something is a piece of second-hand objectivity, projected into the medium by the individual worshipper and his fellows and predecessors; whether it is a piece of first-hand objectivity, corresponding, on the psychic level, to the data of the material universe; or whether it is a combination of both these things, it is impossible to determine. All that need be said in this place is that people who turn towards God without turning from themselves often seem to acquire a knack of getting their petitions answered and sometimes develop considerable supernormal powers, such as those of psychic healing and extra-sensory perception. But, it may be asked: Is it necessarily a good thing to be able to get one's petitions answered in the way one wants them to be? And how far is it spiritually profitable to be possessed of these 'miraculous' powers? These are questions which were considered in the chapter on 'Prayer' and will be further discussed in the chapter on 'The Miraculous.'

The Grand Augur, in his ceremonial robes, approached the shambles and thus addressed the pigs. 'How can you object to die? I shall fatten you for three months. I shall discipline myself for ten days and fast for three. I shall strew fine grass and place you bodily upon a carved sacrificial dish. Does not this satisfy you?'

Then, speaking from the pigs' point of view, he continued: 'It is better perhaps, after all, to live on bran and escape from the shambles.'

'But then,' he added, speaking from his own point of view, 'to enjoy honour when alive, one would readily die on a war-shield or in the headsman's basket.'

So he rejected the pigs' point of view and adopted his own point of view. In what sense, then, was he different from the pigs?

Chuang Tzu Anyone who sacrifices anything but his own person or his own interests is on exactly the same level as Chuang Tzu's pigs. The pigs seek their own advantage inasmuch as they prefer life and bran to honour and the shambles; the sacrifices seek their own advantage inasmuch as they prefer the magical, God-constraining death of pigs to the death of their own passions and self-will. And what applies to sacrifice, applies equally to incantations, rituals and vain repetitions, when these are used (as they all too frequently are, even in the higher religions) as a form of compulsive magic. Rites and vain repetitions have a legitimate place in religion as aids to recollectedness, reminders of truth momentarily forgotten in the turmoil of worldly distractions. When spoken or performed as a kind of magic, their use is either completely pointless; or else (and this is worse) it may have ego-enhancing results, which do not in any way contribute to the attainment of man's final end.

The vestments of Isis are variegated to represent the cosmos; that of Osiris is white, symbolizing the Intelligible Light beyond the cosmos.

Plutarch So long as the symbol remains, in the worshipper's mind, firmly attached and instrumental to that which is symbolized, the use of such things as white and variegated vestments can do no harm. But if the symbol breaks loose, as it were, and becomes an end in itself, then we have, at the best, a futile aestheticism and sentimentality, at the worst a form of psychologically effective magic.

All externals must yield to love; for they are for the sake of love, and not love for them.

Hans Denk Ceremonies in themselves are not sin; but whoever supposes that he can attain to life either by baptism or by partaking of bread is still in superstition.

Hans Denk John Everard If you be always handling the letter of the Word, always licking the letter, always chewing upon that, what great thing do you? No marvel you are such starvelings.

While the Right Law still prevailed, innumerable were the converts who fathomed the depths of the Dharma by merely listening to half a stanza or even to a single phrase of the Buddha's teaching. But as we come to the age of similitude and to these latter days of Buddhism, we are indeed far away from the sage. People find themselves drowning in a sea of letters; they do not know how to get at the one substance which alone is truth. This was what caused the appearance of the Fathers (of Zen Buddhism) who, pointing directly at the human mind, told us to see here the ultimate ground of all things and thereby to attain Buddhahood. This is known as a special transmission outside the scriptural teaching. If one is endowed with superior talents or a special sharpness of mind, a gesture or a word will suffice to give one an immediate knowledge of the truth. Hence, since they were advocates of 'special transmission,' Ummon treated the (historical) Buddha with the utmost irreverence and Yakusan forbade his followers even to read the sutras.

Zen is the name given to this branch of Buddhism, which keeps itself away from the Buddha. It is also called the mystical branch, because it does not adhere to the literal meaning of the sutras. It is for this reason that those who blindly follow the steps of Buddha are sure to deride Zen, while those who have no liking for the letter are naturally inclined towards the mystical approach. The followers of the two schools know how to shake the head at each other, but fail to realize that they are after all complementary. Is not Zen one of the six virtues of perfection? If so, how can it conflict with the teachings of the Buddha? In my view, Zen is the outcome of the Buddha's teaching, and the mystical issues from the letters. There is no reason why a man should shun Zen because of the Buddha's teaching; nor need we disregard the letters on account of the mystical teachings of Zen... Students of scriptural Buddhism run the risk of becoming sticklers for the scriptures, the real meaning of which they fail to understand. By such men ultimate reality is never grasped, and for them Zen would mean salvation. Whereas those who study Zen are too apt to run into the habit of making empty talks and practising sophistry. They fail to understand the significance

of letters. To save them, the study of Buddhist scriptures is recommended. It is only when these one-sided views are mutually corrected that there is a perfect appreciation of the Buddha's teaching.

Chiang Chih-chi

It would be hard to find a better summing up of the conclusions, to which any spiritually and psychologically realistic mind must sooner or later come, than the foregoing paragraphs written in the eleventh century by one of the masters of Zen Buddhism.

The extract that follows is a moving protest against the crimes and follies perpetrated in the name of religion by those sixteenth-century Reformers who had turned to God without turning away from themselves and who were therefore far more keenly interested in the temporal aspects of historic Christianity - the ecclesiastical organization, the logic-chopping, the letter of Scripture - than in the Spirit who must be worshipped in spirit, the eternal Reality in the selfless knowledge of whom stands man's eternal life. Its author was Sebastian Castellio, who was at one time Calvin's favourite disciple, but who parted company with his master when the latter burned Servetus for heresy against his own heresy. Fortunately Castellio was living in Basel when he made his plea for charity and common decency; penned in Geneva, it would have earned him torture and death.

If you, illustrious Prince (the words were addressed to the Duke of Wurtemberg) had informed your subjects that you were coming to visit them at an unnamed time, and had requested them to be prepared in white garments to meet you at your coming, what would you do if on arrival you should find that, instead of robing themselves in white, they had spent their time in violent debate about your person - some insisting that you were in France, others that you were in Spain; some declaring that you would come on horseback, others that you would come by chariot; some holding that you would come with great pomp and others that you would come without any train or following? And what especially would you say if they debated not only with words, but with blows of fist and sword strokes, and if some succeeded in killing and destroying others who differed from them? 'He will come on horseback.'

'No, he will not; it will be by chariot.' 'You lie.'

'I do not; you are the liar.'

'Take that' — a blow with the fist. 'Take that' - a sword-thrust through the body. Prince, what would you think of such citizens? Christ asked us to put on the white robes of a pure and holy life; but what occupies our thoughts? We dispute not only of the way to Christ, but of his relation to God the Father, of the Trinity, of predestination, of free will, of the nature of God, of the angels, of the condition of the soul after death - of a multitude of matters that are not essential to salvation; matters, moreover, which can never be known until our hearts are pure; for they are things which must be spiritually perceived.

Sebastian Castellio Europe got the kind of theology it liked. But it also got, along with other unanticipated by-products, the Thirty Years War, capitalism and the first

rudiments of modern Germany. 'If we wish,' Dean Inge has recently written, 'to find a scapegoat on whose shoulders may we lay the miseries which Germany has brought upon the world... I am more and more convinced that the worst evil genius of that country is not Hitler or Bismarck or Frederick the Great, but Martin Luther... It (Lutheranism) worships a God who is neither just nor merciful... The Law of Nature, which ought to be the court of appeal against unjust authority, is identified (by Luther) with the existing order of society, to which absolute obedience is due.' And so on. Right belief is the first branch of the Eightfold Path leading to deliverance; the root and primal cause of bondage is wrong belief, or ignorance — an ignorance, let us remember, which is never completely invincible, but always, in the last analysis, a matter of will. If we don't know, it is because we find it more convenient not to know. Original ignorance is the same thing as original sin.

21. Idolatry

TO EDUCATED PERSONS the more primitive kinds of idolatry have ceased to be attractive. They find it easy to resist the temptation to believe that particular natural objects are gods, or that certain symbols and images are the very forms of divine entities and as such must be worshipped and propitiated. True, much fetishistic superstition survives even today. But though it survives, it is not considered respectable. Like drinking and prostitution, the primitive forms of idolatry are tolerated, but not approved. Their place in the accredited hierarchy of values is among the lowest.

How different is the case with the developed and more modern forms of idolatry! These have achieved not merely survival, but the highest degree of respectability. They are recommended by men of science as an up-to-date substitute for genuine religion and by many professional religious teachers are equated with the worship of God. All this may be deplorable; but it is not in the least surprising. Our education disparages the more primitive forms of idolatry; but at the same time it disparages, or at the best it ignores, the Perennial Philosophy and the practice of spirituality. In place of mumbo-jumbo at the bottom and of the immanent and transcendent Godhead at the top, it sets up, as objects of admiration, faith and worship, a pantheon of strictly human ideas and ideals. In academic circles and among those who have been subjected to higher education, there are few fetishists and few devout contemplatives; but the enthusiastic devotees of some form of political or social idolatry are as common as blackberries. Significantly enough, I have observed, when making use of university libraries, that books on spiritual religion were taken out much less frequently than was the case in public libraries, patronized in the main by men and women who had not enjoyed the advantages, or suffered under the handicaps, of prolonged academic instruction.

The many varieties of higher idolatry may be classed under three main heads: technological, political and moral. Technological idolatry is the most ingenuous and primitive of the three; for its devotees, like those of the lower idolatry, believe that their redemption and liberation depend upon material objects - in this case gadgets. Technological idolatry is the religion whose doctrines are promulgated, explicitly or by implication, in the advertisement pages of our newspapers and magazines - the source, we may add parenthetically, from which millions of men, women and children in the capitalistic countries derive their working philosophy of life. In Soviet Russia too, technological idolatry was strenuously preached, becoming, during the years of that country's industrialization, a kind of state religion. So whole-hearted is the modern faith in technological idols that (despite all the lessons of mechanized warfare) it is impossible to discover in the popular thinking of our time any trace of the ancient and profoundly

realistic doctrine of hubris and inevitable nemesis. There is a very general belief that, where gadgets are concerned, we can get something for nothing - can enjoy all the advantages of an elaborate, top-heavy and constantly advancing technology without having to pay for them by any compensating disadvantages.

Only a little less ingenuous are the political idolaters. For the worship of redemptive gadgets these have substituted the worship of redemptive social and economic organizations. Impose the right kind of organizations upon human beings, and all their problems, from sin and unhappiness to nationalism and war, will automatically disappear. Most political idolaters are also technological idolaters - and this in spite of the fact that the two pseudoreligions are finally incompatible, since technological progress at its present rate makes nonsense of any political blue-print, however ingeniously drawn, within a matter, not of generations, but of years and sometimes even of months. Further, the human being is, 'unfortunately, a creature endowed with free will; and if, for any reason, individuals do not choose to make it work, even the best organization will not produce the results it was intended to produce.

The moral idolaters are realists inasmuch as they see that gadgets and organizations are not enough to guarantee the triumph of virtue and the increase of happiness, and that the individuals who compose societies and use machines are the arbiters who finally determine whether there shall be decency in personal relationship, order or disorder in society. Material and organizational instruments are indispensable, and a good tool is preferable to a bad one. But in listless or malicious hands the finest instrument is either useless or a means to evil.

The moralists cease to be realistic and commit idolatry inasmuch as they worship, not God, but their own ethical ideals, inasmuch as they treat virtue as an end in itself and not as the necessary condition of the knowledge and love of God - a knowledge and love without which that virtue will never be made perfect or even socially effective.

What follows is an extract from a very remarkable letter written in 1836 by Thomas Arnold to his old pupil and future biographer, A. P. Stanley. 'Fanaticism is idolatry; and it has the moral evil of idolatry in it; that is, a fanatic worships something which is the creation of his own desire, and thus even his self-devotion in support of it is only an apparent self-devotion; for in fact it is making the parts of his nature or his mind, which he least values, offer sacrifice to that which he most values. The moral fault, as it appears to me, is the idolatry - the setting up of some idea which is most kindred to our own minds, and the putting it in the place of Christ, who alone cannot be made an idol and inspire idolatry, because He combines all ideas of perfection and exhibits them in their just harmony and combination. Now in my own mind, by its natural tendency - that is, taking my mind at its best - truth and justice would be the idols I should follow; and they would be idols, for they would not supply all the food which the mind wants, and whilst worshipping them, reverence and humility and tenderness might very likely be forgotten. But Christ Himself includes at once truth and justice and all these other qualities too... Narrow-mindedness tends to wickedness, because it

does not extend its watchfulness to every part of our moral nature, and the neglect fosters wickedness in the parts so neglected.'

As a piece of psychological analysis this is admirable. Its only defect is one of omission; for it neglects to take into account those influxes from the eternal order into the temporal, which are called grace or inspiration. Grace and inspiration are given when, and to the extent to which, a human being gives up self-will and abandons himself, moment by moment, through constant recollectedness and non-attachment, to the will of God. As well as the animal and spiritual graces, whose source is the divine Nature of Things, there are human pseudo-graces - such as, for example, the accessions of strength and virtue that follow self-devotion to some form of political or moral idolatry. To distinguish the true grace from the false is often difficult; but as time and circumstances reveal the full extent of their consequences on the soul, discrimination becomes possible even to observers having no special gifts of insight. Where the grace is genuinely 'supernatural,' an amelioration in one aspect of the total personality is not paid for by atrophy or deterioration elsewhere. The virtue which is accompanied and perfected by the love and knowledge of God is something quite different from the 'righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees' which, for Christ, was among the worst of moral evils. Hardness, fanaticism, uncharitableness and spiritual pride — these are the ordinary byproducts of a course of stoical self-improvement by means of personal effort, either unassisted or, if assisted, seconded only by the pseudo-graces which are given when the individual devotes himself to the achievement of an end which is not his true end, when the goal is not God, but merely a magnified projection of his own favourite ideas or moral excellences. The idolatrous worship of ethical values in and for themselves defeats its own object — and defeats it not only because, as Arnold insists, there is a lack of allround development, but also and above all because even the highest forms of moral idolatry are God-eclipsing and therefore guarantee the idolater against the enlightening and liberating knowledge of Reality.

22. Emotionalism

YOU HAVE SPENT all your life in the belief that you are wholly devoted to others, and never self-seeking. Nothing so feeds self-conceit as this sort of internal testimony that one is quite free from self-love and always generously devoted to one's neighbours. But all this devotion that seems to be for others is really for yourself. Your self-love reaches to the point of perpetual self-congratulation that you are free from it; all your sensitiveness is lest you might not be fully satisfied with self; this is at the root of all your scruples. It is the 'I' which makes you so keen and sensitive. You want God as well as man to be always satisfied with you, and you want to be satisfied with yourself in all your dealings with God.

Fénelon Besides, you are not accustomed to be contented with a simple good will — your self-love wants a lively emotion, a reassuring pleasure, some kind of charm or excitement. You are too much used to be guided by imagination and to suppose that your mind and will are inactive, unless you are conscious of their workings. And thus you are dependent upon a kind of excitement similar to that which the passions arouse, or theatrical representations. By dint of refinement you fall into the opposite extreme — a real coarseness of imagination. Nothing is more opposed, not only to the life of faith, but also to true wisdom. There is no more dangerous illusion than the fancies by which people try to avoid illusion. It is imagination which leads us astray; and the certainty which we seek through imagination, feeling, and taste, is one of the most dangerous sources from which fanaticism springs. This is the gulf of vanity and corruption which God would make you discover in your heart; you must look upon it with the calm and simplicity belonging to true humility. It is mere self-love to be inconsolable at seeing one's own imperfections; but to stand face to face with them, neither flattering nor tolerating them, seeking to correct oneself without becoming pettish - this is to desire what is good for its own sake, and for God's.

A letter from the Archbishop of Cambrai — what an event, what a signal honour! And yet it must have been with a certain trepidation that one broke the emblazoned seal. To ask for advice and a frank opinion of oneself from a man who combines the character of a saint with the talents of a Marcel Proust, is to ask for the severest kind of shock to one's self-esteem. And duly, in the most exquisitely lucid prose, the shock would be administered - and, along with the shock, the spiritual antidote to its excruciating consequences. Fénelon never hesitated to disintegrate a correspondent's complacent ego; but the disintegration was always performed with a view to reintegration on a higher, non-egotistic level.

This particular letter is not only an admirable piece of character analysis; it also contains some very interesting remarks on the subject of emotional excitement in its relation to the life of the spirit.

The phrase, 'religion of experience,' has two distinct and mutually incompatible meanings. There is the 'experience' of which the Perennial Philosophy treats - the direct apprehension of the divine Ground in an act of intuition possible, in its fullness, only to the selflessly pure in heart. And there is the 'experience' induced by revivalist sermons, impressive ceremonials, or the deliberate efforts of one's own imagination. This 'experience' is a state of emotional excitement — an excitement which may be mild and enduring or brief and epileptically violent, which is sometimes exultant in tone and sometimes despairing, which expresses itself here in song and dance, there in uncontrollable weeping. But emotional excitement, whatever its cause and whatever its nature, is always excitement of that individualized self, which must be died to by anyone who aspires to live to divine Reality. 'Experience' as emotion about God (the highest form of this kind of excitement) is incompatible with 'experience' as immediate awareness of God by a pure heart which has mortified even its most exalted emotions. That is why Fénelon, in the foregoing extract, insists upon the need for 'calm and simplicity,' why St François de Sales is never tired of preaching the serenity which he himself so consistently practised, why all the Buddhist scriptures harp on tranquillity of mind as a necessary condition of deliverance. The peace that passes all understanding is one of the fruits of the spirit. But there is also the peace that does not pass understanding, the humbler peace of emotional self-control and self-denial; this is not a fruit of the spirit, but rather one of its indispensable roots.

The imperfect destroy true devotion, because they seek sensible sweetness in prayer.

St John of the Cross

The fly that touches honey cannot use its wings; so the soul that clings to spiritual sweetness ruins its freedom and hinders contemplation.

St John of the Cross

What is true of the sweet emotions is equally true of the bitter. For as some people enjoy bad health, so others enjoy a bad conscience. Repentance is metanoia, or 'change of mind'; and without it there cannot be even a beginning of the spiritual life - for the life of the spirit is incompatible with the life of that 'old man,' whose acts, whose thoughts, whose very existence are obstructing evils which have to be repented. This necessary change of mind is normally accompanied by sorrow and self-loathing. But these emotions are not to be persisted in and must never be allowed to become a settled habit of remorse. In Middle'

English 'remorse' is rendered, with a literalness which to modern readers is at once startling and stimulating, as 'again-bite.' In this cannibalistic encounter, who bites whom? Observation and self-analysis provide the answer: the creditable aspects of the self bite the discreditable and are themselves bitten, receiving wounds that fester with incurable shame and despair. But, in Fénelon's words, 'it is mere self-love to be inconsolable at seeing one's own imperfections.' Self-reproach is painful; but the very

pain is a reassuring proof that the self is still intact; so long as attention is fixed on the delinquent ego, it cannot be fixed upon God and the ego (which lives upon attention and dies only when that sustenance is withheld) cannot be dissolved in the divine Light.

Eschew as though it were a hell the consideration of yourself and your offences. No one should ever think of these things except to humiliate himself and love Our Lord. It is enough to regard yourself in general as a sinner, even as there are many saints in heaven who were such.

Charles de Condren

Faults will turn to good, provided we use them to our own humiliation, without slackening in the effort to correct ourselves. Discouragement serves no possible purpose; it is simply the despair of wounded self-love. The real way of profiting by the humiliation of one's own faults is to face them in their true hideousness, without ceasing to hope in God, while hoping nothing from self.

Fénelon

Came she (Mary Magdalene) down from the height of her desire for God into the depth of her sinful life, and searched in the foul stinking fen and dunghill of her soul? Nay, surely she did not do so. And why? Because God let her know by His grace in her soul that she should never so bring it about. For so might she sooner have raised in herself an ableness to have often sinned than have purchased by that work any plain forgiveness of all her sins.

The Cloud of Unknowing In the light of what has been said above, we can understand the peculiar spiritual dangers by which every kind of predominantly emotional religion is always menaced. A hell-fire faith that uses the theatrical techniques of revivalism in order to stimulate remorse and induce the crisis of sudden conversion; a saviour cult that is for ever stirring up what St Bernard calls the *amor carnalis* or fleshly love of the Avatar and personal God; a ritualistic mystery-religion that generates high feelings of awe and reverence and aesthetic ecstasy by means of its sacraments and ceremonials, its music and its incense, its numinous darkness and sacred lights — in its own special way, each one of these runs the risk of becoming a form of psychological idolatry, in which God is identified with the ego's affective attitude towards God and finally the emotion becomes an end in itself, to be eagerly sought after and worshipped, as the addicts of a drug spend life in the pursuit of their artificial paradise. All this is obvious enough. But it is no less obvious that religions that make no appeal to the emotions have very few adherents. Moreover, when pseudoreligions with a strong emotional appeal make their appearance, they immediately win millions of enthusiastic devotees from among the masses to whom the real religions have ceased to have a meaning or to be a comfort. But whereas no adherent of a pseudo-religion (such as one of our current political idolatries, compounded of nationalism and revolutionism) can possibly go forward into the way of genuine spirituality, such a way always remains open to the adherents of even the most highly emotionalized varieties of genuine religion. Those who have actually followed this way to its end in the unitive knowledge of

the divine Ground constitute a very small minority of the total. Many are called; but, since few choose to be chosen, few are chosen. The rest, say the oriental exponents of the Perennial Philosophy, earn themselves another chance, in circumstances more or less propitious according to their deserts, to take the cosmic intelligence test. If they are 'saved,' their incomplete and undefinitive deliverance is into some paradisaal state of freer personal existence, from which (directly or through further incarnations) they may go on to the final release into eternity. If they are 'lost,' their 'hell' is a temporal and temporary condition of thicker darkness and more oppressive bondage to self-will, the root and principle of all evil.

We see, then, that if it is persisted in, the way of emotional religion may lead, indeed, to a great good, but not to the greatest. But the emotional way opens into the way of unitive knowledge, and those who care to go on in this other way are well prepared for their task if they have used the emotional approach without succumbing to the temptations which have beset them on the way. Only the perfectly selfless and enlightened can do good that does not, in some way or other, have to be paid for by actual or potential evils. The religious systems of the world have been built up, in the main, by men and women who were not completely selfless or enlightened. Hence all religions have had their dark and even frightful aspects, while the good they do is rarely gratuitous, but must, in most cases, be paid for, either on the nail or by instalments. The emotion-rousing doctrines and practices, which play so important a part in all the world's organized religions, are no exception to this rule. They do good, but not gratuitously. The price paid varies according to the nature of the individual worshippers. Some of these choose to wallow in emotionalism and, becoming idolaters of feeling, pay for the good of their religion by a spiritual evil that may actually outweigh that good. Others resist the temptation to self-enhancement and go forward to the mortification of self, including the self's emotional side, and to the worship of God rather than of their own feelings and fancies about God. The further they go in this direction, the less they have to pay for the good which emotionalism brought them and which, but for emotionalism, most of them might never have had.

23. The Miraculous

REVELATIONS ARE THE aberration of faith; they are an amusement that spoils simplicity in relation to God, that embarrasses the soul and makes it swerve from its directness in relation to God. They distract the soul and occupy it with other things than God. Special illuminations, auditions, prophecies and the rest are marks of weakness in a soul that cannot support the assaults of temptation or of anxiety about the future and God's judgment upon it. Prophecies are also marks of creaturely curiosity in a soul to whom God is indulgent and to whom, as a father to his importunate child, he gives a few trifling sweetmeats to satisfy its appetite.

J.J. Olier

The slightest degree of sanctifying grace is superior to a miracle, which is supernatural only by reason of its cause, by its mode of production (*quoad modum*), not by its intimate reality; the life restored to a corpse is only the natural life, low indeed in comparison with that of grace.

R. Garrigou-Lagrange

Can you walk on water? You have done no better than a straw. Can you fly in the air? You have done no better than a bluebottle. Conquer your heart; then you may become somebody.

Ansari of Herat

The abnormal bodily states, by which the immediate awareness of the divine Ground is often accompanied, are not, of course, essential parts of that experience. Many mystics, indeed, deplored such things as being signs, not of divine grace, but of the body's weakness. To levitate, to go into trance, to lose the use of one's senses - in De Condren's words, this is 'to receive the effects of God and his holy communications in a very animal and carnal way.'

'One ounce of sanctifying grace,' he (St François de Sales) used to say, 'is worth more than a hundredweight of those graces which theologians call "gratuitous," among which is the gift of miracles. It is possible to receive such gifts and yet to be in mortal sin; nor are they necessary to salvation.

Jean Pierre Camus The Sufis regard miracles as 'veils' intervening between the soul and God. The masters of Hindu spirituality urge their disciples to pay no attention to the siddhis, or psychic powers, which may come to them unsought, as a byproduct of one-pointed contemplation. The cultivation of these powers, they warn, distracts the soul from Reality and sets up insurmountable obstacles in the way of enlightenment and deliverance. A similar attitude is taken by the best Buddhist teachers, and in one of the Pali scriptures there is an anecdote recording the Buddha's own characteristically

dry comment on a prodigious feat of levitation performed by one of his disciples. 'This,' he said, 'will not conduce to the conversion of the unconverted, nor to the advantage of the converted.' Then he went back to talking about deliverance.

Because they know nothing of spirituality and regard the material world and their hypotheses about it as supremely significant, rationalists are anxious to convince themselves and others that miracles do not and cannot happen. Because they have had experience of the spiritual life and its by-products, the exponents of the Perennial Philosophy are convinced that miracles do happen, but regard them as things of little importance, and that mainly negative and anti-spiritual.

The miracles which at present are in greatest demand, and of which there is the steadiest supply, are those of psychic healing. In what circumstances and to what extent the power of psychic healing should be used has been clearly indicated in the Gospel: 'Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk?' If one can 'forgive sins,' one can safely use the gift of healing. But the forgiving of sins is possible, in its fullness, only to those who 'speak with authority,' in virtue of being selfless channels of the divine Spirit. To these theocentric saints the ordinary, unregenerate human being reacts with a mixture of love and awe - longing to be close to them and yet constrained by their very holiness to say, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.' Such holiness makes holy to the extent that the sins of those who approach it are forgiven and they are enabled to make a new start, to face the consequences of their past wrong-doings (for of course the consequences remain) in a new spirit that makes it possible for them to neutralize the evil or turn it into positive good. A less perfect kind of forgiveness can be bestowed by those who are not themselves outstandingly holy, but who speak with the delegated authority of an institution which the sinner believes to be in some way a channel of supernatural grace. In this case the contact between unregenerate soul and divine Spirit is not direct, but is mediated through the sinner's imagination.

Those who are holy in virtue of being selfless channels of the Spirit may practise psychic healing with perfect safety; for they will know which of the sick are ready to accept forgiveness along with the mere miracle of a bodily cure. Those who are not holy, but who can forgive sins in virtue of belonging to an institution which is believed to be a channel of grace, may also practise healing with a fair confidence that they will not do more harm than good. But unfortunately the knack of psychic healing seems in some persons to be inborn, while others can acquire it without acquiring the smallest degree of holiness. ('It is possible to receive such graces and yet be in mortal sin.') Such persons will use their knack indiscriminately, either to show off or for profit. Often they produce spectacular cures - but, lacking the power to forgive sins or even to understand the psychological correlates, conditions or causes of the symptoms they have so miraculously dispelled, they leave a soul empty, swept and garnished against the coming of seven other devils worse than the first.

24. Ritual, Symbol, Sacrament

ASWALA: YAJNAVALKYA, SINCE everything connected with the sacrifice is pervaded by death and is subject to death, by what means can the sacrificer overcome death?

YAJNAVALKYA: By the knowledge of the identity between the sacrificer, the fire and the ritual word. For the ritual word is indeed the sacrificer, and the ritual word is the fire, and the fire, which is one with Brahman, is the sacrificer. This knowledge leads to liberation. This knowledge leads one beyond death.

Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad

In other words, rites, sacraments, and ceremonials are valuable to the extent that they remind those who take part in them of the true Nature of Things, remind them of what ought to be and (if only they would be docile to the immanent and transcendent Spirit) of what actually might be their own relation to the world and its divine Ground. Theoretically any ritual or sacrament is as good as any other ritual or sacrament, provided always that the object symbolized be in fact some aspect of divine Reality and that the relation between symbol and fact be clearly defined and constant. In the same way, one language is theoretically as good as another. Human experience can be thought about as effectively in Chinese as in English or French. But in practice Chinese is the best language for those brought up in China, English for those brought up in England and French for those brought up in France. It is, of course, much easier to learn the order of a rite and to understand its doctrinal significance than to master the intricacies of a foreign language. Nevertheless what has been said of language is true, in large measure, of religious ritual. For persons who have been brought up to think of God by means of one set of symbols, it is very hard to think of Him in terms of other and, in their eyes, unhallowed sets of words, ceremonies and images.

The Lord Buddha then warned Subhuti, saying, 'Subhuti, do not think that the Tathagata ever considers in his own mind: I ought to enunciate a system of teaching for the elucidation of the Dharma. You should never cherish such a thought. And why? Because if any disciple harboured such a thought he would not only be misunderstanding the Tathagata's teaching, but he would be slandering him as well. Moreover, the expression "a system of teaching" has no meaning; for Truth (in the sense of Reality) cannot be cut up into pieces and arranged into a system. The words can only be used as a figure of speech.'

Diamond Sutra

But for all their inadequacy and their radical unlikeness to the facts to which they refer, words remain the most reliable and accurate of our symbols. Whenever we want

to have a precise report of facts or ideas, we must resort to words. A ceremony, a carved or painted image, may convey more meanings and overtones of meaning in a smaller compass and with greater vividness than can a verbal formula; but it is liable to convey them in a form that is much more vague and indefinite. One often meets, in modern literature, with the notion that mediaeval churches were the architectural, sculptural and pictorial equivalents of a theological summa, and that mediaeval worshippers who admired the works of art around them were thereby enlightened on the subject of doctrine. This view was evidently not shared by the more earnest churchmen of the Middle Ages. Coulton cites the utterances of preachers who complained that congregations were getting entirely false ideas of Catholicism by looking at the pictures in the churches instead of listening to sermons. (Similarly, in our own day the Catholic Indians of Central America have evolved the wildest heresies by brooding on the carved and painted symbols with which the Conquistadors filled their churches.) St Bernard's objection to the richness of Cluniac architecture, sculpture and ceremonial was motivated by intellectual as well as strictly moral considerations. 'So great and marvellous a variety of divers forms meets the eye that one is tempted to read in the marbles rather than in the books, to pass the whole day looking at these carvings one after another rather than in meditating on the law of God.' It is in imageless contemplation that the soul comes to the unitive knowledge of Reality; consequently, for those who, like St Bernard and his Cistercians, are really concerned to achieve man's final end, the fewer distracting symbols the better.

Most men worship the gods because they want success in their worldly undertakings. This kind of material success can be gained very quickly (by such worship), here on earth.

Bhagavad-Gita

Among those who are purified by their good deeds there are four kinds of men who worship Me: the world-weary, the seeker for knowledge, the seeker for happiness and the man of spiritual discrimination. The man of discrimination is the highest of these. He is continually united with Me. He devotes himself to Me always, and to no other. For I am very dear to that man, and he to Me.

Certainly, all these are noble;
 But the man of discrimination
 I see as my very Self.
 For he alone loves
 Me Because I am Myself,
 The last and only goal
 Of his devoted heart.
 Through many a long life
 His discrimination ripens;
 He makes Me his refuge,
 Knows that Brahman is all.
 How rare are such great ones!

Men whose discrimination has been blunted by worldly desires, establish this or that ritual or cult and resort to various deities, according to the impulse of their inborn nature. But no matter what deity a devotee chooses to worship, if he has faith, I make his faith unwavering. Endowed with the faith I give him, he worships that deity and gets from it everything he prays for. In reality, I alone am the giver.

But these men of small understanding pray only for what is transient and perishable. The worshippers of the devas will go to the devas. Those who worship Me will come to Me.

Bhagavad-Gita

If sacramental rites are constantly repeated in a spirit of faith and devotion, a more or less enduring effect is produced in the psychic medium, in which individual minds bathe and from which they have, so to speak, been crystallized out into personalities more or less fully developed, according to the more or less perfect development of the bodies with which they are associated. (Of this psychic medium an eminent contemporary philosopher, Dr C. D. Broad, has written, in an essay on telepathy contributed to the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, as follows: ‘We must therefore consider seriously the possibility that a person’s experience initiates more or less permanent modifications of structure or process in something which is neither his mind nor his brain. There is no reason to suppose that this substratum would be anything to which possessive adjectives, such as “mine” and “yours” and “his,” could properly be applied, as they can be to minds and animated bodies... Modifications which have been produced in the substratum by certain of M’s past experiences are activated by N’s present experiences or interests, and they become cause factors in producing or modifying N’s later experiences.’) Within this psychic medium or non-personal substratum of individual minds, something which we may think of metaphorically as a vortex persists as an independent existence, possessing its own derived and secondary objectivity, so that, wherever the rites are performed, those whose faith and devotion are sufficiently intense actually discover something ‘out there,’ as distinct from the subjective something in their own imaginations. And so long as this projected psychic entity is nourished by the faith and love of its worshippers, it will possess, not merely objectivity, but power to get people’s prayers answered. Ultimately, of course, ‘I alone am the giver,’ in the sense that all this happens in accordance with the divine laws governing the universe in its psychic and spiritual, no less than its material, aspects. Nevertheless, the devas (those imperfect forms under which, because of their own voluntary ignorance, men worship the divine Ground) may be thought of as relatively independent powers. The primitive notion that the gods feed on the sacrifices made to them is simply the crude expression of a profound truth. When their worship falls off, when faith and devotion lose their intensity, the devas sicken and finally die. Europe is full of old shrines, whose saints and Virgins and relics have lost the power and the secondhand psychic objectivity which they once possessed. Thus, when Chaucer lived and wrote, the deva called Thomas Becket was giving to any Canterbury pilgrim, who had sufficient faith, all the boons he could ask for. This once-powerful deity is now

stone-dead; but there are still certain churches in the West, certain mosques and temples in the East, where even the most irreligious and un-psychic tourist cannot fail to be aware of some intensely 'numinous' presence. It would, of course, be a mistake to imagine that this presence is the presence of that God who is a Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit; it is rather the psychic presence of men's thoughts and feelings about the particular, limited form of God, to which they have resorted 'according to the impulse of their inborn nature' - thoughts and feelings projected into objectivity and haunting the sacred place in the same way as thoughts and feelings of another kind, but of equal intensity, haunt the scenes of some past suffering or crime. The presence in these consecrated buildings, the presence evoked by the performance of traditional rites, the presence inherent in a sacramental object, name or formula - all these are real presences, but real presences, not of God or the Avatar, but of something which, though it may reflect the divine Reality, is yet less and other than it.

Dulcis Jesu memoria dans vera cordi gaudia:

sed super mel et omnia ejus dulcis praesentia.

'Sweet is the memory of Jesus, giving true joys to the heart; but sweeter beyond honey and all else is his presence.' This opening stanza of the famous twelfth-century hymn summarizes in fifteen words the relations subsisting between ritual and real presence and the character of the worshipper's reaction to each. Systematically cultivated *memoria* (a thing in itself full of sweetness) first contributes to the evocation, then results, for certain souls, in the immediate apprehension of *praesentia*, which brings with it joys of a totally different and higher kind. This presence (whose projected objectivity is occasionally so complete as to be apprehensible not merely by the devout worshipper, but by more or less indifferent outsiders) is always that of the divine being who has been previously remembered, Jesus here, Krishna or Amitabha Buddha there.

The value of this practice (repetition of the name of Amitabha Buddha) is this. So long as one person practises his method (of spirituality) and another practises a different method, they counterbalance one another and their meeting is just the same as their not meeting. Whereas if two persons practise the same method, their mindfulness tends to become deeper and deeper, and they tend to remember each other and to develop affinities for each other, life after life. Moreover, whoever recites the name of Amitabha Buddha, whether in the present time or in future time, will surely see the Buddha Amitabha and never become separated from him. By reason of that association, just as one associating with a maker of perfumes becomes permeated with the same perfumes, so he will become perfumed by Amitabha's compassion, and will become enlightened without resort to any other expedient means.

Surangama Sutra

We see then that intense faith and devotion, coupled with perseverance by many persons in the same forms of worship or spiritual exercise, have a tendency to objectify the idea or memory which is their content and so to create, in some sort, a numinous real presence, which worshippers actually find 'out there' no less, and in quite another way, than 'in here.' In so far as this is the case, the ritualist is perfectly correct in

attributing to his hallowed acts and words a power which, in another context, would be called magical. The mantram works, the sacrifice really does something, the sacrament confers grace *ex opere operato*: these are, or rather may be, matters of direct experience, facts which anyone who chooses to fulfil the necessary conditions can verify empirically for himself. But the grace conferred *ex opere operato* is not always spiritual grace and the hallowed acts and formulae have a power which is not necessarily from God. Worshippers can, and very often do, get grace and power from one another and from the faith and devotion of their predecessors, projected into independent psychic existences that are hauntingly associated with certain places, words and acts. A great deal of ritualistic religion is not spirituality, but occultism, a refined and well-meaning kind of white magic. Now, just as there is no harm in art, say, or science, but a great deal of good, provided always that these activities are not regarded as ends, but simply as means to the final end of all life, so too there is no harm in white magic, but the possibilities of much good, so long as it is treated, not as true religion, but as one of the roads to true religion - an effective way of reminding people with a certain kind of psycho-physical make-up that there is a God, 'in knowledge of whom standeth their eternal life.' If ritualistic white magic is regarded as being in itself true religion; if the real presences it evokes are taken to be God in Himself and not the projections of human thoughts and feelings about God or even about something less than God; and if the sacramental rites are performed and attended for the sake of the 'spiritual sweetness' experienced and the powers and advantages conferred - then there is idolatry. This idolatry is, at its best, a very lofty and, in many ways, beneficent kind of religion. But the consequences of worshipping God as anything but Spirit and in any way except in spirit and in truth are necessarily undesirable in this sense - that they lead only to a partial salvation and delay the soul's ultimate reunion with the eternal Ground.

That very large numbers of men and women have an ineradicable desire for rites and ceremonies is clearly demonstrated by the history of religion. Almost all the Hebrew prophets were opposed to ritualism. 'Rend your hearts and not your garments.'

'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.'

'I hate, I despise your feasts; I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.' And yet, in spite of the fact that what the prophets wrote was regarded as divinely inspired, the Temple at Jerusalem continued to be, for hundreds of years after their time, the centre of a religion of rites, ceremonials and blood sacrifice. (It may be remarked in passing that the shedding of blood, one's own or that of animals or other human beings, seems to be a peculiarly efficacious way of constraining the 'occult' or psychic world to answer petitions and confer supernormal powers. If this is a fact, as from the anthropological and antiquarian evidence it appears to be, it would supply yet another cogent reason for avoiding animal sacrifices, savage bodily austerities and even, since thought is a form of action, that imaginative gloating over spilled blood which is so common in certain Christian circles.) What the Jews did in spite of their prophets, Christians have done in spite of Christ. The Christ of the Gospels is a preacher and not a dispenser of sacraments or performer of rites; he speaks against vain repetitions;

he insists on the supreme importance of private worship; he has no use for sacrifices and not much use for the Temple. But this did not prevent historic Christianity from going its own, all too human, way. A precisely similar development took place in Buddhism. For the Buddha of the Pali scriptures, ritual was one of the fetters holding back the soul from enlightenment and liberation. Nevertheless, the religion he founded has made full use of ceremonies, vain repetitions and sacramental rites.

There would seem to be two main reasons for the observed developments of the historical religions. First, most people do not want spirituality or deliverance, but rather a religion that gives them emotional satisfactions, answers to prayer, supernatural powers and partial salvation in some sort of posthumous heaven. Second, some of those few who do desire spirituality and deliverance find that, for them, the most effective means to those ends are ceremonies, 'vain repetitions' and sacramental rites. It is by participating in these acts and uttering these formulae that they are most powerfully reminded of the eternal Ground of all being; it is by immersing themselves in the symbols that they can most easily come through to that which is symbolized. Every thing, event or thought is a point of intersection between creature and Creator, between a more or less distant manifestation of God and a ray, so to speak, of the unmanifest Godhead; every thing, event or thought can therefore be made the doorway through which a soul may pass out of time into eternity. That is why ritualistic and sacramental religion can lead to deliverance. But at the same time every human being loves power and self-enhancement, and every hallowed ceremony, form of words or sacramental rite is a channel through which power can flow out of the fascinating psychic universe into the universe of embodied selves. That is why ritualistic and sacramental religion can also lead away from deliverance.

There is another disadvantage inherent in any system of organized sacramentalism, and that is that it gives to the priestly caste a power which it is all too natural for them to abuse. In a society which has been taught that salvation is exclusively or mainly through certain sacraments, and that these sacraments can be administered effectively only by a professional priesthood, that professional priesthood will possess an enormous coercive power. The possession of such power is a standing temptation to use it for individual satisfaction and corporate aggrandizement. To a temptation of this kind, if repeated often enough, most human beings who are not saints almost inevitably succumb. That is why Christ taught his disciples to pray that they should not be led into temptation. This is, or should be, the guiding principle of all social reform - to organize the economic, political and social relationships between human beings in such a way that there shall be, for any given individual or group within the society, a minimum of temptations to covetousness, pride, cruelty and lust for power. Men and women being what they are, it is only by reducing the number and intensity of temptations that human societies can be, in some measure at least, delivered from evil. Now, the sort of temptations to which a priestly caste is exposed in a society that accepts a predominantly sacramental religion are such that none but the most saintly persons can be expected consistently to resist them. What happens when ministers of

religion are led into these temptations is clearly illustrated by the history of the Roman Church. Because Catholic Christianity taught a version of the Perennial Philosophy it produced a succession of great saints. But because the Perennial Philosophy was overlaid with an excessive amount of sacramentalism and with an idolatrous preoccupation with things in time, the less saintly members of its hierarchy were exposed to enormous and quite unnecessary temptations and, duly succumbing to them, launched out into persecution, simony, power politics, secret diplomacy, high finance and collaboration with despots.

I very much doubt whether, since the Lord by his grace brought me into the faith of his dear Son, I have ever broken bread or drunk wine, even in the ordinary course of life, without remembrance of, and some devout feeling regarding, the broken body and the blood-shedding of my dear Lord and Saviour.

Stephen Grellet We have seen that, when they are promoted to be the central core of organized religious worship, ritualism and sacramentalism are by no means unmixed blessings. But that the whole of a man's workaday life should be transformed by him into a kind of continuous ritual, that every object in the world around him should be regarded as a symbol of the world's eternal Ground, that all his actions should be performed sacramentally - this would seem to be wholly desirable. All the masters of the spiritual life, from the authors of the Upanishads to Socrates, from Buddha to St Bernard, are agreed that without self-knowledge there cannot be adequate knowledge of God, that without a constant recollectedness there can be no complete deliverance. The man who has learnt to regard things as symbols, persons as temples of the Holy Spirit and actions as sacraments, is a man who has learned constantly to remind himself who he is, where he stands in relation to the universe and its Ground, how he should behave towards his fellows and what he must do to come to his final end.

'Because of this indwelling of the Logos,' writes Mr Kenneth Saunders in his valuable study of the Fourth Gospel, the Gita and the Lotus Sutra, 'all things have a reality. They are sacraments, not illusions like the phenomenal word of the Vedanta.' That the Logos is in things, lives and conscious minds, and they in the Logos, was taught much more emphatically and explicitly by the Vedantists than by the author of the Fourth Gospel; and the same idea is, of course, basic in the theology of Taoism. But though all things in fact exist at the intersection between a divine manifestation and a ray of the unmanifest Godhead, it by no means follows that everyone always knows that this is so. On the contrary, the vast majority of human beings believe that their own selfness and the objects around them possess a reality in themselves, wholly independent of the Logos. This belief leads them to identify their being with their sensations, cravings and private notions, and in its turn this self-identification with what they are not effectively walls them off from divine influence and the very possibility of deliverance. To most of us on most occasions things are not symbols and actions are not sacramental; and we have to teach ourselves, consciously and deliberately, to remember that they are.

The world is imprisoned in its own activity, except when actions are performed as worship of God. Therefore you must perform every action sacramentally (as if it were

yajna, the sacrifice that, in its divine Logos-essence, is identical with the Godhead to whom it is offered), and be free from all attachment to results.

Bhagavad-Gita

Precisely similar teachings are found in Christian writers, who recommend that persons and even things should be regarded as temples of the Holy Ghost and that everything done or suffered should be constantly 'offered to God'.

It is hardly necessary to add that this process of conscious sacramentalization can be applied only to such actions as are not intrinsically evil. Somewhat unfortunately, the Gita was not originally published as an independent work, but as a theological digression within an epic poem; and since, like most epics, the Mahabharata is largely concerned with the exploits of warriors, it is primarily in relation to warfare that the Gita's advice to act with non-attachment and for God's sake only is given. Now, war is accompanied and followed, among other things, by a widespread dissemination of anger and hatred, pride, cruelty and fear. But, it may be asked, is it possible (the Nature of Things being what it is) to sacramentalize actions whose psychological by-products are so completely God-eclipsing as are these passions? The Buddha of the Pali scriptures would certainly have answered this question in the negative. So would the Lao Tzu of the Tao Teh King. So would the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels. The Krishna of the Gita (who is also, by a kind of literary accident, the Krishna of the Mahabharata) gives an affirmative answer. But this affirmative answer, it should be remembered, is hedged around with limiting conditions. Non-attached slaughter is recommended only to those who are warriors by caste, and to whom warfare is a duty and vocation. But what is duty or dharma for the Kshatriya is adharma and forbidden to the Brahman; nor is it any part of the normal vocation or caste duty of the mercantile and labouring classes. Any confusion of castes, any assumption by one man of another man's vocation and duties of state, is always, say the Hindus, a moral evil and a menace to social stability. Thus, it is the business of the Brahmans to fit themselves to be seers, so that they may be able to explain to their fellow-men the nature of the universe, of man's last end and of the way to liberation. When soldiers or administrators, or usurers, or manufacturers or workers usurp the functions of the Brahmans and formulate a philosophy of life in accordance with their variously distorted notions of the universe, then society is thrown into confusion. Similarly confusion reigns when the Brahman, the man of non-coercive spiritual authority, assumes the coercive power of the Kshatriya, or when the Kshatriya's job of ruling is usurped by bankers and stock-jobbers, or finally when the warrior caste's dharma of fighting is imposed, by conscription, on Brahman, Vaisya and Sudra alike. The history of Europe during the later Middle Ages and Renaissance is largely a history of the social confusions that arise when large numbers of those who should be seers abandon spiritual authority in favour of money and political power. And contemporary history is the hideous record of what happens when political bosses, business men or class-conscious proletarians assume the Brahman's function of formulating a philosophy of life; when usurers dictate policy and debate the issues

of war and peace; and when the warrior's caste duty is imposed on all and sundry, regardless of psycho-physical make-up and vocation.

25. Spiritual Exercises

rites, sacraments, ceremonies, liturgies - all these belong to public worship. They are devices, by means of which the individual members of a congregation are reminded of the true Nature of Things and of their proper relations to one another, the universe and God. What ritual is to public worship, spiritual exercises are to private devotion. They are devices to be used by the solitary individual when he enters into his closet, shuts the door and prays to his Father which is in secret. Like all other devices, from psalm-singing to Swedish exercises and from logic to internal-combustion engines, spiritual exercises can be used either well or badly. Some of those who use spiritual exercises make progress in the life of the spirit; others, using the same exercises, make no progress. To believe that their use either constitutes enlightenment or guarantees it, is mere idolatry and superstition. To neglect them altogether, to refuse to find out whether and in what way they can help in the achievement of our final end, is nothing but self-opinionatedness and stubborn obscurantism.

St François de Sales used to say, 'I hear of nothing but perfection on every side, so far as talk goes; but I see very few people who really practise it. Everybody has his own notion of perfection. One man thinks it lies in the cut of his clothes, another in fasting, a third in almsgiving, or in frequenting the Sacraments, in meditation, or in some special gift of contemplation, or in extraordinary gifts or graces - but they are all mistaken, as it seems to me, because they confuse the means, or the results with the end and cause.

'For my part, the only perfection I know of is a hearty love of God, and to love one's neighbour as oneself. Charity is the only virtue which rightly unites us to God and man. Such union is our final aim and end, and all the rest is mere delusion.'

Jean Pierre Camus

St François himself recommended the use of spiritual exercises as a means to the love of God and one's neighbours, and affirmed that such exercises deserved to be greatly cherished; but this affection for the set forms and hours of mental prayer must never, he warned, be allowed to become excessive. To neglect any urgent call to charity or obedience for the sake of practising one's spiritual exercises would be to neglect the end and the proximate means for the sake of means which are not proximate, but at several removes from the ultimate goal.

Spiritual exercises constitute a special class of ascetic practices, whose purpose is, primarily, to prepare the intellect and emotions for those higher forms of prayer in which the soul is essentially passive in relation to divine Reality, and secondarily, by

means of this self-exposure to the Light and of the increased self-knowledge and self-loathing resulting from it, to modify character.

In the Orient the systemization of mental prayer was carried out at some unknown but certainly very early date. Both in India and China spiritual exercises (accompanied or preceded by more or less elaborate physical exercises, especially breathing exercises) are known to have been used several centuries before the birth of Christ. In the West, the monks of the Thebaid spent a good part of each day in meditation as a means to contemplation or the unitive knowledge of God; and, at all periods of Christian history, more or less methodical mental prayer has been largely used to supplement the vocal praying of public and private worship. But the systemization of mental prayer into elaborate spiritual exercises was not undertaken, it would seem, until near the end of the Middle Ages, when reformers within the Church popularized this new form of spirituality in an effort to revivify a decaying monasticism and to reinforce the religious life of a laity that had been bewildered by the Great Schism and profoundly shocked by the corruption of the clergy. Among these early systematizers the most effective and influential were the canons of Windesheim, who were in close touch with the Brethren of the Common Life. During the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries spiritual exercises became, one might almost say, positively fashionable. The early Jesuits had shown what extraordinary transformations of character, what intensities of will and devotion, could be achieved by men systematically trained on the intellectual and imaginative exercises of St Ignatius Loyola, and as the prestige of the Jesuits stood very high, at this time, in Catholic Europe, the prestige of spiritual exercises also stood high. Throughout the first century of the Counter-Reformation numerous systems of mental prayer (many of them, unlike the Ignatian exercises, specifically mystical) were composed, published and eagerly bought. After the Quietist controversy mysticism fell into disrepute and, along with mysticism, many of the once popular systems, which their authors had designed to assist the soul on the path towards contemplation. For more detailed information on this interesting and important subject the reader should consult Pourrat's *Christian Spirituality*, Bede Frost's *The Art of Mental Prayer*, Edward Leen's *Progress through Mental Prayer* and Aelfrida Tillyard's *Spiritual Exercises*. Here it is only possible to give a few characteristic specimens from the various religious traditions.

Know that when you learn to lose yourself, you will reach the Beloved. There is no other secret to be learnt, and more than this is not known to me.

Ansari of Herat

Six hundred years later, as we have seen, St François de Sales was saying very much the same thing to young Camus and all the others who came to him in the ingenuous hope that he could reveal some easy and infallible trick for achieving the unitive knowledge of God. But to lose self in the Beloved - there is no other secret. And yet the Sufis, like their Christian counterparts, made ample use of spiritual exercises — not, of course, as ends in themselves, not even as proximate means, but as means to the proximate means of union with God, namely selfless and loving contemplation.

For twelve years I was the smith of my soul. I put it in the furnace of austerity and burned it in the fire of combat, I laid it on the anvil of reproach and smote it with the hammer of blame until I made of my soul a mirror. Five years I was the mirror of myself and was ever polishing that mirror with divers acts of worship and piety. Then for a year I gazed in contemplation. On my waist I saw a girdle of pride and vanity and self-conceit and reliance on devotion and approbation of my works. I laboured for five years more until that girdle became worn out and I professed Islam anew. I looked and saw that all created things were dead. I pronounced four akbirs over them and returned from the funeral of them all, and without intrusion of creatures, through God's help alone, I attained unto God.

Bayazid of Bistun

The simplest and most widely practised form of spiritual exercise is repetition of the divine name, or of some phrase affirming God's existence and the soul's dependence upon Him.

And therefore, when thou purposest thee to this work (of contemplation), and feelest by grace that thou art called by God, lift up thine heart unto God with a meek stirring of love. And mean God that made thee, and bought thee, and graciously called thee to thy degree, and receive none other thought of God. And yet not all these, except thou desirest; for a naked intent directed unto God, without any other cause than Himself, sufficeth wholly.

And if thou desirest to have this intent lapped and folden in one word, so that thou mayest have better hold thereupon, take thee but a little word of one syllable, for so it is better than of two; for the shorter the word, the better it accordeth with the work of the spirit. And such a word is this word GOD or this word LOVE. Choose whichever thou wilt, or another; whatever word thou likest best of one syllable. And fasten this word to thy heart that so it may never go thence for anything that befalleth.

The word shall be thy shield and thy spear, whether thou ridest on peace or on war. With this word thou shalt beat on this cloud and this darkness above thee. With this word thou shalt smite down all manner of thought under the cloud of forgetting. Insomuch that, if any thought press upon thee to ask what thou wouldst have, answer with no more words than with this one word (GOD or LOVE). And if he offer of his great learning to expound to thee that word, say to him that thou wilt have it all whole, and not broken nor undone. And if thou wilt hold fast to this purpose, be sure that that thought will no while bide.

The Cloud of Unknowing

In another chapter the author of the Cloud suggests that the word symbolizing our final end should sometimes be alternated with a word denoting our present position in relation to that end. The words to be repeated in this exercise are SIN and GOD.

Not breaking or expounding these words with curiosity of wit, considering the qualities of these words, as if thou wouldst by that consideration increase thy devotion. I believe it should never be so in this case and in this work. But hold them all whole, these words; and mean by SIN a lump, thou knowest never what, none other thing

but thyself... And because ever the whiles thou livest in this wretched life, thou must always feel in some part this foul stinking lump of sin, as it were oned and congealed with the substance of thy being, therefore shalt thou alternately mean these two words - SIN and GOD. With this general understanding that, if thou hadst God, then shouldst thou lack sin; and mightest thou lack sin, then shouldst thou have God.

The Cloud of Unknowing

The shaykh took my hand and led me into the convent. I sat down in the portico, and the shaykh picked up a book and began to read. As is the way of scholars, I could not help wondering what the book was.

The shaykh perceived my thoughts. 'Abu Said,' he said, 'all the hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets were sent to preach one word. They bade the people say, "Allah," and devote themselves to Him. Those who heard this word by the ear alone let it go out by the other ear; but those who heard it with their souls imprinted it on their souls and repeated it until it penetrated their hearts and souls, and their whole beings became this word. They were made independent of the pronunciation of the word; they were released from the sound of the letters. Having understood the spiritual meaning of this word, they became so absorbed in it that they were no more conscious of their own non-existence.'

Abu Sa 'id

Take a short verse of a psalm, and it shall be shield and buckler to you against all your foes.

Cassian, quoting Abbot Isaac

In India the repetition of the divine name or the mantram (a short devotional or doctrinal affirmation) is called japam and is a favourite spiritual exercise among all the sects of Hinduism and Buddhism. The shortest mantram is OM - a spoken symbol that concentrates within itself the whole Vedanta philosophy. To this and other mantrams Hindus attribute a kind of magical power. The repetition of them is a sacramental act, conferring grace *ex opere operato*. A similar efficacy was and indeed still is attributed to sacred words and formulae by Buddhists, Moslems, Jews and Christians. And, of course, just as traditional religious rites seem to possess the power to evoke the real presence of existents projected into physic objectivity by the faith and devotion of generations of worshippers, so too long-hallowed words and phrases may become channels for conveying powers other and greater than those belonging to the individual who happens at the moment to be pronouncing them. And meanwhile the constant repetition of 'this word GOD or this word LOVE' may, in favourable circumstances, have a profound effect upon the subconscious mind, inducing that selfless one-pointedness of will and thought and feeling, without which the unitive knowledge of God is impossible. Furthermore, it may happen that, if the word is simply repeated 'all whole, and not broken up or undone' by discursive analysis, the Fact for which the word stands will end by presenting itself to the soul in the form of an integral intuition. When this happens, 'the doors of the letters of this word are opened' (to use the language of the Sufis) and the soul passes through into Reality. But though

all this may happen, it need not necessarily happen. For there is no spiritual patent medicine, no pleasant and infallible panacea for souls suffering from separateness and the deprivation of God. No, there is no guaranteed cure; and, if used improperly, the medicine of spiritual exercises may start a new disease or aggravate the old. For example, a mere mechanical repetition of the divine name can result in a kind of numbed stupefaction that is as much below analytical thought as intellectual vision is above it. And because the sacred word constitutes a kind of prejudgment of the experience induced by its repetition, this stupefaction, or some other abnormal state, is taken to be the immediate awareness of Reality and is idolatrously cultivated and hunted after, with a turning of the will towards what is supposed to be God before there has been a turning of it away from the self.

The dangers which beset the practiser of *japam*, who is insufficiently mortified and insufficiently recollected and aware, are encountered in the same or different forms by those who make use of more elaborate spiritual exercises. Intense concentration on an image or idea, such as is recommended by many teachers, both Eastern and Western, may be very helpful for certain persons in certain circumstances, very harmful in other cases. It is helpful when the concentration results in such mental stillness, such a silence of intellect, will and feeling, that the divine Word can be uttered within the soul. It is harmful when the image concentrated upon becomes so hallucinatingly real that it is taken for objective Reality and idolatrously worshipped; harmful, too, when the exercise of concentration produces unusual psycho-physical results, in which the person experiencing them takes a personal pride, as being special graces and divine communications. Of these unusual psycho-physical occurrences the most ordinary are visions and auditions, foreknowledge, telepathy and other psychic powers, and the curious bodily phenomenon of intense heat. Many persons who practise concentration exercises experience this heat occasionally. A number of Christian saints, of whom the best known are St Philip of Neri and St Catherine of Siena, have experienced it continuously. In the East techniques have been developed whereby the accession of heat resulting from intense concentration can be regulated, controlled and put to do useful work, such as keeping the contemplative warm in freezing weather. In Europe, where the phenomenon is not well understood, many would-be contemplatives have experienced this heat, and have imagined it to be some special divine favour, or even the experience of union, and being insufficiently mortified and humble, have fallen into idolatry and a God-eclipsing spiritual pride.

The following passage from one of the great Mahayana scriptures contains a searching criticism of the kind of spiritual exercises prescribed by Hinayanist teachers - concentration on symbolic objects, meditations on transience and decay (to wean the soul away from attachment to earthly things), on the different virtues which must be cultivated, on the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism. (Many of these exercises are described at length in *The Path of Purity*, a book which has been translated in full and published by the Pali Text Society. Mahayanist exercises are described in the

Surangama Sutra, translated by Dwight Goddard, and in the volume on Tibetan Yoga, edited by Dr Evans-Wentz.)

In his exercise the Yogin sees (imaginatively) the form of the sun or moon, or something looking like a lotus, or the underworld, or various forms, such as sky, fire and the like. All these appearances lead him in the way of the philosophers; they throw him down into the state of Sravakahood, into the realm of the Pratyeka-buddhas. When all these are put aside and there is a state of imagelessness, then a condition in conformity with Suchness presents itself, and the Buddhas will come together from all their countries and with their shining hands will touch the head of this benefactor.

Lankavatara Sutra

In other words intense concentration on any image (even if the image be a sacred symbol, like the lotus) or on any idea, from the idea of hell to the idea of some desirable virtue or its apotheosis in one of the divine attributes, is always concentration on something produced by one's own mind. Sometimes, in mortified and recollected persons, the art of concentration merges into the state of openness and alert passivity, in which true contemplation becomes possible. But sometimes the fact that the concentration is on a product of the concentrator's own mind results in some kind of false or incomplete contemplation. Suchness, or the divine Ground of all being, reveals itself to those in whom there is no ego-centredness (nor even any alter-ego-centredness) either of will, imagination, feeling or intellect.

I say, then, that introversion must be rejected, because extraversion must never be admitted; but one must live continuously in the abyss of the divine Essence and in the nothingness of things; and if at times a man finds himself separated from them (the divine Essence and created nothingness) he must return to them, not by introversion, but by annihilation.

Renet of Canfield

Introversion is the process condemned in the Lankavatara Sutra as the way of the Yogin, the way that leads at worst to idolatry, at best to a partial knowledge of God in the heights within, never to a complete knowledge in the fullness without as well as within. Annihilation (of which Father Benet distinguishes two kinds, passive and active) is for the Mahayanist the 'state of imagelessness' in contemplation and, in active life, the state of total non-attachment, in which eternity can be apprehended within time, and samsara is known to be one with nirvana.

And therefore, if thou wilt stand and not fall, cease never in thine intent, but beat evermore on this cloud of unknowing that is betwixt thee and thy God, with a sharp dart of longing love. And, loathe to think of aught under God. And go not thence for anything that befalleth. For this only is that work that destroyed) the ground and the root of sin...

Yea, and what more? Weep thou never so much for sorrow of thy sins, or of the passion of Christ, or have thou never so much thought of the joys of heaven, what may it do to thee? Surely much good, much help, much profit, much grace will it get thee. But in comparison of this blind stirring of love, it is but little that it doth, or may do,

without this. This by itself is the best part part of Mary, without these other. They without it profit but little or nought. It destroyeth not only the ground and the root of sin, as it may be here, but also it getteth virtues. For if it be truly conceived, all virtues shall be subtly and perfectly conceived, felt and comprehended in it, without any mingling of thine intent. And have a man never so many virtues without it, all they be mingled with some crooked intent, for the which they be imperfect. For virtue is nought else but an ordered and measured affection, plainly directed unto God for Himself.

The Cloud of Unknowing

If exercises in concentration, repetitions of the divine name, or meditation on God's attributes or on imagined scenes in the life of saint or Avatar help those who make use of them to come to selflessness, openness and (to use Augustine Baker's phrase) that 'love of the pure divinity,' which makes possible the soul's union with the Godhead, then such spiritual exercises are wholly good and desirable. If they have other results - well, the tree is known by its fruits.

Benet of Canfield, the English Capuchin who wrote *The Rule of Perfection* and was the spiritual guide of Mme Acarie and Cardinal Bérulle, hints in his treatise at a method by which concentration on an image may be made to lead up to imageless contemplation, 'blind beholding,'

'love of the pure divinity.' The period of mental prayer is to begin with intense concentration on a scene of Christ's passion; then the mind is, as it were, to abolish this imagination of the sacred humanity and to pass from it to the formless and attributeless Godhead which that humanity incarnates. A strikingly similar exercise is described in the *Bardo Thodol* or Tibetan Book of the Dead (a work of quite extraordinary profundity and beauty, now fortunately available in translation with a valuable introduction and notes by Dr Evans-Wentz).

Whosoever thy tutelary deity may be, meditate upon the form for much time - as being apparent, yet non-existent in reality, like a form produced by a magician... Then let the visualization of the tutelary deity melt away from the extremities, till nothing at all remaineth visible of it; and put thyself in the state of the Clearness and the Voidness - which thou canst not conceive as something — and abide in that state for a little while. Again meditate upon the tutelary deity; again meditate upon the Clear Light; do this alternately. Afterwards allow thine own intellect to melt away gradually, beginning from the extremities.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead

As a final summing up of the whole matter we may cite a sentence of Eckhart's. 'He who seeks God under settled form lays hold of the form, while missing the God concealed in it.' Here, the key word is 'settled.' It is permissible to seek God provisionally under a form which is from the first recognized as merely a symbol of Reality, and a symbol which must sooner or later be discarded in favour of what it stands for. To seek Him under a settled form - settled because regarded as the very shape of Reality - is to commit oneself to illusion and a kind of idolatry.

The chief impediments in the way of taking up the practice of some form of mental prayer are ignorance of the Nature of Things (which has never, of course, been more abysmal than in this age of compulsory education) and the absorption in self-interest, in positive and negative emotions connected with the passions and with what is technically known as a 'good time.' And when the practice has been taken up, the chief impediments in the way of advance towards the goal of mental prayer are distractions.

Probably all persons, even the most saintly, suffer to some extent from distractions. But it is obvious that a person who, in the intervals of mental prayer, leads a dispersed, unrecollected, self-centred life will have more and worse distractions to contend with than one who lives one-pointedly, never forgetting who he is and how related to the universe and its divine Ground. Some of the most profitable spiritual exercises actually make use of distractions, in such a way that these impediments to self-abandonment, mental silence and passivity in relation to God are transformed into means of progress.

But first, by way of preface to the description of these exercises, it should be remarked that all teachers of the art of mental prayer concur in advising their pupils never to use violent efforts of the surface will against the distractions which arise in the mind during periods of recollection. The reason for this has been succinctly stated by Benet of Canfield in his *Rule of Perfection*. 'The more a man operates, the more he is and exists. And the more he is and exists, the less of God is and exists within him.' Every enhancement of the separate personal self produces a corresponding diminution of that self's awareness of divine Reality. But any violent reaction of the surface will against distractions automatically enhances the separate, personal self and therefore reduces the individual's chances of coming to the knowledge and love of God. In the process of trying forcibly to abolish our God-eclipsing day-dreams, we merely deepen the darkness of our native ignorance. This being so, we must give up the attempt to fight distractions and find ways either of circumventing them, or of somehow making use of them. For example, if we have already achieved a certain degree of alert passivity in relation to Reality and distractions intervene, we can simply 'look over the shoulder' of the malicious and concupiscent imbecile who stands between us and the object of our 'simple regard.' The distractions now appear in the foreground of consciousness; we take notice of their presence, then, lightly and gently, without any straining of the will, we shift the focus of attention to Reality which we glimpse, or divine, or (by past experience or an act of faith) merely know about, in the background. In many cases, their effortless shift of attention will cause the distractions to lose their obsessive 'thereness' and, for a time at least, to disappear.

If the heart wanders or is distracted, bring it back to the point quite gently and replace it tenderly in its Master's presence. And even if you did nothing during the whole of your hour but bring your heart back and place it again in Our Lord's presence, though it went away every time you brought it back, your hour would be very well employed.

St François de Sales

In this case the circumvention of distractions constitutes a valuable lesson in patience and perseverance. Another and more direct method of making use of the monkey in our heart is described in *The Cloud of Unknowing*.

When thou feelest that thou mayest in no wise put them (distractions) down, cower then down under them as a caitiff and a coward overcome in battle, and think it is but folly to strive any longer with them, and therefore thou yieldest thyself to God in the hands of thine enemies... And surely, I think, if this device be truly conceived, it is nought else but a true knowing and a feeling of thyself as thou art, a wretch and a filthy thing, far worse than nought; the which knowing and feeling is meekness (humility). And this meekness meriteth to have God mightily descending to venge thee on thine enemies, so as to take thee up and cherishingly dry thy ghostly eyes, as the father doth to the child that is at the point to perish under the mouths of wild swine and mad biting bears.

The Cloud of Unknowing

Finally, there is the exercise, much employed in India, which consists in dispassionately examining the distractions as they arise and in tracing them back, through the memory of particular thoughts, feelings and actions, to their origins in temperament and character, constitution and acquired habit. This procedure reveals to the soul the true reasons for its separation from the divine Ground of its being. It comes to realize that its spiritual ignorance is due to the inert recalcitrance or positive rebelliousness of its selfhood, and it discovers, specifically, the points where that eclipsing selfhood congeals, as it were, into the hardest, densest clots. Then, having made the resolution to do what it can, in the course of daily living, to rid itself of these impediments to Light, it quietly puts aside the thought of them and, empty, purged and silent, passively exposes itself to whatever it may be that lies beyond and within.

‘Noverim me, noverim Te,’ St Francis of Assisi used to repeat. Self-knowledge, leading to self-hatred and humility, is the condition of the love and knowledge of God. Spiritual exercises that make use of distractions have this great merit, that they increase self-knowledge. Every soul that approaches God must be aware of who and what it is. To practise a form of mental or vocal prayer that is, so to speak, above one’s moral station is to act a lie: and the consequences of such lying are wrong notions about God, idolatrous worship of private and unrealistic phantasies and (for lack of the humility of self-knowledge) spiritual pride.

It is hardly necessary to add that this method has, like every other, its dangers as well as its advantages. For those who employ it there is a standing temptation to forget the end in the all too squalidly personal means — to become absorbed in a whitewashing or remorseful essay in autobiography to the exclusion of the pure Divinity, before whom the ‘angry ape’ played all the fantastic tricks which he now so relishingly remembers.

We come now to what may be called the spiritual exercises of daily life. The problem, here, is simple enough - how to keep oneself reminded, during the hours of work and recreation, that there is a good deal more to the universe than that which meets the eye

of one absorbed in business or pleasure? There is no single solution to this problem. Some kinds of work and recreation are so simple and unexactive that they permit of continuous repetition of sacred name or phrase, unbroken thought about divine Reality, or, what is still better, uninterrupted mental silence and alert passivity. Such occupations as were the daily task of Brother Lawrence (whose 'practice of the presence of God' has enjoyed a kind of celebrity in circles otherwise completely uninterested in mental prayer or spiritual exercises) were almost all of this simple and unexacting kind. But there are other tasks too complex to admit of this constant recollectedness. Thus, to quote Eckhart, 'a celebrant of the mass who is over-intent on recollection is liable to make mistakes. The best way is to try to concentrate the mind before and afterwards, but, when saying it, to do so quite straightforwardly.' This advice applies to any occupation demanding undivided attention. But undivided attention is seldom demanded and is with difficulty sustained for long periods at a stretch. There are always intervals of relaxation. Everyone is free to choose whether these intervals shall be filled with day-dreaming or with something better.

Whoever has God in mind, simply and solely God, in all things, such a man carries God with him into all his works and into all places, and God alone does all his works. He seeks nothing but God, nothing seems good to him but God. He becomes one with God in every thought. Just as no multiplicity can dissipate God, so nothing can dissipate this man or make him multiple.

Eckhart

I do not mean that we ought voluntarily to put ourselves in the way of dissipating influences; God forbid! That would be tempting God and seeking danger. But such distractions as come in any way providentially, if met with due precaution and carefully guarded hours of prayer and reading, will turn to good. Often those things which make you sigh for solitude are more profitable to your humiliation and self-denial than the most utter solitude itself would be... Sometimes a stimulating book of devotion, a fervent meditation, a striking conversation, may flatter your tastes and make you feel self-satisfied and complacent, imagining yourself far advanced towards perfection; and by filling you with unreal notions, be all the time swelling your pride and making you come from your religious exercises less tolerant of whatever crosses your will. I would have you hold fast to this simple rule: seek nothing dissipating, but bear quietly with whatever God sends without your seeking it, whether of dissipation or interruption. It is a great delusion to seek God afar off in matters perhaps quite unattainable, ignoring that He is beside us in our daily annoyances, so long as we bear humbly and bravely all those which arise from the manifold imperfections of our neighbours and ourselves.

Fénelon Consider that your life is a perpetual perishing, and lift up your mind to God above all whenever the strikes, saying, 'God I adore your eternal being; I am happy that my being should perish every moment, so that at every moment it may render homage to your eternity.'

J J Olier When you are walking alone, or elsewhere, glance at the general will of God, by which He wills all the works of his mercy and justice in heaven, on earth,

under the earth, and approve, praise and then love that sovereign will, all holy, all just, all beautiful. Glance next at the special will of God, by which He loves his own, and works in them in divers ways, by consolation and tribulation. And then you should ponder a little, considering the variety of consolations, but especially of tribulations, that the good suffer; and then with great humility approve, praise and love all this will. Consider that will in your own person, in all the good or ill that happens to you and may happen to you, except sin; then approve, praise and love all that, protesting that you will ever cherish, honour and adore that sovereign will, and submitting to God's pleasure and giving Him all who are yours, amongst whom am I. End in a great confidence in that will, that it will work all good for us and our happiness. I add that, when you have performed this exercise two or three times in this way, you can shorten it, vary it and arrange it, as you find best, for it should often be thrust into your heart as an aspiration.

St François de Sales

Dwelling in the light, there is no occasion at all for stumbling, for all things are discovered in the light. When thou art walking abroad it is present with thee in thy bosom, thou needest not to say, Lo here, or Lo there; and as thou layest in thy bed, it is present to teach thee and judge thy wandering mind, which wanders abroad, and thy high thoughts and imaginations, and makes them subject. For following thy thoughts, thou art quickly lost. By dwelling in this light, it will discover to thee the body of sin and thy corruptions and fallen estate, where thou art. In that light which shows thee all this, stand; go neither to the right nor to the left.

George Fox

The extract which follows is taken from the translation by Waitao and Goddard of the Chinese text of *The Awakening of Faith*, by Ashvaghosha - a work originally composed in Sanskrit during the first century of our era, but of which the original has been lost. Ashvaghosha devotes a section of his treatise to the 'expedient means,' as they are called in Buddhist terminology, whereby unitive knowledge of Thusness may be achieved. The list of these indispensable means includes charity and compassion towards all sentient beings, sub-human as well as human, self-naughting or mortification, personal devotion to the incarnations of the Absolute Buddha-nature, and spiritual exercises designed to free the mind from its infatuating desires for separateness and independent selfhood and so make it capable of realizing the identity of its own essence with the universal Essence of Mind. Of these various 'expedient means' I will cite only the last two - the Way of Tranquillity, and the Way of Wisdom.

The Way of Tranquillity. The purpose of this discipline is twofold: to bring to a standstill all disturbing thoughts (and all discriminating thoughts are disturbing), to quiet all engrossing moods and emotions, so that it will be possible to concentrate the mind for the purpose of meditation and realization. Secondly, when the mind is tranquillized by stopping all discursive thinking, to practise 'reflection' or meditation, not in a discriminating, analytical way, but in a more intellectual way (cp the scholastic distinction between reason and intellect), by realizing the meaning and significances

of one's thoughts and experiences. By this twofold practice of 'stopping and realizing' one's faith, which has already been awakened, will be developed, and gradually the two aspects of this practice will merge into one another - the mind perfectly tranquil, but most active in realization. In the past one naturally had confidence in one's faculty of discrimination (analytical thinking), but this is now to be eradicated and ended.

Those who are practising 'stopping' should retire to some quiet place and there, sitting erect, earnestly seek to tranquillize and concentrate the mind. While one may at first think of one's breathing, it is not wise to continue this practice very long, nor to let the mind rest on any particular appearances, or sights, or conceptions, arising from the senses, such as the primal elements of earth, water, fire and ether (objects on which Hinayanists were wont to concentrate at one stage of their spiritual training), nor to let it rest on any of the mind's perceptions, particularizations, discriminations, moods or emotions. All kinds of ideation are to be discarded as fast as they arise; even the notions of controlling and discarding are to be got rid of. One's mind should become like a mirror, reflecting things, but not judging them or retaining them. Conceptions of themselves have no substance; let them arise and pass away unheeded. Conceptions arising from the senses and lower mind will not take form of themselves, unless they are grasped by the attention; if they are ignored, there will be no appearing and no disappearing. The same is true of conditions outside the mind; they should not be allowed to engross one's attention and so to hinder one's practice. The mind cannot be absolutely vacant, and as the thoughts arising from the senses and the lower mind are discarded and ignored, one must supply their place by right meditation. The question then arises: what is right meditation? The reply is: right meditation is the realization of mind itself, of its pure undifferentiated Essence. When the mind is fixed on its pure Essence, there should be no lingering notions of the self, even of the self in the act of realizing, nor of realization as a phenomenon...

The Way of Wisdom. The purpose of this discipline is to bring a man into the habit of applying the insight that has come to him as the result of the preceding disciplines. When one is rising, standing, walking, doing something, stopping, one should constantly concentrate one's mind on the act and the doing of it, not on one's relation to the act, or its character or value. One should think: there is walking, there is stopping, there is realizing; not, I am walking, I am doing this, it is a good thing, it is disagreeable, I am gaining merit, it is I who am realizing how wonderful it is. Thence come vagrant thoughts, feelings of elation or of failure and unhappiness. Instead of all this, one should simply practise concentration of the mind on the act itself, understanding it to be an expedient means for attaining tranquillity of mind, realization, insight and Wisdom; and one should follow the practice in faith, willingness and gladness. After long practice the bondage of old habits becomes weakened and disappears, and in its place appear confidence, satisfaction, awareness and tranquillity.

What is this Way of Wisdom designed to accomplish? There are three classes of conditions that hinder one from advancing along the path to Enlightenment. First, there are the allurements arising from the senses, from external conditions and from the

discriminating mind. Second, there are the internal conditions of the mind, its thoughts, desires and mood. All these the earlier practices (ethical and modificatory) are designed to eliminate. In the third class of impediments are placed the individual's instinctive and fundamental (and therefore most insidious and persistent) urges - the will to live and to enjoy, the will to cherish one's personality, the will to propagate, which give rise to greed and lust, fear and anger, infatuation, pride and egotism. The practice of the Wisdom Paramita is designed to control and eliminate these fundamental and instinctive hindrances. By means of it the mind gradually grows clearer, more luminous, more peaceful.

Insight becomes more penetrating, faith deepens and broadens, until they merge into the inconceivable Samadhi of the Mind's Pure Essence. As one continues the practice of the Way of Wisdom, one yields less and less to thoughts of comfort or desolation; faith becomes surer, more pervasive, beneficent and joyous; and fear of retrogression vanishes. But do not think that the consummation is to be attained easily or quickly; many rebirths may be necessary, many aeons may have to elapse. So long as doubts, unbelief, slanders, evil conduct, hindrances of karma, weakness of faith, pride, sloth and mental agitation persist, so long as even their shadows linger, there can be no attainment of the Samadhi of the Buddhas. But he who has attained to the radiance of the highest Samadhi, or unitive Knowledge, will be able to realize, with all the Buddhas, the perfect unity of all sentient beings with Buddhahood's Dharmakaya. In the pure Dharmakaya there is no dualism, neither shadow or differentiation. All sentient beings, if only they were able to realize it, are already in Nirvana. The Mind's pure Essence is Highest Samadhi, is Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi, is Prajna Paramita, is Highest Perfect Wisdom.

Ashvaghosha

26. Perseverance and Regularity

HE WHO INTERRUPTS the course of his spiritual exercises and prayer is like a man who allows a bird to escape from his hand; he can hardly catch it again.

St John of the Cross Si volumus non redire, currendum est. (If we wish not to go backwards, we must run.)

Pelagius

If thou shouldst say, 'It is enough, I have reached perfection,' all is lost. For it is the function of perfection to make one know one's imperfection.

St Augustine The Buddhists have a similar saying to the effect that, if an arhat thinks to himself that he is an arhat, that is proof that he is not an arhat.

I tell you that no one can experience this birth (of God realized in the soul) without a mighty effort. No one can attain this birth unless he can withdraw his mind entirely from things.

Eckhart

If a sharp penance had been laid upon me, I know of none that I would not very often have willingly undertaken, rather than prepare myself for prayer by self-recollection. And certainly the violence with which Satan assailed me was so irresistible, or my evil habits were so strong, that I did not betake myself to prayer; and the sadness I felt on entering the oratory was so great that it required all the courage I had to force myself in. They say of me that my courage is not slight, and it is known that God has given me a courage beyond that of a woman; but I have made a bad use of it. In the end Our Lord came to my relief, and when I had done this violence to myself, I found greater peace and joy than I sometimes had when I had a desire to pray.

St Teresa

To one of his spiritual children our dear father (St François de Sales) said, 'Be patient with everyone, but above all with yourself. I mean, do not be disheartened by your imperfections, but always rise up with fresh courage. I am glad you make a fresh beginning daily; there is no better means of attaining to the spiritual life than by continually beginning again, and never thinking that we have done enough. How are we to be patient in bearing with our neighbour's faults, if we are impatient in bearing with our own? He who is fretted by his own failings will not correct them; all profitable correction comes from a calm, peaceful mind.'

Jean Pierre Camus

There are scarce any souls that give themselves to internal prayer but some time or other do find themselves in great indisposition thereto, having great obscurities in the mind and great insensibility in their affections, so that if imperfect souls be not well

instructed and prepared, they will be in danger, in case that such contradictions of inferior nature continue long, to be dejected, yea, and perhaps deterred from pursuing prayer, for they will be apt to think that their recollections are to no purpose at all, since, for as much as seems to them, whatsoever they think or actuate towards God is a mere loss of time and of no worth at all; and therefore that it would be more profitable for them to employ their time some other way.

Yea, some souls there are conducted by Almighty God by no other way, but only by such prayer of aridity, finding no sensible contentment in any recollection, but, on the contrary, continual pain and contradiction, and yet, by a privy grace and courage imprinted deeply in the spirit, cease not for all that, but resolutely break through all difficulties and continue, the best way they can, their internal exercises to the great advancement of their spirit.

Augustine Baker

27. Contemplation, Action and Social Utility

IN ALL THE historic formulations of the Perennial Philosophy it is axiomatic that the end of human life is contemplation, or the direct and intuitive awareness of God; that action is the means to that end; that a society is good to the extent that it renders contemplation possible for its members; and that the existence of at least a minority of contemplatives is necessary for the well-being of any society. In the popular philosophy of our own time it goes without saying that the end of human life is action; that contemplation (above all in its lower forms of discursive thought) is the means to that end; that a society is good to the extent that the actions of its members make for progress in technology and organization (a progress which is assumed to be causally related to ethical and cultural advance); and that a minority of contemplatives is perfectly useless and perhaps even harmful to the community which tolerates it. To expatiate further on the modern Weltanschauung is unnecessary; explicitly or by implication it is set forth on every page of the advertising sections of every newspaper and magazine. The extracts that follow have been chosen in order to illustrate the older, truer, less familiar theses of the Perennial Philosophy.

Work is for the purification of the mind, not for the perception of Reality. The realization of Truth is brought about by discrimination, and not in the least by ten millions of acts.

Shankara

Now, the last end of each thing is that which is intended by the first author or mover of that thing; and the first author and mover of the universe is an intellect. Consequently, the last end of the universe must be the good of the intellect; and this is truth. Therefore truth must be the last end of the whole universe, and the consideration thereof must be the chief occupation of wisdom. And for this reason divine Wisdom, clothed in flesh, declares that He came into the world to make known the truth... Moreover Aristotle defines the First Philosophy as being the knowledge of truth, not of any truth, but of that truth which is the source of all truth, of that, namely, which refers to the first principle of being of all things; wherefore its truth is the principle of all truth, since the disposition of things is the same in truth as in being.

St Thomas Aquinas

A thing may belong to the contemplative life in two ways, essentially or as a predisposition... The moral virtues belong to the contemplative life as a predisposition. For the act of contemplation, in which the contemplative life essentially consists, is hin-

dered both by the impetuosity of the passions and by outward disturbances. Now the moral virtues curb the impetuosity of the passions and quell the disturbance of outward occupations. Hence moral virtues belong to the contemplative life as a predisposition.

St Thomas Aquinas

These works (of mercy), though they be but active, yet they help very much, and dispose a man in the beginning to attain afterwards to contemplation.

Walter Hilton

In Buddhism, as in Vedanta and in all but the most recent forms of Christianity, right action is the means by which the mind is prepared for contemplation. The first seven branches of the Eightfold Path are the active, ethical preparation for unitive knowledge of Suchness. Only those who consistently practise the Four Virtuous Acts, in which all other virtues are included - namely, the requital of hatred by love, resignation, 'holy indifference' or desirelessness, obedience to the dharma or Nature of Things - can hope to achieve the liberating realization that samsara and nirvana are one, that the soul and all other beings have as their living principle the Intelligible Light or Buddha-womb.

A question now, quite naturally, presents itself: Who is called to that highest form of prayer which is contemplation? The answer is unequivocally plain. All are called to contemplation, because all are called to achieve deliverance, which is nothing else but the knowledge that unites the knower with what is known, namely the eternal Ground or Godhead. The oriental exponents of the Perennial Philosophy would probably deny that everyone is called here and now; in this particular life, they would say, it may be to all intents and purposes impossible for a given individual to achieve more than a partial deliverance, such as personal survival in some kind of 'heaven,' from which there may be either an advance towards total liberation or else a return to those material conditions which, as all the masters of the spiritual life agree, are so uniquely propitious for taking the cosmic intelligence test that results in enlightenment. In orthodox Christianity it is denied that the individual soul can have more than one incarnation, or that it can make any progress in its posthumous existence. If it goes to hell, it stays there. If it goes to purgatory, it merely expiates past evil doing, so as to become capable of the beatific vision. And when it gets to heaven, it has just so much of the beatific vision as its conduct during its one brief life on earth made it capable of, and everlastingly no more. Granted these postulates, it follows that, if all are called to contemplation, they are called to it from that particular position in the hierarchy of being, to which nature, nurture, free will and grace have conspired to assign them. In the words of an eminent contemporary theologian, Father Garrigou-Lagrange, 'all souls receive a general remote call to the mystical life, and if all were faithful in avoiding, as they should, not only mortal but venial sins, if they were, each according to his condition, generally docile to the Holy Ghost, and if they lived long enough, a day would come when they would receive the proximate and efficacious vocation to a high perfection and to the mystical life properly so called.' This view - that the life of mystical contemplation is the proper and normal development of the 'interior life' of recollectedness and devotion to God -

is then justified by the following considerations. First, the principle of the two lives is the same. Second, it is only in the life of mystical contemplation that the interior life finds its consummation. Third, their end, which is eternal life, is the same; moreover, only the life of mystical contemplation prepares immediately and perfectly for that end.

There are few contemplatives, because few souls are perfectly humble.

The Imitation of Christ

God does not reserve such a lofty vocation (that of mystical contemplation) to certain souls only; on the contrary, He is willing that all should embrace it. But He finds few who permit Him to work such sublime things for them. There are many who when He sends them trials, shrink from the labour and refuse to bear with the dryness and mortification, instead of submitting, as they must, with perfect patience.

St John of the Cross

This assertion that all are called to contemplation seems to conflict with what we know about the inborn varieties of temperament and with the doctrine that there are at least three principal roads to liberation - the ways of works and devotion as well as the way of knowledge. But the conflict is more apparent than real. If the ways of devotion and works lead to liberation, it is because they lead into the way of knowledge. For total deliverance comes only through unitive knowledge. A soul which does not go on from the ways of devotion and works into the way of knowledge is not totally delivered, but achieves at the best the incomplete salvation of 'heaven.' Coming now to the question of temperament, we find that, in effect, certain individuals are naturally drawn to lay the main doctrinal and practical emphasis in one place, certain others elsewhere. But though there may be born devotees, born workers, born contemplatives, it is nevertheless true that even those at the extreme limits of temperamental eccentricity are capable of making use of other ways than that to which they are naturally drawn. Given the requisite degree of obedience to the leadings of the Light, the born contemplative can learn to purify his heart by work and direct his mind by one-pointed adoration; the born devotee and the born worker can learn to 'be still and know that I am God.' Nobody need be the victim of his peculiar talents. Few or many, of this stamp or of that, they are given us to be used for the gaining of one great end. We have the power to choose whether to use them well or badly - in the easier, worse way or the harder and better.

Those who are more adapted to the active life can prepare themselves for contemplation in the practice of the active life, while those who are more adapted to the contemplative life can take upon themselves the works of the active life so as to become yet more apt for contemplation.

St Thomas Aquinas

He who is strong in faith, weak in understanding, will generally place his confidence in good-for-nothing people and believe in the wrong object. He who is strong in understanding, weak in faith, leans towards dishonesty and is difficult to cure, like a disease caused by medicine. One in whom both are equal believes in the right object.

He who is strong in concentration, weak in energy, is overcome by idleness, since concentration partakes of the nature of idleness. He who is strong in energy, weak in concentration, is overcome by distractions, since energy partakes of the nature of distraction. Therefore they should be made equal to one another, since from equality in both comes contemplation and ecstasy...

Mindfulness should be strong everywhere, for mindfulness keeps the mind away from distraction, into which it might fall, since faith, energy and understanding partake of the nature of distraction: and away from idleness, into which it might fall, since concentration partakes of the nature of idleness.

Buddhaghosha

At this point it is worth remarking parenthetically that God is by no means the only possible object of contemplation. There have been and still are many philosophic, aesthetic and scientific contemplatives. One-pointed concentration on that which is not the highest may become a dangerous form of idolatry. In a letter to Hooker, Darwin wrote that 'it is a cursed evil to any man to become so absorbed in any subject as I am in mine.' It is an evil because such one-pointedness may result in the more or less total atrophy of all but one side of the mind. Darwin himself records that in later life he was unable to take the smallest interest in poetry, art or religion. Professionally, in relation to his chosen speciality, a man may be completely mature. Spiritually and sometimes even ethically, in relation to God and his neighbours, he may be hardly more than a foetus.

In cases where the one-pointed contemplation is of God there is also the risk that the mind's unemployed capacities may atrophy. The hermits of Tibet and the Thebaïd were certainly one-pointed, but with a one-pointedness of exclusion and mutilation. It may be, however, that if they had been more truly 'docile to the Holy Ghost,' they would have come to understand that the one-pointedness of exclusion is at best a preparation for the one-pointedness of inclusion - the realization of God in the fullness of cosmic being as well as in the interior height of the individual soul. Like the Taoist sage, they would at last have turned back into the world riding on their tamed and regenerate individuality; they would have 'come eating and drinking,' would have associated with 'publicans and sinners' or their Buddhist equivalents, 'wine-bibbers and butchers.' For the fully enlightened, totally liberated person, samsara and nirvana, time and eternity, the phenomenal and the Real, are essentially one. His whole life is an unsleeping and one-pointed contemplation of the Godhead in and through the things, lives, minds and events of the world of becoming. There is here no mutilation of the soul, no atrophy of any of its powers and capacities. Rather, there is a general enhancement and intensification of consciousness, and at the same time an extension and transfiguration. No saint has ever complained that absorption in God was a 'cursed evil.'

In the beginning was the Word; behold Him to whom Mary listened. And the Word was made flesh; behold Him whom Martha served.

St Augustine

God aspires us into Himself in contemplation, and then we must be wholly His; but afterwards the Spirit of God expires us without, for the practice of love and good works.

Ruysbroeck

Action, says Aquinas, should be something added to the life of prayer, not something taken away from it. One of the reasons for this recommendation is strictly utilitarian; action that is 'taken away from the life of prayer' is action unenlightened by contact with Reality, uninspired and unguided; consequently it is apt to be ineffective and even harmful. 'The sages of old,' says Chuang Tzu, 'first got Tao for themselves, then got it for others.' There can be no taking of motes out of other people's eyes so long as the beam in our own eye prevents us from seeing the divine Sun and working by its light. Speaking of those who prefer immediate action to acquiring, through contemplation, the power to act well, St John of the Cross asks, 'What do they accomplish?' And he answers, *Poco mas que nada, y a veces nada, y aun a veces dano* ('Little more than nothing, and sometimes nothing at all, and sometimes even harm'). Income must balance expenditure. This is necessary not merely on the economic level, but also on the physiological, the intellectual, the ethical and the spiritual. We cannot put forth physical energy unless we stoke our body with fuel in the form of food. We cannot hope to utter anything worth saying, unless we read and inwardly digest the utterances of our betters. We cannot act rightly and effectively unless we are in the habit of laying ourselves open to leadings of the divine Nature of Things. We must draw in the goods of eternity in order to be able to give out the goods of time. But the goods of eternity cannot be had except by giving up at least a little of our time to silently waiting for them. This means that the life in which ethical expenditure is balanced by spiritual income must be a life in which action alternates with repose, speech with alertly passive silence. *Otium sanctum quaerit carilas veritalis; negotium justum suscipit necessitas caritalis* ('The love of Truth seeks holy leisure; the necessity of love undertakes righteous action'). The bodies of men and animals are reciprocating engines, in which tension is always succeeded by relaxation. Even the unsleeping heart rests between beat and beat.

There is nothing in living Nature that even distantly resembles man's greatest technical invention, the continuously revolving wheel. (It is this fact, no doubt, which accounts for the boredom, weariness and apathy of those who, in modern factories, are forced to adapt their bodily and mental movements to circular motions of mechanically uniform velocity.) 'What a man takes in by contemplation,' says Eckhart, 'that he pours out in love.' The well-meaning humanist and the merely muscular Christian, who imagines that he can obey the second of the great commandments without taking time even to think how best he may love God with all his heart, soul and mind, are people engaged in the impossible task of pouring unceasingly from a container that is never replenished.

Daughters of Charity ought to love prayer as the body loves the soul. And just as the body cannot live without the soul, so the soul cannot live without prayer. And in

so far as a daughter prays as she ought to pray, she will do well. She will not walk, she will run in the ways of the Lord, and will be raised to a high degree of the love of God.

St Vincent de Paul

Households, cities, countries and nations have enjoyed great happiness, when a single individual has taken heed of the Good and Beautiful... Such men not only liberate themselves; they fill those they meet with a free mind.

Philo

Similar views are expressed by Al-Ghazzali, who regards the mystics not only as the ultimate source of our knowledge of the soul and its capacities and defects, but as the salt which preserves human societies from decay. 'In the time of the philosophers,' he writes, 'as at every other period, there existed some of these fervent mystics. God does not deprive this world of them, for they are its sustainers.' It is they who, dying to themselves, become capable of perpetual inspiration and so are made the instruments through which divine grace is mediated to those whose unregenerate nature is impervious to the delicate touches of the Spirit.

Science, Liberty and Peace

CONTENTS

- I.
- II.

The first edition

I.

‘IF THE ARRANGEMENT of society is bad (as ours is), and a small number of people have power over the majority and oppress it, every victory over Nature will inevitably serve only to increase that power and that oppression. This is what is actually happening.’

It is nearly half a century since Tolstoy wrote these words, and what was happening then has gone on happening ever since. Science and technology have made notable advances in the intervening years — and so has the centralization of political and economic power, so have oligarchy and despotism. It need hardly be added that science is not the only causative factor involved in this process. No social evil can possibly have only one cause. Hence the difficulty, in any given case, of finding a complete cure. All that is being maintained here is that progressive science is one of the causative factors involved in the progressive decline of liberty and the progressive centralization of power, which have occurred during the twentieth century.

Applied science touches the lives of individuals and societies at many different points and in a great variety of contexts, and therefore the ways in which it has increased the power of the few over the majority are correspondingly many and various. In the paragraphs that follow I shall enumerate the more obviously significant of these ways, shall indicate how and by what means applied science has contributed hitherto toward the centralization of power in the hands of a small ruling minority, and also how and by what means such tendencies may be resisted and ultimately, perhaps, reversed.

1. In the course of the past two or three generations science and technology have equipped the political bosses who control the various national states with unprecedentedly efficient instruments of coercion. The tank, the flame-thrower and the bomber — to mention but a few of these instruments — have made nonsense of the old techniques of popular revolt. At the same time the recent revolutionary improvements in the means of transport and communications have vastly strengthened the hands of the police. In his own peculiar way, Fouché was a man of first-rate abilities; but compared with the secret police force at the disposal of a modern dictatorship or even of a modern democracy, the instrument of oppression, which he was able to forge for Napoleon, was an absurdly clumsy piece of machinery. In the past, personal and political liberty depended to a considerable extent upon governmental inefficiency. The

spirit of tyranny was always more than willing; but its organization and material equipment were generally weak. Progressive science and technology have changed all this completely. Today, if the central executive wishes to act oppressively, it finds an almost miraculously efficient machine of coercion standing ready to be set in motion. Thanks to the genius and co-operative industry of highly trained physicists, chemists, metallurgists and mechanical inventors, tyrants are able to dragoon larger numbers of people more effectively, and strategists can kill and destroy more indiscriminately and at greater distances, than ever before. On many fronts nature has been conquered; but, as Tolstoy foresaw, man and his liberties have sustained a succession of defeats.

Overwhelming scientific and technological superiority cannot be resisted on their own plane. In 1848 the sporting gun was a match for the muskets of the soldiery, and a barricade made of overturned carts, sandbags and paving stones was a sufficient protection against cavalry and muzzle-loading cannon. After a century of scientific and technological progress no weapons available to the masses of the people can compete with those in the arsenals controlled by the ruling minority. Consequently, if any resistance is to be offered by the many to the few, it must be offered in a field in which technological superiority does not count. In countries where democratic institutions exist and the executive is prepared to abide by the rules of the democratic game, the many can protect themselves against the ruling few by using their right to vote, to strike, to organize pressure groups, to petition the legislature, to hold meetings and conduct press campaigns in favour of reform. But where there are no democratic institutions, or where a hitherto democratic government declines any longer to abide by the rules of the game, a majority which feels itself oppressed may be driven to resort to direct action. But since science and technology, in conquering nature have thereby enormously increased the military and police power of the ruling few, this direct action cannot hope for a successful outcome, if it is violent; for in any armed conflict, the side which has the tanks, planes and flame-throwers cannot fail to defeat the side which is armed at the very best only with small arms and hand grenades.

Is there any way out of the unfavourable political situation in which, thanks to applied science, the masses now find themselves? So far only one hopeful issue has been discovered. In South Africa and, later, in India, Gandhi and his followers were confronted by an oppressive government armed with overwhelming military might. Gandhi, who is not only an idealist and a man of principle, but also an intensely practical politician, attempted to cope with this seemingly desperate situation by organizing a non-violent form of direct action, which he called satyagraha. For a full account of the methods and results of satyagraha the reader is referred to *War without Violence* by Krishnalal Shridharani (New York, 1939). Here it is only necessary to state that the method achieved a number of striking successes against odds which, from a military point of view, were overwhelmingly great. To those who think that the record of Gandhi's achievements is irrelevant to the historical and psychological situation of the industrial West, Mr. Shridharani makes the following answer:

My contact with the Western world has led me to think that, contrary to popular belief, satyagraha, once consciously and deliberately adopted, has more fertile fields in which to grow and flourish in the West than in the Orient. Like war, satyagraha demands public spirit, self-sacrifice, organization and discipline for its successful operation, and I have found these qualities displayed in Western communities more than in my own. Perhaps the best craftsmen in the art of violence may still be the most effective wielders of non-violent direct action. It is but a question, in the words of William James, of 'opinion-making men seizing historic opportunities.'

It is often argued that satyagraha cannot work against an organization whose leaders are prepared to exploit their military superiority without qualm or scruple. And of course this may very well be the case. No more than any other form of political action, violent or otherwise, can satyagraha guarantee success. But even though, against an entirely ruthless and fanatical opponent, non-co-operation and what Thoreau called 'civil disobedience,' coupled with a disciplined willingness to accept and even to court sacrificial suffering, may prove unavailing, the resulting situation could not be, materially, any worse than it would have been if the intolerable oppression had been passively accepted or else resisted unavailingly by force; while, psychologically and morally, it would in all probability be very much better — better for those participating in the satyagraha and better in the eyes of spectators and of those who merely heard of the achievement at second hand.

In the years ahead it seems possible that satyagraha may take root in the West — not primarily as the result of any 'change of heart,' but simply because it provides the masses, especially in the conquered countries, with their only practicable form of political action. The Germans of the Ruhr and the Palatinate resorted to satyagraha against the French in 1923. The movement was spontaneous; philosophically, ethically and organizationally, it had not been prepared for. It was for this reason that it finally broke down. But it lasted long enough to prove that a Western people — and a people more thoroughly indoctrinated with militarism than any other — was perfectly capable of non-violent direct action, involving the cheerful acceptance of sacrificial suffering. Similar movements of satyagraha (more conscious of themselves this time, and better prepared for) may again be initiated among the masses of conquered Germany. The impracticability of any other kind of political action makes it very possible that this will happen sooner or later. It would be one of the happier ironies of history if the nation which produced Clausewitz and Bernhardt and Hitler were to be forced by circumstances to become the first large-scale exponent in the West of that non-violent direct action which has become, in this age of scientific progress, humanity's only practical substitute for hopeless revolution and self-stultifying or suicidal war.

2. The pen and the voice are at least as mighty as the sword; for the sword is wielded in obedience to the spoken or the written word. Progressive technology has strengthened the powers that be by providing them not only with bigger and better instruments of coercion, but also with instruments of persuasion incomparably superior to those at the disposal of earlier rulers. The rotary press and, more recently, the

radio have contributed greatly to the concentration of political and economic power. James Mill believed that, when everybody had learned to read, the reign of reason and democracy would be assured for ever. But in actual historical fact the spread of free compulsory education, and, along with it, the cheapening and acceleration of the older methods of printing, have almost everywhere been followed by an increase in the power of ruling oligarchies at the expense of the masses. The reasons for this are obvious. A newspaper combining attractiveness with cheapness cannot be produced unless it is subsidized either by advertisers (that is to say, the people who control centralized finance and large-scale, mass-producing and mass-distributing industry), or by some organization desirous, for its own purposes, of influencing public opinion, or by the central government. In countries where the press is said to be free, newspapers are subsidized primarily by advertisers, and to a lesser extent by political parties, financial or professional groups. In countries where the press is not free, newspapers are subsidized by the central government. The man who pays the piper always calls the tune. In capitalist democracies the popular press supports its advertisers by inculcating the benefits of centralized industry and finance, coupled with as much centralized government as will enable these institutions to function at a profit. In totalitarian states all newspapers preach the virtues of governmental omnipotence, one-party politics and state control of everything. In both cases progressive technology has strengthened the hands of the local bosses by providing them with the means of persuading the many that concentration of political and economic power is for the general benefit.

What is true of the press is equally true of the radio. Spoken words are more exciting than words printed on wood pulp. In the past a great orator could reach, at the most, only a few thousand listeners. Today, thanks to applied science, a dictator with a gift of the gab is able to pour his emotionally charged evangel into the ears of tens of millions. What Mark Antony could do to the mob assembled round Caesar's corpse, his modern counterpart can do to entire nations. Never have so many been so much at the mercy of so few.

Undesirable propaganda will not cease until the persons who pay for propaganda either change their minds, or are replaced by other persons willing to pay for something else. Meanwhile there is no remedy for the evil except personal self-denial. Reading newspapers and listening to the radio are psychological addictions; and psychological addictions, like the physiological addictions to drugs, tobacco and alcohol, can only be put an end to by a voluntary effort on the part of the addict. So long as people yield to the craving to read about murders and divorces and to look at the comic strips, or to listen to soap operas and swing music, they must expect to be influenced by the propaganda which always accompanies these habit-forming stimuli. A questionnaire on reading habits was recently addressed by the heads of a New York labour union to its membership. Among the questions asked were: What newspaper do you regularly read? and what newspaper do you consider the least trustworthy and most untruthful? Sixty per cent. of the membership agreed that newspaper X was the most untruthful sheet in the New York area, but over forty per cent. admitted to making it their daily

reading — because of its superior comic strips and more violent sensationalism. As usual, it is a case of video *meliora proboque; deteriora sequor* — I see the better and I approve; but the worse is what I pursue. Under the present dispensation, nothing but self-denial on the part of readers can diminish the influence of newspaper X. Continued indulgence in psychological addictions has to be paid for, and the price is undesirable propaganda.

3. By supplying the ruling oligarchy with more effective instruments of coercion and persuasion, applied science has contributed directly to the centralization of power in the hands of the few. But it has also made important indirect contributions to the same end. It has done this in two ways; first, by introducing over ever larger areas of the industrial and agricultural economy the methods of large-scale mass production and mass distribution; second, by creating, through its very progressiveness, an economic and social insecurity which drives all those concerned, owners and managers no less than workers, to seek the assistance of the national state. Let us now consider these two power-centralizing factors in greater detail.

(a) In applying the results of disinterested scientific research, inventors and technicians have paid more attention to the problem of equipping large concerns with the expensive machinery of mass production and mass distribution than to that of providing individuals or co-operating groups with cheap and simple, but effective, means of production for their own subsistence and for the needs of a local market. The reason for this is that there has been more money in working for the mass producers and mass distributors; and the mass producers and mass distributors have had more money because financiers have seen that there was more profit for them, and more power, in a centralized than in a decentralized system of production.

Here, in parenthesis, let us note that concentration of financial power preceded the scientific revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was largely responsible for making our industrial civilization the hateful thing it was and, for the most part, still is. Throughout Europe, land and natural resources were not owned outright by the people, represented by a multitude of small-holders; nor were they the property of a sovereign, leasing to small tenants and spending the rent (which is the monetary expression of the social value of land) for social purposes. The best part of the land and its natural resources was the monopoly of a small class of landlords, who appropriated the social values of what should, quite obviously, have been everybody's property, to their own private use. Hence the early centralization of financial power — a power that was used to exploit the new technological discoveries for the benefit, not of individual small producers or co-operating groups, but for that of the class which alone possessed accumulations of money. Centralized finance begot centralized industry, and in due course the profits of centralized industry increased the power of centralized finance, so that it was able to proceed ever further in the direction of completely centralized production and distribution.

The centralizing of industrial capacity in big mass-producing factories has resulted in the centralization of a large part of the population in cities and in the reduction

of ever-increasing numbers of individuals to complete dependence upon a few private capitalists and their managers, or upon the one public capitalist, the state, represented by politicians and working through civil servants. So far as liberty is concerned, there is little to choose between the two types of boss. Up to the present, state-controlled enterprises have been closely modelled upon those of capitalist big business. Nationalization has not stopped short at land and natural resources, nor have the land and natural resources been nationalized with the purpose of giving individuals or co-operating groups free access to the means of small-scale production, personal liberty and self-government. On the contrary, the objects nationalized include, besides land and natural resources, the tools of production, and that nationalization has been undertaken with a view to strengthening the state (that is to say, the politicians momentarily in power) against its subjects and not at all with the purpose of liberating individual men and women from economic dependence upon bosses. But economic dependence upon bosses is always bad, because, quite obviously, it is not easily reconcilable with local and professional self-government or with civil and personal liberty. Democratic institutions are likely to work best at times and in places where at least a good part of the citizens have access to enough land and possess sufficient tools and professional skill to be able to provide for their subsistence without recourse to financially potent private capitalists or to the government. Where, as in the contemporary Western world, great numbers of the citizens own nothing (not even, in many cases, a skill, since the operation of semi-automatic machines does not require a skill), personal liberty and political and civil rights are to a more or less considerable extent dependent upon the grace of the capitalistic or national owners and managers of the means of production and distribution, and upon their willingness to abide by the rules of the democratic game. To forward their interests and to protect themselves against oppression, propertyless workers combine in trade unions. These have done much to bridle the ambition and covetousness of capitalists and to improve the conditions of labour. But trade unions are as subject to gigantism and centralization as are the industries to which they are related. Consequently it happens all too frequently that the masses of unionized workers find themselves dependent upon, and subordinated to, two governing oligarchies — that of the bosses and that of the union leaders. Over the first they have no control at all, except by strike and the threat of strike; over the second their control is at best remote and rather shadowy. Self-government, which is the very essence of democratic freedom, is more or less completely absent from their professional lives. This is ultimately due, as we have seen, to propertylessness and consequent dependence upon the private or public owners and managers of the means of mass production and mass distribution; and propertylessness is due in its turn to (among other things) the progress of applied science — a progress which, under the auspices of centralized finance, has hitherto favoured mass production at the expense of production on a small scale for personal or co-operative use, or to supply a local market.

In the most highly industrialized countries, applied science and its ally, and master, centralized finance, have profoundly changed the traditional pattern of agricultural life.

Thus, in the United States, the percentage of the population making its living from the land has been reduced in recent years to only a fifth of the total. Meanwhile the size of individual holdings of land has tended to increase, as powerful corporations add field to field in the effort to exploit mechanized farming to its economic limit. Small-scale farmers, who used to be primarily concerned with subsistence, secondarily with a cash crop, have been largely replaced by men whose primary concern is with cash crops and who use the cash so earned to buy 'nationally advertised,' processed and denatured foods at the grocer's.

In Russia the process of centralizing and consolidating the control of land and of industrializing agricultural production has been carried out by government decree and by means of the liquidation of a whole class of society. It would appear, however, that a measure of small-scale private ownership, or quasi-ownership, has had to be reintroduced in order to increase agricultural efficiency by improving the morale of the workers.

(b) Among the ordinary results of the rapid progress of applied science are technological unemployment and the sudden and unexpected necessity of changing long-established habits of agricultural and industrial production. When too rapid, changes of position or state are very disturbing to living organisms, sometimes even fatal. That is why, when we get out of a plane in mid-air, we use a parachute, why, when we take a Turkish bath, we do not plunge immediately into the hottest chamber. Analogously, social, economic and political changes can take place too rapidly and too frequently for human well-being. A highly progressive technology entails incessant and often very rapid and startling changes of economic, political and ethical state; and such changes tend to keep the societies subjected to them in a chronically uncomfortable and unstable condition. Some day, perhaps, social scientists will be able to tell us what is the optimum rate of change, and what the optimum amount of it at any one time. For the present, Western societies remain at the mercy of their progressive technologies, to the intense discomfort of everybody concerned. Man as a moral, social and political being is sacrificed to homo faber, or man the smith, the inventor and forger of new gadgets.

And meanwhile, of course, technological unemployment is always with us; for every labour-saving device, every substitution of a new and more efficient technique for an older and less efficient one, results in a local and temporary diminution of the labour force. In the long run the persons displaced, as the result of technological advance, may find themselves reabsorbed by other industries or even (since increased efficiency results in lowered prices, greater demand and an expansion of production sufficient, in some cases, to offset the original technological unemployment) by the industry from which they were discharged. But what may happen in the long run is of little interest to propertyless persons who are compelled by hunger and the elements to do their living exclusively in the short run. For such persons the chief consequence of progressive science is a chronic social and economic insecurity.

Here, as in an earlier paragraph, it is necessary to stress the fact that the progress of applied science is not the only causative factor involved. Mass unemployment and

periodical slumps have a variety of interlocking causes — meteorological, financial and psychological causes as well as those connected with science and technology. Concerning the relative importance of these factors the experts are not yet agreed. Many theories of slumps and unemployment have been formulated, each of which emphasizes one of the known causative factors at the expense of all the rest. None of these theories is universally accepted; but all of them — and this, for our present purpose, is the important point — are agreed that technological unemployment is a reality and that the progress of applied science does in fact play an important part in creating the economic and social insecurity which is the plague of modern industrial societies.

In the capitalist countries the nature of the monetary and financial systems has been such that, whenever a boom gets under way, the issuers of credit are compelled by the traditional rules of banking to withdraw credit and so to convert the boom into a slump. At the same time the owners of mass-producing industry are compelled by the rules of the game of profit-making to practise what Thorstein Veblen used to call ‘capitalist sabotage’ — in other words, they are compelled by the necessity of making profits to prevent their managers from producing as many goods and at as cheap a rate as they are technically equipped to do. In both cases the result of following the traditional rules is an accentuation of the social and economic insecurity normally resulting from technological progress. State socialists hold that the remedy for these evils can be found only in the nationalization of banking, land and Industry — in other words, in the complete and final centralization of economic as well as political power in the hands of the currently ruling politicians and their managers. But power is in its essence expansive, and cannot be curbed except by other powers of equal or at least comparable magnitude. Under a regime of state socialism there would be no power systems within a community capable of opposing any serious resistance to the politically and economically almighty executive. The political bosses and civil servants in control of the state would themselves be controlled by nothing stronger than a paper constitution. In cases where state socialism succeeds capitalist democracy by non-violent, constitutional means, the rules of the political game are likely to remain, in many respects, identical with those prevailing under the older regime. For as long as the new system is administered by men brought up under democratic traditions, the constitutional rules will probably be observed. But when these men are succeeded by a new generation, born and brought up in a society dominated by the omnipotent state, what then? Only the most ingenuously optimistic, the most wilfully blind to the facts of history and psychology, can believe that paper guarantees of liberty — guarantees wholly unsupported by the realities of political and economic power — will be scrupulously respected by those who have known only the facts of governmental omnipotence on the one hand and, on the other, of mass dependence upon, and consequently subservience to, the state and its representatives.

We see, then, that technological progress results in economic and social insecurity, and that this insecurity is greatly aggravated, in the capitalist countries, by the necessity of abiding by the traditional rules of private banking, financing and mass produc-

tion. By nationalizing, or at the least by rigidly controlling, industry, agriculture and banking, the state could probably get rid of periodical depressions and would be in a position to mitigate, by financial and political measures, the worst consequences of scientific progress. In this way the advantages of centralized finance, mass-producing industry and quasi-industrial agriculture could be reconciled with social and economic security for the masses. But everything has its price, and it seems unlikely that security achieved in this way could for long co-exist with that liberty under law which, as Acton was never tired of insisting, is the end of all political action, all social and economic arrangements.

At the present time the horrors of insecurity, as exemplified above all in mass unemployment, have impressed themselves so deeply upon the popular mind that, if offered the choice between liberty and security, most people would almost unhesitatingly vote for security. Similar situations have occurred at other periods of history. Thus, in the years which witnessed the final disintegration of the Roman Empire, the insecurity of life and property was such that many hitherto free peasants and yeomen voluntarily made over their land and even their persons to the nearest great lord, in exchange for his protection. It was better, they felt, to be the serf or even the domestic slave of a powerful noble than to be free, but at the mercy of bandits, barbarians and the men-at-arms of other hereditary magnates. The sources of our present insecurity are not the same as were the sources of the insecurity of fifteen hundred years ago; but in both cases the reaction to insecurity is identical — namely, a general wish to exchange freedom for protection, independence for guaranteed subsistence in the service of the holders of great power. But great power invariably exercises a corrupting influence on those who wield it; and when, in due course, the tyranny of the bosses in control of the omnipotent state becomes unbearable, the masses who now pine for security will begin to pine even more ardently for liberty. That they will be able to extort liberty from a ruling minority equipped by science with the very latest in self-propelled flame-throwers and atomic missiles seems in the highest degree unlikely. It is in satyagraha, or non-violent direct action, that the only hope of future revolutions resides. Meanwhile there is no question, in the contemporary world, of any popular movement in favour of liberty. On the contrary, the masses are everywhere clamouring for ever greater governmental control of everything. Nor are these demands exclusively confined to the masses. The owners and managers of the various capitalist systems of production are also victims of the general insecurity. They too would like a measure of government control — enough control to guarantee profits, but not so much, of course, as to constitute expropriation or nationalization.

Is there any way in which the material advantages of progressive technology can be combined not only with security, but also with freedom? My own view, which is essentially that of the Decentralists, is that, so long as the results of pure science are applied for the purpose of making our system of mass-producing and mass-distributing industry more expensively elaborate and more highly specialized, there can be nothing but ever greater centralization of power in ever fewer hands. And the corollary

of this centralization of economic and political power is the progressive loss by the masses of their civil liberties, their personal independence and their opportunities for self-government. But here we must note that there is nothing in the results of disinterested scientific research which makes it inevitable that they should be applied for the benefit of centralized finance, industry and government. If inventors and technicians so chose, they could just as well apply the results of pure science for the purpose of increasing the economic self-sufficiency and consequently the political independence of small owners, working either on their own or in co-operative groups, concerned not with mass distribution, but with subsistence and the supply of a local market. The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; and the same is true of applied science. Human beings have certain physical and psychological wants. They require food, clothing and shelter; and, for moral and mental health, they need to be given the opportunity to develop their latent potentialities to the fullest degree compatible with the freedom and well-being of others. And beyond these primary psychological needs lies man's spiritual need — the need, in theological language, to achieve his Final End, which is the unitive knowledge of ultimate Reality, the realization that Atman and Brahman are one, that the body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, that Tao or the Logos is at once transcendent and immanent.

Now it seems pretty obvious that man's psychological, to say nothing of his spiritual, needs cannot be fulfilled unless, first, he has a fair measure of personal independence and personal responsibility within and toward a self-governing group, unless, secondly, his work possesses a certain aesthetic value and human significance, and unless, in the third place, he is related to his natural environment in some organic, rooted and symbiotic way. But in modern industrial societies vast numbers of men and women pass their whole lives in hideous cities, are wholly dependent for their livelihood upon a capitalistic or governmental boss, have to perform manual or clerical work that is repetitive, mechanical and intrinsically meaningless, are rootless, propertyless and entirely divorced from the world of nature, to which, as animals, they still belong and in which, as human beings, they might (if they were sufficiently humble and docile) discover the spiritual Reality in which the whole world, animate and inanimate, has its being. The reason for this dismal state of things is the progressive application of the results of pure science for the benefit of mass-producing and mass-distributing industry, and with the unconscious or conscious purpose of furthering centralization of power in finance, manufacture and government.

But now let us suppose that those who make it their business to apply the results of pure science to economic ends should elect to do so, not primarily for the benefit of big business, big cities and big government, but with the conscious aim of providing individuals with the means of doing profitable and intrinsically significant work, of helping men and women to achieve independence from bosses, so that they may become their own employers, or members of a self-governing, co-operative group working for subsistence and a local market. Suppose, I repeat, that this were henceforward to become the acknowledged purpose guiding the labours of inventors and engineers.

Seconded by appropriate legislation, this differently orientated technological progress would result, not as at present in the further concentration of power and the completer subordination of the many to the few, but in a progressive decentralization of population, of accessibility of land, of ownership of the means of production, of political and economic power. Ralph Borsodi's studies have shown that mass-producing and mass-distributing methods are technologically justified in about one-third of the total production of goods. In regard to the remaining two-thirds, the economies effected by mass-production are offset by the increased costs involved in mass distribution over great areas, so that local production by individuals or co-operating groups, working for subsistence and a neighbourhood market, is more economical than mass production in vast centralized factories. And to these economic advantages of decentralization must be added the social advantages of a more humanly satisfying life for more people, a greater measure of genuine self-governing democracy and a blessed freedom from the silly or pernicious adult education provided by the mass producers of consumer goods through the medium of advertisements.

4. The continuous advance of science and technology has profoundly affected the prevailing mental climate. The basic postulates of thought have been changed, so that what to our fathers seemed obviously true and important strikes us as either false or negligible and beside the point. Let us consider a few of the more significant of these changes and their effects upon the social and political life of our times.

(a) Unlike art, science is genuinely progressive. Achievement in the fields of research and technology is cumulative; each generation begins at the point where its predecessor left off. Furthermore, the results of disinterested research were from the first applied in such a way that the upper and middle classes of all industrialized societies found themselves becoming steadily richer and richer. It was, therefore, only to be expected that the professional thinkers who sprang from these classes, and who were familiar with the methods and achievements of science, should have based upon the facts of technological and economic progress a general theory of human life. The world, they affirmed, was becoming materially, intellectually and morally better and better, and this amelioration was in some way inevitable. The theory of progress — a theory that soon became a dogma, indeed an axiom of popular thought — was novel and, from an orthodox Christian point of view, heretical. For orthodoxy, man was a fallen being. Humanity if not actively deteriorating, was statically bad, with a badness which only grace in co-operation with the individual's free will could possibly mitigate. In illustration of this, let us consider how the thirteenth century was regarded by those who lived through it, and how it is regarded by modern historians. For the latter it seems one of the most glorious periods in European history; the former were unanimous (as Professor Coulton has shown) in regarding it as an age of peculiar wickedness and manifest degeneracy. Even in the age of Queen Elizabeth thoughtful men were still talking of humanity's decline. It was not until the late seventeenth century (the age of the rise of modern science) that the note of bumptious self-congratulation began

to be sounded, not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the dogma of inevitable progress became an unquestioned article of popular faith.

The belief in all-round progress is based upon the wishful dream that one can get something for nothing. Its underlying assumption is that gains in one field do not have to be paid for by losses in other fields. For the ancient Greeks, hubris, or overweening insolence, whether directed against the gods, or one's fellow-men, or nature, was sure to be followed, sooner or later, in one way or another, by avenging Nemesis. Unlike the Greeks, we of the twentieth century believe that we can be insolent with impunity.

So intense is our faith in the dogma of inevitable progress that it has survived two world wars and still remains flourishing in spite of totalitarianism and the revival of slavery, concentration camps and saturation bombing.

Faith in progress has affected contemporary political life by reviving and popularizing, in an up-to-date, pseudo-scientific and this-worldly form, the old Jewish and Christian apocalypticism. A glorious destiny awaits mankind, a coming Golden Age, in which more ingenious gadgets, more grandiose plans and more elaborate social institutions, will somehow have created a race of better and brighter human beings. Man's Final End is not in the eternal timeless Now, but in a not too distant utopian future. In order to secure the peace and happiness of their great-great-grandchildren, the masses ought to accept and their rulers need feel no qualms in imposing, any amount of war and slavery, of suffering and moral evil, in the present. It is a highly significant fact that all modern dictators, whether of the Right or of the Left, talk incessantly about the golden Future, and justify the most atrocious acts here and now, on the ground that they are means to that glorious end. But the one thing we all know about the future is that we are completely ignorant of what is going to happen, and that what does in fact happen is often very different from what we anticipated. Consequently any faith based upon hypothetical occurrences a long time hence must always, in the very nature of things, be hopelessly unrealistic. In practice, faith in the bigger and better future is one of the most potent enemies to present liberty; for rulers feel themselves justified in imposing the most monstrous tyrannies on their subjects for the sake of the wholly imaginary fruits which these tyrannies are expected (only an implicit faith in progress can say why) to bear some time, let us say, in the twenty-first or twenty-second century.

(b) As theory, pure science is concerned with the reduction of diversity to identity. As a praxis, scientific research proceeds by simplification. These habits of scientific thought and action have, to a certain extent, been carried over into the theory and practice of contemporary politics. Where a centralized authority undertakes to make plans, for an entire society, it is compelled by the bewildering complexity of the given facts to follow the example of the scientific experimenter, who arbitrarily simplifies his problem in order to make it manageable. In the laboratory this is a sound and entirely justifiable procedure. But when applied to the problems of human society, the process of simplification is a process, inevitably, of restraint and regimentation, of curtailment of liberty and denial of individual rights. This reduction of human

diversity to a military and quasi-mechanical identity is achieved by propaganda, by legal enactments and, if necessary, by brute force — by the imprisonment, exile or liquidation of those persons, or those classes, who persist in their perverse desire to remain themselves and are obstinate in their reluctance to conform to the pattern which the political and economic bosses find it, at the moment, most convenient to impose. Philosophically, this ironing out of individual idiosyncrasies is held to be respectable, because it is analogous to what is done by scientists, when they arbitrarily simplify an all too complex reality, so as to make nature comprehensible in terms of a few general laws. A highly organized and regimented society, whose members exhibit a minimum of personal peculiarities, and whose collective behaviour is governed by a single master plan imposed from above, is felt by the planners and even (such is the power of propaganda) by the plannees to be more ‘scientific’, and therefore better, than a society of independent, freely co-operating and self-governing individuals.

(c) The first step in this simplification of reality, without which (since human minds are finite and nature is infinite) scientific thought and action would be impossible, is a process of abstraction. Confronted by the data of experience, men of science begin by leaving out of account all those aspects of the facts which do not lend themselves to measurement and to explanation in terms of antecedent causes rather than of purpose, intention and values. Pragmatically they are justified in acting in this odd and extremely arbitrary way; for by concentrating exclusively on the measurable aspects of such elements of experience as can be explained in terms of a causal system they have been able to achieve a great and ever increasing control over the energies of nature. But power is not the same thing as insight and, as a representation of reality, the scientific picture of the world is inadequate, for the simple reason that science does not even profess to deal with experience as a whole, but only with certain aspects of it in certain contexts. All this is quite clearly understood by the more philosophically minded men of science. But unfortunately some scientists, many technicians and most consumers of gadgets have lacked the time and the inclination to examine the philosophical foundations and background of the sciences. Consequently they tend to accept the world picture implicit in the theories of science as a complete and exhaustive account of reality; they tend to regard those aspects of experience which scientists leave out of account, because they are incompetent to deal with them, as being somehow less real than the aspects which science has arbitrarily chosen to abstract from out of the infinitely rich totality of given facts. Because of the prestige of science as a source of power, and because of the general neglect of philosophy, the popular *Weltanschauung* of our times contains a large element of what may be called ‘nothing-but’ thinking. Human beings, it is more or less tacitly assumed, are nothing but bodies, animals, even machines; the only really real elements of reality are matter and energy in their measurable aspects; values are nothing but illusions that have somehow got themselves mixed up with our experience of the world; mental happenings are nothing but epiphenomena, produced by and entirely dependent upon physiology; spirituality is nothing but wish fulfilment and misdirected sex; and so on. The political consequences of this

‘nothing-but’ philosophy are clearly apparent in that widespread indifference to the values of human personality and human life which are so characteristic of the present age. Within the past thirty years, this indifference has expressed itself in a number of dangerous and disquieting ways. We have witnessed, first of all, the wholesale revival of slavery in its worst and most inhuman forms — slavery imposed upon political heretics living under the various dictatorships, slavery imposed upon whole classes of conquered populations, slavery imposed upon prisoners of war. Next, we note the increasing indiscriminateness of slaughter during wartime. Area bombing, saturation bombing, rocket bombing, bombing by atomic missiles — the indiscriminateness has steadily increased throughout the Second World War, until now no nation even makes a pretence of observing the traditional distinction between civilians and combatants, innocent and guilty, but all devote themselves methodically and scientifically to general massacre and wholesale destruction. Other practical consequences of our ‘nothing-but’ philosophies of life are the employment by civilized people, with a high standard of scientific and technological training, of torture, human vivisection and the systematic starvation of entire populations. And finally there is the phenomenon of forced migration — the removal at the point of the bayonet of millions of men, women and children from their homes to other places, where most of them will die of hunger, exposure and disease.

Unrealistic beliefs tend to result in foolish or morally evil actions; and such wrong beliefs cannot be got rid of, except by teaching right, or at least less erroneous, beliefs. If the ministers, of the various sects and religions would abandon sentimentality and superstition, and devote themselves to teaching their flocks that the Final End of man is not in the unknowable utopian future, but in the timeless eternity of the Inner Light, which every human being is capable, if he so desires, of realizing here and now, then the myth of progress would lose its harmfulness as a justifier of present tyranny and wrongdoing. If scientists and technicians could be persuaded to read, for example, the essays in Edward Carpenter’s *Civilization, Its Cause and Cure*, together with Professor Burt’s *Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science* and the speculative writings of Sir Arthur Eddington, the disastrous notion that the contemporary scientific world picture is a complete representation of reality, and the no less disastrous habit of ‘nothing-but’ evaluations of social and psychological facts, might perhaps be eliminated, to the great advantage of suffering humanity. But quis custodiet custodes? — who is going to guard the guardians of our civilization, and who is going to teach its teachers? Our basic trouble is that, in spite of everything that has happened, everybody thinks he is right. In the past, despots committed the crimes that despots always do commit — but committed them with a conscience that was sometimes distinctly uneasy. They had been brought up as Christians, as Hindus, as Moslems or Buddhists, and in the depths of their being they knew that they were doing wrong, because what they were doing was contrary to the teachings of their religion. Today the political boss has been brought up in our more enlightened and scientific environment. Consequently he is able to perpetrate his outrages with a perfectly clear conscience, convinced that he is acting

for humanity's highest good — for is he not expediting the coming of the glorious future promised by Progress? is he not tidying up a messily individualistic society? is he not doing his utmost to substitute the wisdom of experts for the foolishness of men and women who want to do what they think (how erroneously, since of course they are not experts!) is best for them? And then there are the pastors and the schoolmasters. They have their Ph.D.s and their D.D.s, their academic positions and their cures of souls, their habits of authority and their high perches in the pulpit or on the lecture platform. Why should they change their long-established habits and the hallowed traditions of the organizations of which they are the living pillars? The most important lesson of history, it has been said, is that nobody ever learns history's lessons. The enormous catastrophes of recent years have left the survivors thinking very much as they thought before. A horde of Bourbons, we return to what we call peace, having learned nothing and forgotten nothing — forgotten nothing, except, of course, the causes of war, which (whatever our intentions and our well-worded ideals) we do everything in our power to perpetuate.

II.

IN A WORLD where the concentration of economic power is advantageous to the ruling minority, it is only natural that the results of disinterested scientific research should be applied in such a way as to foster large-scale mass production and mass distribution. And in a world where nationalism is taken for granted, and where the values of nationalism are held to be supreme, it is only natural that these same results should be applied to the end of producing and continually improving the instruments of war. Because it paid them to do so, men of science, inventors and engineers have worked to build up a system of centralized industry; and because, as nationalists, they thought it was their duty (and also, it must be added, because the duty was often a very profitable one), they have worked to produce such marvels of technological ingenuity as tanks, bombers, flame-throwers and atomic missiles.

'Nationality,' wrote Lord Acton in 1862, 'does not aim either at liberty or prosperity, both of which it sacrifices to the imperative necessity of making the nation the mould and measure of the state. Its course will be marked with material as well as moral ruin.' Acton's prophecy is still in the terrible process of fulfilment. The material havoc wrought by applied science in the service of nationalism is such that it will take a generation to repair the damage. For many millions of men, women and especially children, the moral ruin caused by the war is irreparable; to the end of their lives they are doomed to remain psychologically warped, crippled and stunted. And these, of course, are not the only gifts of the nationalism which (having repudiated all belief in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man) we have set up as our idolatrous religion. The world is parcelled out into some fifty-odd administrative units, calling themselves nations. In each of these nations there is a state religion — namely, the

worship of the nation regarded as the supreme value, or God. To be a worshipper of one of the fifty-odd national Molochs is, necessarily and automatically, to be a crusader against the worshippers of all the other national Molochs. Nationalism leads to moral ruin because it denies universality, denies the existence of a single God, denies the value of the human being as a human being; and because, at the same time, it affirms exclusiveness, encourages vanity, pride and self-satisfaction, stimulates hatred and proclaims the necessity and the rightness of war. The fatal consequences of nationalism have been demonstrated again and again in the course of history. Consider, for example, the civilization of ancient Greece — the highest, in many respects, ever achieved in the Western world. After only a brief life it perished, self-destroyed by nationalism. Each city-state worshipped itself and consequently hated and despised its neighbours. The Greek world of the great poets, artists and philosophers was chronically in a state of civil war. In the end it bled to death, the victim of idolatrous and separatist patriotism. Fortunately, the Macedonians were at hand to take over.

The modern world differs from that of ancient Greece in degree and scale, not in kind. What separatist patriotism did for the inhabitants of a few thousand square miles in the eastern Mediterranean, it is doing today for the population of the entire planet. As Athens and Sparta died of idolatry and flag-waving and jingoism, so we shall die of idolatry and flag-waving and jingoism. But whereas the technologists at the service of the various Greek nationalisms had got no further than chariots and javelins, the technologists at the service of our fifty-odd self-worshipping administrative units have given us bombers that can fly non-stop for eight thousand miles, incendiaries that nobody can put out, and atomic missiles that are guaranteed to do to whole cities what a quart of boiling water does to an ants' nest.

'Lead us not into temptation.' The presence of this phrase in the Lord's Prayer reveals its author's profoundly realistic appreciation of human nature. Why should we pray that we may not be led into temptation? For the excellent reason that, as all experience proves, whenever temptations to evil are sufficiently strong and sufficiently frequent, men and women generally succumb to them. The existence of powerful armaments constitutes for their possessors a standing temptation to resort to violence. *Si vis bellum, para bellum*: and when the preparations for war are carried on with all the resources of progressive science and technology, the temptation to aggression, to the defence or consolidation of legitimate interests, to the realization of a manifest destiny (the names and justifications vary, but the nature of the consequent war remains the same), becomes progressively more intense, until at some critical moment — the moment when nation X feels certain of being, in some strategically significant way, better armed than nations Y and Z — it turns into a categorical imperative, a divine command to go to war for the greater glory of the nation-god. Nor is this the only temptation to present itself. Recent progress in the applied science of armament-making has been a progress in the development of weapons that will destroy more indiscriminately at greater distances. High explosives and incendiaries, the heavy bomber and the jet-propelled robot plane, the rocket and finally the atomic missile — taken together these

constitute a powerful temptation to ignore the traditional rules of war and to obliterate wholesale entire civilian populations and their dwellings. To this temptation all the belligerents in the Second World War succumbed. And so long as governments and manufacturers continue to subsidize research into the science and technology of armaments, these temptations will remain, irresistibly beckoning to nationalistic power lovers, just as drink and sex and money beckon to their respective addicts.

In recent months many persons have optimistically argued that the harnessing of atomic energy must (because that energy is so destructive) put an end to men's inveterate habit of making war. Similar arguments have been set forth in the past. Whenever progressive applied science has produced some strikingly more efficient instrument of slaughter, hopes have been voiced, and facts and figures marshalled to prove, that henceforward war would be too expensive in life, suffering and money to be worth waging. Nevertheless wars have still been fought. Methods of defence against the new destructive weapon are devised and yet more efficient instruments of counterattack are invented. Advances in technology do not abolish the institution of war; they merely modify its manifestations. In the present instance it seems quite possible that there may be no defence against atomic missiles. But this does not necessarily presage the end of warfare. The collective mentality of nations — the mentality which reasonable adults have to adopt, when making important decisions in the field of international politics — is that of a delinquent boy of fourteen, at once cunning and childish, malevolent and silly, maniacally egotistical, touchy and acquisitive, and at the same time ludicrously boastful and vain. When the issues involved are of no great weight, the adults in control of a nation's policy are permitted, by the rules of the curious game they are playing, to behave like adults. But as soon as important economic interests or national prestige is involved, this grown-up Jekyll retires and his place is taken by an adolescent Hyde, whose ethical standards are those of a boy-gangster and whose Weltanschauung seems to have been formed by a study of Houston Stewart Chamberlain and the more sanguinary comic strips. And let us remember that this same delinquent boy who, concealed in the middle-aged body of a politician, decrees that millions shall do and suffer the utmost in scientifically organized malice, resides within us all, ready and waiting, whenever some crisis makes us forget our surface rationality and idealism, to come out into the open. To this boy-gangster in our midst, the natural reaction to the atom bomb is not an impulse to put an end to war by getting rid of its causes in nationalism, economic rivalry and the craving for power. Rather it is an impulse to make use of the new powers provided by science for the purpose of establishing world dominion for his particular gang. It is a highly significant fact that people love to talk about a war to end war, or a war to preserve democracy; they do not love to talk about peace to end war, or self-governing democracy (which is the polar antithesis of militarism) to preserve democracy. Like the adult, with whom he is associated, the nationalistic boy-gangster is frightened of what atomic power may do to him and his world. Nevertheless he continues to think in terms of gang rivalry and his own supremacy. 'If,' he argues, 'our gang can get its scientists to perfect the rocket

and the atom bomb, if it can get its manufacturers to produce enough plutonium and uranium 235, to build enough launching ramps and robot planes and V2's, then all that need be done is to press a few buttons and bang! the war to end war will be over, and I shall be the boss of the whole planet.' Because of the boy-gangster in every Foreign Office, every war department and every private home, we may expect that, in the years immediately ahead of us, all the (technologically speaking) advanced nations will spend vast sums upon armament research and the manufacture of new weapons capable of more indiscriminate destruction at ever greater distances. This research will be secret — an affair of 'Manhattan Projects' and 'Tube Alloys' — and much of the manufacture will be carried on at the bottom of mines and caverns. And at some moment — unless, by a miracle, Jekyll should contrive to get the upper hand — the temptation to press those buttons will become irresistible; the juvenile delinquent in some Ministry for Foreign Affairs will call up his colleague at the Ministry of National Defence and bang! the war to make the world yet safer for delinquency will have begun.

In discussing the possibility of abolishing war, another important point to be remembered is that the preparation for war and sometimes even war itself are things which a highly centralized government finds very useful for its own totalitarian purposes. Thus, peacetime conscription is always justified on the ground that it constitutes an insurance against war, or at least against defeat in war. In actual fact, of course, nations which have adopted peacetime conscription have fought just as many wars as they fought before adopting it, and have suffered just as many defeats. The real, the unavowed reason for peacetime conscription must be sought in the all too natural desire of a powerful, centralized government to regiment and control its subjects by placing them, actually or potentially, under martial law and by arrogating to itself the right, whenever it so desires (as, for example, during an inconvenient strike), to call them to the colours. In these days of atomic weapons, mass armies would seem to have become something of an anachronism. Nevertheless, no country which imposed peacetime conscription in the past shows any inclination to relax its grip upon the masses of its people. Moreover, in countries where peacetime conscription was previously unheard-of there are many high military and civilian officials who advocate the imposition of permanent military servitude upon the masses.

There is also another way in which the preparation for war is useful to the holders of centralized political power. When things go badly at home, when popular discontent becomes inconveniently articulate, it is always possible, in a world where war-making remains an almost sacred habit, to shift the people's attention away from domestic to foreign and military affairs. A flood of xenophobic or imperialistic propaganda is released by the government-controlled instruments of persuasion, a 'strong policy' is adopted toward some foreign power, an appeal for 'national unity' (in other words, unquestioning obedience to the ruling oligarchy) is launched, and at once it becomes unpatriotic for anybody to voice even the most justifiable complaints against mismanagement or oppression. It is difficult to see how any highly centralized government could afford to dispense with militarism and the threat of foreign war. This constitutes yet another ar-

gument for the division and dispersal of power, the de-institutionalizing of politics and economics and the substitution, wherever possible, of regional co-operative self-help for centralized mass production and mass distribution, and of regional, co-operative self-government for state intervention and state control.

Finally, we have to consider the part played by militarism in solving those problems of economic and social insecurity, which, as we have seen, are the curse of a technologically progressive society. The great depression of the 1930's was accompanied, in all industrialized countries, by mass unemployment. This fearful social sickness was treated in a variety of ways. Thus, in Great Britain an ambitious housing programme was launched; in the United States the Roosevelt administration resorted to public works, 'pump priming' and restriction of agricultural output with a view to raising prices. These measures were only partially successful. The numbers of the unemployed were reduced, but unemployment was by no means eliminated. Complete success came only when Hitler embarked upon large-scale rearmament. As though by magic, unemployment was banished — first from Germany and, later, as other countries took fright and joined the armament race, throughout the rest of the industrialized world. A cure had been found for the insecurity which is the fruit of scientific and technological progress when it is at the service of centralized finance. But the price of the temporary cure was death and destruction, and the last state of all the nations concerned was incomparably worse than the first. Nevertheless it seems quite possible that wholesale rearmament may, at some future date, again be used to palliate the symptoms of unemployment.

It should be remarked that, under the present dispensation, armaments are the only goods that are given away without consideration of costs or profits. Modern war is, among other things, a competition among nations as to which can hand out, free, gratis and for nothing, the largest amount of capital goods in the shortest time. These capital goods are all maleficent and unproductive; but the thought occurs to one that something resembling wartime prosperity might be made permanent if there were more giving away at cost, or even for nothing, and less selling at a profit and paying of interest. Were this to happen, we should have a centralized financing, mass production and mass distribution, combined with a political system, approximating state socialism. That this arrangement would in some ways be preferable to the present dispensation seems likely enough. But we must remember that any government enjoying a monopoly of political and economic power is exposed to almost irresistible temptations to tyranny. There has never been a time when too much power did not corrupt its possessors, and there is absolutely no reason to suppose that, in this respect, the future behaviour of human beings will be in any way different from their behaviour in the past and at the present time. The arguments for the limitation and decentralization of power remain valid, even when that power is concentrated in the hands of an oligarchy of socialists — a phrase which is actually a contradiction in terms; for, to quote Mr. Middleton Murry: 'Socialism by autocracy or oligarchy is not socialism, or anything like it.' It is just benevolent despotism; and there is nothing in the record of history to justify us

in the belief that any benevolent despotism will for long retain its benevolence. The appetite for power grows with every successive satisfaction of that most alluring and pernicious of all the lusts. Against the temptations to abuse power there is no armour except sanctity. But since very few human beings are prepared to pay the price of sanctity and very few saints desire power, mere common sense demands that the amount of power wielded by any individual or organization of individuals should be strictly limited and that the principle of self-government (which is the principle of the division of power, the balancing and compromise of independent forces) should be applied, and applied to the extreme practicable limit, in every field of human activity. This entails the de-institutionalization of many political and economic procedures, which are at present planned from above by the functionaries of private capitalism or the national state. In present circumstances it is most unlikely that this highly desirable process of decentralization and de-institutionalization will be carried out. By the education they have received in schools and, later, at the hands of the writers of advertising copy and political propaganda, the great majority of men and women have been conditioned to believe that progressive institutionalization, controlled by private capitalists, or the state, or both together, is an intrinsically beneficent thing and at the same time an inevitable and quasi-natural development. Those who have a reasoned belief in the current centralist philosophy and those, much more numerous, who take it for granted by an act of implicit faith, cannot be expected to look with anything but suspicion on the ideas of de-institutionalization, self-help and self-government. What is needed is a restatement of the Emersonian doctrine of self-reliance — a restatement, not abstract and general, but fully documented with an account of all the presently available techniques for achieving independence within a localized, co-operative community. These techniques are of many kinds — agricultural techniques designed to supply the basic social unit, the family, with its staple food supply; mechanical techniques for the production of many consumer goods for a local market; financial techniques, such as those of the credit union, by means of which individuals can borrow money without increasing the power of the state or of commercial banks; legal techniques, through which a community can protect itself against the profiteer who speculates in land values, which he has done nothing whatever to increase. At present this documented and practical restatement of an old doctrine is being made by such men as Wilfred Wellock in England, as Ralph Borsodi and the writers who contribute to *Free America* in the United States. In the enormous bellowing chorus of advertisers singing the praises of centralized mass-producing and mass-distributing industry, and of Left-wing propagandists singing the praises of the omnipotent state, these few isolated voices have some difficulty in making themselves heard. If it were not for the fact that, in the past, apparently negligible movements, originating among individuals without any political power, have yet exercised a prodigious influence over mankind, there would be reason for discouragement. But fortunately it is not impossible that the presently tiny piece of decentralist leaven may end by leavening the whole huge lump of contemporary society.

It is not impossible, I repeat; but it must be added that, so long as the nations stick to their ancient habit of war-making, it is highly improbable. For the nature of modern war is such that it cannot be successfully waged by any nation which does not possess a highly developed, not to say hypertrophied, capital-goods industry supplemented by a mass-producing consumer-goods industry capable of rapid expansion and conversion for wartime needs. Furthermore it cannot be waged successfully, except by nations which can mobilize their entire man-power and woman-power in universal military or industrial conscription. But universal conscription is most easily imposed where large numbers of the population are rootless, propertyless and entirely dependent for their livelihood upon the state or upon large-scale private employers. Such persons constitute that dream of every militaristic dictator — a ‘fluid labour force,’ which can be shifted at will from one place or one unskilled job to another place or job. Again, big centralized corporations and their wage-earning employees can be taxed much more easily and profitably than small-scale farmers working primarily for subsistence and only secondarily for cash, or than independent or co-operative producers of commodities for a localized market. For this reason anything like a popular movement in the direction of decentralization could hardly be tolerated by any government desirous of becoming or remaining a ‘great power.’ It may be argued that the bomber and the rocket may force all nations to undertake a geographical dispersion of industries; but such dispersion can take place without any real decentralization of political and economic power, any real increase of individual independence from governmental or capitalist control, or any expansion of the present area of voluntary co-operation, self-government and de-institutionalized activity.

‘Science’ is an abstract word, and when we are trying to think about concrete political and economic problems, it is best to talk concretely, not of science but of the people who work in the various scientific fields, from the fields of uncontaminated theory and disinterested research into basic problems to those of applied science and technology. Assuming that the abolition of war is desirable, we proceed to ask ourselves how scientific workers can help to achieve this end.

1. As individuals or in organized groups, scientific workers can take three kinds of action against war. There is, first, the possibility of negative action in the form of a refusal, on conscientious grounds, to participate in work having as its purpose the killing, torture or enslavement of human beings. Christianity once insisted, and Buddhism still insists, upon the importance of ‘right livelihood.’ There are certain professions so intrinsically harmful that no individual ought to practise them. In the eyes of medieval Catholic theologians, for example, the profession of a moneylender or of a speculator was beyond the pale: they held that a man could not live by usury and the manipulation of the commodity markets, and still be regarded as a Christian. Similarly, for Buddha and his followers, a man could not be regarded as a Buddhist, if he made his living by the manufacture of arms or intoxicants. Men of science and technologists would do well, as individuals and in their national and international organizations, to consider the problem of right livelihood in its relation to their own

contemporary activities. Is it possible to work on the development of instruments of ever more indiscriminate slaughter and to remain — not a good Christian or a good Buddhist; for in scientific and technological circles religion is now out of fashion — but a good human being? Is it possible to go on believing that one is working for the good of mankind, while applying the results of disinterested research in ways which demonstrably increase the power of the ruling capitalist or governmental minority at the expense of personal liberty and local and professional self-government? These and similar questions need to be asked and carefully answered by scientific workers — asked and answered, if possible, on the level of their international organizations. Meanwhile it is to be hoped and perhaps expected that a certain number of individual scientists and technicians will take the negative stand against war and the centralization of power which is war's inevitable accompaniment, by refusing to collaborate in any project whose purpose is the destruction or enslavement of human beings.

2. Negative action is good so far as it goes, but it needs to be supplemented by action of a positive and constructive kind. Such positive action may be classified under two heads: (a) action which takes its start in politics, to end in the field of science: and (b) action which takes its start in science, to end in politics.

(a) Several suggestions have recently been made for the political control, in the interests of humanity, of the activities of scientists and technologists. Thus, in the course of an interesting two-day debate in the House of Lords (May 29 and 30, 1945) Lord Vansittart urged the necessity of subjecting all German laboratories, whether attached to universities or supported by the state or by private industrialists, to strict supervision over a long term of years. Only in this way, he claimed, could the danger of a war of revenge, waged with new 'secret weapons,' be avoided. More realistically, Lord Brabazon proposed that this supervision of scientific developments should not be confined exclusively to the defeated nations — nations whose opportunities for the large-scale manufacture of new weapons would, for many years at least, be small. His suggestion was that, under the final peace treaties, an international committee of inspection should be constituted, having authority to enter laboratories and factories in any part of the world. In Lord Brabazon's view, the only alternative to such a scheme of international inspection would be an armament race between Britain and the United States on the one hand and the rest of the world on the other. By intensive research the Anglo-Saxon group might hope to obtain the lead in such a race, and so discourage attack by other powers. Lord Brabazon's speech was made before the dropping of the first atomic bomb. As things now stand, the United States and Britain already possess an enormous lead in the post-war armament race. For a few years they may keep that lead. Then other nations (unless, of course, they are previously blown to bits by the present possessors of the bomb, or unless reason, surrender of absolute sovereignty and world government come to replace nationalism) will be supplied by their scientists with the same or even better methods for manufacturing atomic missiles. Meanwhile the desirability of an international inspectorate charged with preserving humanity from the triumphs of science is even greater now than it was before Hiroshima. The existence of

an international inspectorate would involve the adoption of another security measure, advocated in the course of the same debate by Lord Strabolgi — namely, the pooling of all scientific discoveries considered by competent experts to be actually or potentially a danger to mankind.

Similar suggestions have been made on the other side of the Atlantic, and it now remains to be seen whether, and to what extent, the United Nations will act upon them. Meanwhile Messrs. Truman, Attlee and King have decided to keep such secrets as their scientists and engineers still possess until ‘enforceable safeguards’ against their use for destructive purposes can be devised.

What is to be the nature of those ‘enforceable safeguards’? As yet, it would seem, nobody has any very clear idea. In principle, the proposals for a pooling of dangerous knowledge and for an international inspectorate are excellent; and, to some, the theory of an ‘international police force’ seems attractive and even workable. But, alas, from principle to application and from theory to practice the road is long and hard. Two disturbing questions inevitably propound themselves. First, will the various national governments concerned agree to act upon these suggestions? Second, if they do agree, will they and the men of science they employ consent to play the game according to the internationally imposed rules? In attempting to answer these questions one must weigh the power of enlightened self-interest against the power of nationalistic passions and prejudices. Enlightened self-interest will unquestioningly vote for world government, international inspection and the pooling of information. But unfortunately, in some of the most important issues of life, human beings do not act from considerations of enlightened self-interest. If they did, we should now be living in something very like paradise. In the field of international politics, as we have seen, the gravest decisions are always taken, not by reasonable adults but by boy-gangsters. Despite the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is quite possible that some national governments will refuse to allow their laboratories and factories to be inspected — and, of course, the refusal of even one government will entail the general abandonment of the scheme. Alternatively, the principle of international inspection will be accepted; but at first some and then (when suspicion has been aroused) all the governments concerned will conspire with the scientists in their employ to carry on research in caves or forests or mountain fastnesses, where no prying eye can see what they are up to. It may perhaps seem unlikely that workers trained in the methods of science should support their political bosses in machinations so manifestly senseless, as well as immoral. But it is not because men have learned to behave rationally in the laboratory that they can be trusted to behave rationally toward foreigners and unpopular minorities, or even toward their own wives and children. Until a very few years ago the best scientific and technological education available was given in Germany; but most of the persons who received that education not only worked for the Nazi bosses, but believed in their doctrines and were swayed by the nationalistic passions which they so skilfully exploited. The case of Germany is not unique. In all countries nationalistic passions (of the same kind as were manifested in Germany, but at a somewhat lower level of intensity) are almost as

common among scientists and technicians as in other classes of society. In spite of their training (perhaps, indeed, owing to the narrowly specialized character of that training, because of it), scientists and technicians are perfectly capable of the most dangerously irrational prejudice, nor are they immune to deceitful propaganda. The same men who reject as superstitious the belief in a transcendent and immanent spiritual Reality beyond and within phenomena, prove by their actions that they find no difficulty in worshipping as a supreme god whichever one of the world's fifty-odd nations they happen to belong to, and in accepting the infallibility of the local Foreign Office and the quasi-divinity of the local political boss. In view of all this we need not be surprised if the plans for an international inspectorate and the pooling of scientific knowledge should fail in practice to produce the good results expected of them.

(b) We must now consider the specifically scientific action which might be taken by men of science and technicians with a view to diminishing the probability of war and so to increasing the sum of human liberty. Such action can only be taken on the plane of applied science. Basic research is essentially disinterested. Men undertake it because, in the words used by the boy Clerk Maxwell, they want to find out 'what's the go' of things — to discover how nature works and how its parts are related within a causal system. What is subsequently done with the results of disinterested research is something which the researcher cannot foresee, and for which he is not responsible. Thus, Clerk Maxwell's own adult curiosity to find out the go of such things as light and magnetism led him to certain conclusions, and these conclusions have since been utilized by technicians for the development of instruments, which are now used, in the main, for the dissemination of maudlin drama, cigarette advertising, bad music and government-sponsored or capitalist-sponsored propaganda. Clerk Maxwell would probably have been horrified by all these uses of the radio, and he is, of course, in no way to blame for them. In practice, it would seem, basic research cannot be planned, except perhaps to the extent of subsidizing inquiry into branches of knowledge which, for whatever reason, appear to have been unduly neglected. If the facilities for research are supplied, men and women with an overpowering desire to find out the go of things will always be forthcoming to make use of them. The planning of scientific activity with a view to achieving certain predetermined political, social and economic ends must begin at the point where the results of disinterested research are applied to the solution of practical problems. Individually and through their professional organizations, scientists and technicians could do a great deal to direct the planning toward humane and reasonable ends.

In theory everyone agreed that applied science was made for man and not man for applied science. In practice great masses of human beings have again and again been sacrificed to applied science. The conflict between science, as it has been applied up to the present, and human interests was clearly stated by Thorstein Veblen in his *Science in the Modern World*. In this essay Veblen distinguishes between what he calls the pragmatic and the scientific point of view. Pragmatically human beings know pretty well what is good for them, and have developed myths and fairy tales, proverbs

and popular philosophies, behaviour-patterns and moralities, in order to illustrate and embody their findings about life. The findings of science — especially of science as applied for the benefit of the holders of centralized economic and political power — are frequently in conflict with humanity's pragmatic values, and this conflict has been and still is the source of much unhappiness, frustration and bitterness. The enormous practical importance of the clash between scientific (or rather applied-scientific) values and pragmatic human values is stressed in an editorial which appeared in a recent issue (July 22, 1945) of the leading British scientific journal *Nature*. In maintaining industrial morals 'the central difficulty,' writes the author of this article, 'is essentially the inevitable opposition which develops between the scientific approach to the human problems of production and the political approach of the administrator, trained in the method of accommodation and compromise. The balancing of opinion and the compromise of different points of view, which is the essence of the political process, may be totally at odds with the scientific approach to questions of industrial management. What is required is not the surrender of scientific principles of established accuracy, or the ignoring of accepted fact, but the combination or integration of both the political and scientific approach in a solution which satisfies both the scientific and the psychological or political requirements.'

Let us begin by noting that in any discussion of economic or political problems, the word 'integration' is always a danger signal; for it is always tacitly assumed that the work of integration is carried out by somebody standing above the processes and persons to be integrated. In other words, whenever people call for 'integration' they are always calling for the exercise of centralized governmental power and for yet another extension of the process of institutionalization. But power is always corrupting, and no human being or group of human beings is to be trusted with too much of it for too long. When science is applied in such a way as to create a form of production, which cannot be run efficiently without coming into sharp conflict with fundamental human values, and which therefore continually calls for the intervention of a governmental authority having power to 'integrate' the conflicting persons and points of view, it may be fairly presumed that the application of the results of disinterested research has been, humanly speaking, misguided and undesirable. Up to the present time applied science has not been used mainly or primarily for the benefit of humanity at large, or (to put the matter less abstractly) for the benefit of individual men and women, considered as personalities each one of which is capable, given suitable material and social conditions, of a moral and spiritual development amounting, in some cases, to a total transfiguration; rather man has been used for applied science, for the technicians who enjoy designing more and more complicated gadgets, and for the financial and governmental interests which profit by the centralization of power. If applied science is henceforward to be used for man, technicians and scientists will have to adopt a professional policy, consciously and deliberately designed to serve fundamental human needs and to forward the causes of peace and personal liberty. Such a policy could not be worked out in detail except by an international organization of scientific workers,

highly trained in their respective fields, so that each could contribute his or her share of skill or information toward the realization of the common end — namely, the welfare, liberty and peace of the individuals composing the human race. It would be absurd for me to try to anticipate the findings of this hypothetical group of experts; but it is possible, without too much presumption, to indicate in a general way a few of the lines which their discussion would have to follow.

Humanity's primary requirement is a sufficiency of food; but it is primarily by considerations of power that the policies of national governments are at present dictated. The ruling minorities of the world invariably contrive to have enough, and (to judge by the disgusting descriptions of recent diplomatic banquets) more than enough to eat, consequently they tend to take food for granted and to think first, and at times almost exclusively, in terms of the questions: Who shall bully whom? But the great majority of the men, women and children on this planet are in no position to take food for granted. Their first and often their exclusive concern is the next meal. The question as to who shall bully whom is of hardly more than academic interest to them. They would like, of course, to be left in peace to go their own way; but they know by bitter experience that, under the present dispensation, there will always be a ruling minority to order them about, to bully and badger them in the name of the divine Nation, the omniscient Party, the sacred Principles of this or that political doctrine. They are therefore unable to take much interest in the national and international policies, which are the prime concern of the well-fed power lovers at the top of the social pyramid.

At the San Francisco Conference the only problems discussed were problems of power. The basic problem of mankind — the problem of getting enough to eat — was relegated to an obscure international committee on agriculture. And yet it is surely obvious that if genuine international agreement is ever to be reached and preserved, it must be an agreement with regard to problems which, first, are of vital interest to the great masses of humanity and which, second, are capable of solution without resort to war or the threat of war. The problems of power are primarily the concern of the ruling few, and the nature of power is essentially expansive, so that there is not the least prospect of power problems being solved, when one expanding system collides with another expanding system, except by means of organized, scientific violence or war. But war on the modern scale shatters the thin, precarious crust of civilization and precipitates vast numbers of human beings into an abyss of misery and slow death, of moral apathy or positive and frenzied diabolism. If politicians were sincere in their loudly expressed desire for peace, they would do all they could to by-pass the absolutely insoluble problems of power by concentrating all their attention, during international conferences and diplomatic discussion, on the one great problem which every member of the human race is concerned to solve — the one great problem which not only does not require military violence for its solution, but which, for the world at large, is wholly insoluble so long as the old games of militarism and power politics continue to be played. The first item on the agenda of every meeting between the representatives

of the various nations should be: How are all men, women and children to get enough to eat?

It is fashionable nowadays to say that Malthus was wrong, because he did not foresee that improved methods of transportation can now guarantee that food surpluses produced in one area shall be quickly and cheaply transferred to another, where there is a shortage. But first of all, modern transportation methods break down whenever the power politicians resort to modern war, and even when the fighting stops they are apt to remain disrupted long enough to guarantee the starvation of millions of persons. And, secondly, no country in which population has outstripped the local food supply can, under present conditions, establish a claim on the surpluses of other countries without paying for them in cash or exports. Great Britain and the other countries in western Europe, which cannot feed their dense populations, have been able, in times of peace, to pay for the food they imported by means of the export of manufactured goods. But industrially backward India and China — countries in which Malthus' nightmare has come true with a vengeance and on the largest scale — produce few manufactured goods, consequently lack the means to buy from underpopulated areas the food they need. But when and if they develop mass-producing industries to the point at which they are able to export enough to pay for the food their rapidly expanding populations require, what will be the effect upon world trade and international politics? Japan had to export manufactured goods in order to pay for the food that could not be produced on the overcrowded home islands. Goods produced by workers with a low standard of living came into competition with goods produced by the better paid workers of the West, and undersold them. The West's retort was political and consisted of the imposition of high tariffs, quotas and embargoes. To these restrictions on her trade Japan's answer was the plan for creating a vast Asiatic empire at the expense of China and of the Western imperialist powers. The result was war. What will happen when India and China are as highly industrialized as pre-war Japan and seek to exchange their low-priced manufactured goods for food, in competition with Western powers, whose standard of living is a great deal higher than theirs? Nobody can foretell the future; but undoubtedly the rapid industrialization of Asia (with equipment, let it be remembered, of the very latest and best post-war design) is pregnant with the most dangerous possibilities.

It is at this point that internationally organized scientists and technicians might contribute greatly to the cause of peace by planning a world-wide campaign, not merely for greater food production, but also (and this is the really important point) for regional self-sufficiency in food production. Greater food production can be obtained relatively easily by the opening up of the earth's vast subarctic regions at present almost completely sterile. Spectacular progress has recently been made in this direction by the agricultural scientists of the Soviet Union; and presumably what can be done in Siberia can also be done in northern Canada. Powerful ice-breakers are already being used to solve the problems of transportation by sea and river; and perhaps commercial submarines, specially equipped for travelling under the ice, may in the future ensure

a regular service between Arctic ports and the rest of the world. Any increase of the world's too scanty food supply is to be welcomed. But our rejoicings must be tempered by two considerations. First, the surpluses of food produced by the still hypothetical Arctic granaries of Siberia and Canada will have to be transferred by ship, plane and rail to the overpopulated areas of the world. This means that no supplies would be available in wartime. Second, possession of food-producing Arctic areas constitutes a natural monopoly, and this natural monopoly will not, as in the past, be in the hands of politically weak nations, such as Argentina and Australia, but will be controlled by the two great power systems of the post-war period — the Russian power system and the Anglo-American power system. That their monopolies of food surpluses will be used as weapons in the game of power politics seems more than probable. 'Lead us not into temptation.' The opening up of the Arctic will be undoubtedly a great good. But it will also be a great temptation for the power politicians — a temptation to exploit a natural monopoly in order to gain influence and finally control over hitherto independent countries, in which population has outstripped the food supply.

It would seem, then, that any scientific and technological campaign aimed at the fostering of international peace and political and personal liberty must, if it is to succeed, increase the total planetary food supply by increasing the various regional supplies to the point of self-sufficiency. Recent history makes it abundantly clear that nations, as at present constituted, are quite unfit to have extensive commercial dealings with one another. International trade has always, hitherto, gone hand in hand with war, imperialism and the ruthless exploitation of industrially backward peoples by the highly industrialized powers. Hence the desirability of reducing international trade to a minimum, until such time as nationalist passions lose their intensity and it becomes possible to establish some form of world government. As a first step in this direction, scientific and technical means must be found for making it possible for even the most densely populated countries to feed their inhabitants. The improvement of existing food plants and domestic animals; the acclimatization in hitherto inhospitable regions of plants that have proved useful elsewhere; the reduction of the present enormous waste of food by the improvement of insect controls and the multiplication of refrigerating units; the more systematic exploitation of seas and lakes as sources of food; the development of entirely new foods, such as edible yeasts; the synthesizing of sugars as a food for such edible yeasts; the synthesizing of chlorophyll so as to make direct use of solar energy in food production — these are a few of the lines along which important advances might be made in a relatively short time.

Hardly less important than regional self-sufficiency in food is self-sufficiency in power for industry, agriculture and transportation. One of the contributing causes of recent wars has been international competition for the world's strictly localized sources of petroleum, and the current jockeying for position in the Middle East, where all the surviving great powers have staked out claims to Persian, Mesopotamian and Arabian oil, bodes ill for the future. Organized science could diminish these temptations to armed conflict by finding means for providing all countries, whatever their natural

resources, with a sufficiency of power. Water power has already been pretty well exploited. Besides, over large areas of the earth's surface there are no mountains and therefore no sources of hydro-electric power. But across the plains where water stands almost still, the air often moves in strong and regular currents. Small windmills have been turning for centuries; but the use of large-scale wind turbines is still, strangely enough, only in the experimental stage. Until recently the direct use of solar power has been impracticable, owing to the technical difficulty of constructing suitable reflectors. A few months ago, however, it was announced that Russian engineers had developed a cheap and simple method for constructing paraboloid mirrors of large size, capable of producing superheated steam and even of melting iron. This discovery could be made to contribute very greatly to the decentralization of production and population and the creation of a new type of agrarian society making use of cheap and inexhaustible power for the benefit of individual small-holders or self-governing, co-operative groups. For the peoples of such tropical countries as India and Africa the new device for directly harnessing solar power should be of enormous and enduring benefit — unless, of course, those at present possessing economic and political power should choose to build mass-producing factories around enormous mirrors, thus perverting the invention to their own centralistic purposes, instead of encouraging its small-scale use for the benefit of individuals and village communities. The technicians of solar power will be confronted with a clear-cut choice. They can work either for the completer enslavement of the industrially backward peoples of the tropics, or for their progressive liberation from the twin curses of poverty and servitude to political and economic bosses.

The storage of the potentialities of power is almost as important as the production of power. One of the most urgent tasks before applied science is the development of some portable source of power to replace petroleum — a most undesirable fuel from the political point of view, since deposits of it are rare and unevenly distributed over the earth's surface, thus constituting natural monopolies which, when in the hands of strong nations, are used to increase their strength at the expense of their neighbours and, when possessed by weak ones, are coveted by the strong and constitute almost irresistible temptations to imperialism and war. From the political and human point of view, the most desirable substitute for petroleum would be an efficient battery for storing the electric power produced by water, wind or the sun. Further research into atomic structure may perhaps suggest new methods for the construction of such a battery.

Meanwhile it is possible that means may be devised, within the next few years, for applying atomic energy to the purposes of peace, as it is now being applied to those of war. Would not this technological development solve the whole problem of power for industry and transportation? The answer to this question may turn out to be simultaneously affirmative and negative. The problems of power may indeed be solved — but solved in the wrong way, by which I mean in a way favourable to centralization and the ruling minority, not for the benefit of individuals and co-operative, self-governing groups. If the raw material of atomic energy must be sought

in radioactive deposits, occurring sporadically, here and there, over the earth's surface, then we have natural monopoly with all its undesirable political consequences, all its temptations to power politics, war, imperialistic aggression and exploitation. But of course it is always possible that other methods of releasing atomic energy may be discovered — methods that will not involve the use of uranium. In this case there will be no natural monopoly. But the process of releasing atomic energy will always be a very difficult and complicated affair, to be accomplished only on the largest scale and in the most elaborately equipped factories. Furthermore, whatever political agreements may be made, the fact that atomic energy possesses unique destructive potentialities will always constitute a temptation to the boy-gangster who lurks within every patriotic nationalist. And even if a world government should be set up within a fairly short space of time, this will not necessarily guarantee peace. The Pax Romana was a very uneasy affair, troubled at almost every imperial death by civil strife over the question of succession. So long as the lust for power persists as a human trait — and in persons of a certain kind of physique and temperament this lust is overmasteringly strong — no political arrangement, however well contrived, can guarantee peace. For such men the instruments of violence are as fearfully tempting as are, to others, the bodies of women. Of all instruments of violence, those powered by atomic energy are the most decisively destructive; and for power lovers, even under a system of world government, the temptation to resort to these all too simple and effective means for gratifying their lust will be great indeed. In view of all this, we must conclude that atomic energy is, and for a long time is likely to remain, a source of industrial power that is, politically and humanly speaking, in the highest degree undesirable.

It is not necessary in this place, nor am I competent, to enter any further into the hypothetical policy of internationally organized science. If that policy is to make a real contribution toward the maintenance of peace and the spread of political and personal liberty, it must be patterned throughout along the decentralist lines laid down in the preceding discussion of the two basic problems of food and power. Will scientists and technicians collaborate to formulate and pursue some such policy as that which has been adumbrated here? Or will they permit themselves, as they have done only too often in the past, to become the conscious or unconscious instruments of militarists, imperialists and a ruling oligarchy of capitalistic or governmental bosses? Time alone will show. Meanwhile, it is to be hoped that all concerned will carefully consider a suggestion made by Dr. Gene Weltfish in the September, 1945, issue of the *Scientific Monthly*. Before embarking upon practice, all physicians swear a professional oath — the oath of Hippocrates — that they will not take improper advantage of their position, but always remember their responsibilities toward suffering humanity. Technicians and scientists, proposes Dr. Weltfish, should take a similar oath in some such words as the following: 'I pledge myself that I will use my knowledge for the good of humanity and against the destructive forces of the world and the ruthless intent of men; and that I will work together with my fellow scientists of whatever nation, creed or colour for these our common ends.'

THE END

The Devils of Loudun

CONTENTS

- CHAPTER ONE
- CHAPTER TWO
- CHAPTER THREE
- CHAPTER FOUR
- CHAPTER FIVE
- CHAPTER SIX
- CHAPTER SEVEN
- CHAPTER EIGHT
- CHAPTER NINE
- CHAPTER TEN
- CHAPTER ELEVEN
- EPILOGUE

Chapter One

IT WAS IN 1605 that Joseph Hall, the satirist and future bishop, made his first visit to Flanders. “Along our way how many churches saw we demolished, nothing left but rude heaps to tell the passenger, there hath been both devotion and hostility. Oh, the miserable footsteps of war! . . . But (which I wondered at) churches fall, and Jesuits’ colleges rise everywhere. There is no city where these are not rearing or built. Whence cometh this? Is it for that devotion is not so necessary as policy? These men (as we say of the fox) fare best when they are most cursed. None so much spited of their own; none so hated of all; none so opposed of by ours; and yet these ill weeds grow.”

They grew for a very simple and sufficient reason: the public wanted them. For the Jesuits themselves, “policy,” as Hall and his whole generation knew very well, was the first consideration. The schools had been called into existence for the purpose of strengthening the Roman Church against its enemies, the “libertines” and the Protestants. The good fathers hoped, by their teaching, to create a class of educated laymen totally devoted to the interests of the Church. In the words of Cerutti — words which drove the indignant Michelet almost to frenzy — “as we swathe the limbs of an infant in the cradle to give them a right proportion, so it is necessary from his earliest youth to swathe, so to speak, his will, that it may preserve through his life a happy and salutary

suppleness.” The spirit of domination was willing enough, but the flesh of propagandist method was weak. In spite of the swaddling of their wills, some of the Jesuits’ best pupils left school to become free thinkers or even, like Jean Labadie, Protestants. So far as “policy” was concerned, the system was never as efficient as its creators had hoped. But the public was not interested in policy; the public was interested in good schools, where their boys could learn all that a gentleman ought to know. Better than most other purveyors of education, the Jesuits supplied the demand. “What did I observe during the seven years I passed under the Jesuits’ roof? A life full of moderation, diligence and order. They devoted every hour of the day to our education, or to the strict fulfillment of their vows. As evidence of this, I appeal to the testimony of the thousands who, like myself, were educated by them.” So wrote Voltaire. His words bear witness to the excellence of the Jesuits’ teaching methods. At the same time, and yet more emphatically, his entire career bears witness to the failure of that “policy,” which the teaching methods were intended to serve.

When Voltaire went to school, the Jesuit colleges were familiar features of the educational scene. A century earlier their merits had seemed positively revolutionary. In an age when most pedagogues were amateurs in everything except the handling of the birch, their disciplinary methods were relatively humane and their professors carefully chosen and systematically trained. They taught a peculiarly elegant Latin and the very latest in optics, geography and mathematics, together with “dramatics” (their end-of-term theatricals were famous), good manners, respect for the Church and (in France, at least, and after Henri IV’s conversion) obedience to the royal authority. For all these reasons the Jesuit colleges recommended themselves to every member of the typical upper-class family — to the tender-hearted mother, who could not bear to think of her darling undergoing the tortures of an old-fashioned education; to the learned ecclesiastical uncle, with his concern for sound doctrine and a Ciceronian style; and finally to the father who, as a patriotic official, approved of monarchical principles and, as a prudent bourgeois, counted on the Company’s backstairs influence to help their pupil to a job, a place at court, an ecclesiastical sinecure. Here, for example, is a very substantial couple — M. Corneille of Rouen, Avocat du Roy à la Table de Marbre du Palais, and his wife, Marthe le Pesant. Their son, Pierre, is such a promising boy that they decide to send him to the Jesuits. Here is M. Joachim Descartes, Counselor of the Parlement of Rennes. In 1604 he takes his youngest — a bright little fellow of eight, called René — to the recently founded and royally endowed Jesuit College of La Flèche. And here too, at about the same date, is the learned Canon Grandier of Saintes. He has a nephew, son of another lawyer not quite so rich and aristocratic as M. Descartes or M. Corneille, but still eminently respectable. The boy, called Urbain, is now fourteen years old and wonderfully clever. He deserves to be given the best of educations, and in the neighborhood of Saintes the best education available is to be had at the Jesuit College of Bordeaux.

This celebrated seat of learning comprised a high school for boys, a liberal arts college, a seminary, and a School of Advanced Studies for ordained postgraduates.

Here the precociously brilliant Urbain Grandier spent more than ten years, first as schoolboy, and later as undergraduate, theological student and, after his ordination in 1615, as Jesuit novice. Not that he intended to enter the Company; for he felt no vocation to subject himself to so rigid a discipline. No, his career was to be made, not in a religious order, but as a secular priest. In that profession a man of his native abilities, pushed and protected by the most powerful organization within the Church, could hope to go far. There might be a chaplaincy to some great noble, the tutorship of some future marshal of France, some cardinal in the bud. There might be invitations to display his remarkable eloquence before bishops, before princesses of the blood, even before the Queen herself. There might be diplomatic missions, appointments of high administrative posts, rich sinecures, juicy pluralities. There might — though this was unlikely, considering that he was not of noble birth — but there conceivably might be some princely bishopric to gild and gladden his declining years.

At the outset of his career circumstances seemed to authorize the most sanguine of these expectations. For at twenty-seven, after two years of advanced theology and philosophy, young Father Grandier received his reward for so many long semesters of diligence and good behavior. By the Company of Jesus, in whose gift it lay, he was presented to the important living of Saint-Pierre du Marché at Loudun. At the same time, and thanks to the same benefactors, he was made a canon of the collegial church of the Holy Cross. His foot was on the ladder; all he now had to do was to climb.

Loudun, as its new parson rode slowly toward his destination, revealed itself as a little city on a hill, dominated by two tall towers — the spire of St. Peter's and the medieval keep of the great castle. As a symbol, as a sociological hieroglyph, Loudun's skyline was somewhat out of date. That spire still threw its Gothic shadow across the town; but a good part of the townspeople were Huguenots who abhorred the Church to which it belonged. That huge donjon, built by the Counts of Poitiers, was still a place of formidable strength; but Richelieu would soon be in power and the days of local autonomy and provincial fortresses were numbered. All unknowing the parson was riding into the last act of a sectarian war, into the prologue to a nationalist revolution.

At the city gates a corpse or two hung, moldering, from the municipal gallows. Within the walls, there were the usual dirty streets, the customary gamut of smells, from wood smoke to excrement, from geese to incense, from baking bread to horses, swine and unwashed humanity.

Peasants, and artisans, journeymen, and domestics — the poor were a negligible and anonymous majority of the city's fourteen thousand inhabitants. A little above them the shopkeepers, the master craftsmen, the small officials clustered precariously on the lowest rung of bourgeois respectability. Above these again — totally dependent upon their inferiors, but enjoying unquestioned privileges and ruling them by a divine right — were the rich merchants, the professional men, the people of quality in their hierarchical order: the petty gentry and the larger landowners, the feudal magnates and the lordly prelates. Here and there one could find a few small oases of culture and disinterested intelligence. Outside these oases the mental atmosphere was suffocatingly

provincial. Among the rich, the concern with money and property, with rights and privileges, was passionate and chronic. For the two or three thousand, at the most, who could afford litigation or needed professional legal advice, there were, at Loudun, no less than twenty barristers, eighteen solicitors, eighteen bailiffs and eight notaries.

Such time and energy as were left over from the preoccupation with possessions were devoted to the cozy little monotonies, the recurrent joys and agonies of family life; to gossip about the neighbors; to the formalities of religion and, since Loudun was a city divided against itself, to the inexhaustible acerbities of theological controversy. Of the existence at Loudun, during the parson's incumbency, of any genuinely spiritual religion there is no evidence. Widespread concern with the spiritual life arises only in the neighborhood of exceptional individuals who know by direct experience that God is a Spirit and must be worshiped in spirit. Along with a good supply of scoundrels, Loudun had its share of the upright and the well-intentioned, the pious and even the devout. But it had no saints, no man or woman whose mere presence is the self-validating proof of a deeper insight into the eternal reality, a closer unison with the divine ground of all being. Not until sixty years later did such a person appear within the city walls. When, after the most harrowing physical and spiritual adventures, Louise du Tronchay came at last to work in the hospital of Loudun, she at once became the center of an intense and eager spiritual life. People of all ages and of every class came flocking to ask her about God, to beg for her advice and help. "They love us too much here," Louise wrote to her old confessor in Paris. "I feel quite ashamed of it; for when I speak of God, people are so much moved that they start crying. I am afraid of contributing to the good opinion they have of me." She longed to run away and hide; but she was the prisoner of a city's devotion. When she prayed, the sick were often healed. To her shame and mortification, Louise was held responsible for their recovery. "If I ever did a miracle," she wrote, "I should think myself damned." After a few years she was ordered by her directors to move away from Loudun. For the people there was now no longer any living window through which the Light might shine. In a little while the fervor cooled; the interest in the life of the spirit died down. Loudun returned to its normal state — the state it had been in when, two generations earlier, Urbain Grandier rode into town.

From the first, public sentiment in regard to the new parson was sharply divided. Most of the devouter sex approved of him. The late Curé had been a doddering nonentity. His successor was a man in the prime of youth, tall, athletic, with an air of grave authority, even (according to one contemporary) of majesty. He had large dark eyes and, under his biretta, an abundance of crinkly black hair. His forehead was high, his nose aquiline, his lips red, full and mobile. An elegant Van Dyck beard adorned his chin, and on his upper lip he wore a narrow mustache sedulously trained and pomaded so that its curling ends confronted one another, on either side of the nose, like a pair of coquettish question marks. To post-Faustian eyes his portrait suggests a fleshier, not unamiable and only slightly less intelligent Mephistopheles in clerical fancy dress.

To this seductive appearance Grandier added the social virtues of good manners and lively conversation. He could turn a compliment with easy grace, and the look with which he accompanied his words was more flattering, if the lady happened to be at all presentable, than the words themselves. The new parson, it was only too obvious, took an interest in his female parishioners that was more than merely pastoral.

Grandier lived in the gray dawn of what may be called the Era of Respectability. Throughout the Middle Ages and during the earlier part of the modern period the gulf between official Catholic theory and the actual practice of individual ecclesiastics had been enormous, unbridged and seemingly unbridgeable. It is difficult to find any medieval or Renaissance writer who does not take it for granted that, from highest prelate to humblest friar, the majority of clergymen are thoroughly disreputable. Ecclesiastical corruption begot the Reformation, and in its turn the Reformation produced the Counter Reformation. After the Council of Trent scandalous Popes became less and less common, until finally, by the middle of the seventeenth century, the breed died out completely. Even some of the bishops, whose only qualification for preferment was the fact that they were the younger sons of noblemen, now made a certain effort to behave themselves. Among the lower clergy abuses were checked from above by a more vigilant and efficient ecclesiastical administration, and from within, by the zeal radiating from such organizations as the Society of Jesus and the Congregation of the Oratory. In France, where the monarchy was making use of the Church as an instrument for increasing the central power at the expense of the Protestants, the great nobles and the traditions of provincial autonomy, clerical respectability was a matter of royal concern. The masses will not revere a Church whose ministers are guilty of scandalous conduct. But in a country where not only l'Etat, but also l'Eglise, c'est Moi, disrespect for the Church is disrespect for the King. "I remember," writes Bayle in one of the interminable footnotes of his great Dictionary, "I remember that I one day asked a Gentleman who was relating to me numberless Irregularities of the Venetian Clergy, how it came to pass that the Senate suffered such a thing, so little to the Honour of Religion and the State. He replied, that the public Good obliged the Sovereign to use this Indulgence; and, to explain this Riddle, he added that the Senate was well pleased that the Priests and Monks were held in the utmost contempt by the People, since, for that reason, they would be less capable of causing an Insurrection among them. One of the Reasons, says he, why the Jesuits there are disagreeable to the Prince is because they preserve the Decorum of their Character; and thus, being the more respected by the inferior People, are more capable of raising a Sedition." In France, during the whole of the seventeenth century, state policy toward clerical irregularities was the exact opposite of that pursued by the Venetian Senate. Because it was afraid of ecclesiastical encroachment, the latter liked to see its clergymen conducting themselves like pigs and disliked the respectable Jesuits. Politically powerful and strongly Gallican, the French monarchy had no reason to fear the Pope, and found the Church very useful as a machine for governing. For this reason it favored the Jesuits and discouraged priestly incontinence, or at least priestly indiscretion. The new parson had embarked

on his career at a time when clerical scandals, though still frequent, were becoming increasingly distasteful to those in authority.

In his autobiographical account of a seventeenth-century boyhood and youth, Grandier's younger contemporary, Jean-Jacques Bouchard, has left us a document so clinically objective, so completely free from all expressions of regret, from any kind of moral judgment, that nineteenth-century scholars could publish it only for private circulation and with emphatic comments on the author's unspeakable depravity. For a generation brought up on Havelock Ellis and Krafft-Ebing, on Hirschfeld and Kinsey, Bouchard's book no longer seems outrageous. But though it has ceased to shock, it must still astonish. For how startling it is to find a subject of Louis XIII writing of the less creditable forms of sexual activity in the flat, matter-of-fact style of a modern college girl answering an anthropologist's questionnaire, or a psychiatrist recording a case history! Descartes was ten years his senior; but long before the philosopher had started to vivisect those writhing automata, to which the vulgar attach the names of dog and cat, Bouchard was conducting a series of psycho-chemico-physiological experiments on his mother's chambermaid. The girl, when he first took notice of her, was pious and almost aggressively virtuous. With the patience and acumen of a Pavlov, Bouchard reconditioned this product of implicit faith so that she became at last a devotee of Natural Philosophy, as ready to be observed and experimented upon as to undertake researches on her own account. On the table next to Jean-Jacques' bed were piled half a dozen folio volumes on anatomy and medicine. Between two assignations, or even between two experimental caresses, this odd forerunner of Ploss and Bartels would open his *De Generatione*, his *Fernelius* or his *Ferandus* and consult the relevant chapter, subsection and paragraph. But, unlike most of his contemporaries, he would accept nothing on authority. Lemnius and Rodericus a Castro might say what they liked about the strange and alarming properties of menstrual blood; Jean-Jacques was determined to see for himself whether it really did all the things it was reputed to do. Seconded by the now willing chambermaid, he made a succession of trials, only to find that, from time immemorial, the doctors, the philosophers and the theologians had been talking through their mortarboards and birettas. Menstrual blood did not kill grass, did not tarnish mirrors, did not blast the buds of the vine, did not dissolve asphalt and did not produce ineradicable spots of rust on the blade of a knife. Biological science lost one of its most promising investigators when, in order to get out of marrying his collaborator and corpus vile, Bouchard precipitately left Paris in order to seek his fortune at the papal court. All he wanted was a bishopric in partibus, or even, at a pinch, in Brittany — some unpretentious little benefice of six or seven thousand livres a year; that was all. (Six thousand five hundred livres was the income derived by Descartes from the judicious investment of his patrimony. It was not princely; but at least it permitted a philosopher to live like a gentleman.) Poor Bouchard was never beneficed. Known to his contemporaries only as the ridiculous author of a *Panglossia*, or collection of verses in forty-six languages, including Coptic, Peruvian and Japanese, he died before he was forty.

Loudun's new parson was too normal and had too hearty an appetite to think of turning his bed into a laboratory. But, like Bouchard, Grandier was the scion of a respectable bourgeois family; like Bouchard, he had been educated at an ecclesiastical boarding school; like Bouchard, he was clever, learned and an enthusiastic humanist; and like Bouchard, he hoped to make a brilliant career in the Church. Socially and culturally, if not temperamentally, the two men had much in common. Consequently what Bouchard has to say of his childhood, his school days and his holiday diversions at home may be regarded as being indirectly evidential in regard to Grandier.

The world revealed by the Confessions is very like the world revealed to us by modern sexologists — but, if anything, a little more so. We see the small fry indulging in sexual play — indulging in it freely and frequently; for there seems to be singularly little adult interference with their activities. At school, under the good Fathers, there are no strenuous games, and the boys' superfluous energy can find no vent except in incessant masturbation and the practice, on half-holidays, of homosexuality. Pep talks and pulpit eloquence, confession and devotional exercises are to some slight extent restraining influences. Bouchard records that, at the four great feasts of the Church, he would refrain from his customary sexual practices for as long as eight or ten days at a stretch. But, try as he might, he never succeeded in prolonging these interims of chastity to a full fortnight, *quoy que la dévotion le gourmandast assez* — despite the fact that he was not a little checked and chided by devotion. In any given set of circumstances our actual behavior is represented by the diagonal of a parallelogram of forces having appetite or interest as its base and, as its upright, our ethical or religious ideals. In Bouchard's case and, we may suppose, in the case of the other boys whom he names as his companions in pleasure, the devotional upright was so short that the angle between the long base and the diagonal of manifest behavior was of only a very few degrees.

When he was at home for the holidays Bouchard's parents assigned him sleeping quarters in the same room with an adolescent chambermaid. This girl was all virtue while she was awake, but could not, it was obvious, be responsible for what happened while she was asleep. And according to her private system of casuistry, it made no difference whether she was really asleep or merely pretending. Later on, when Jean-Jacques's school days were over, there was a little peasant girl who minded the cows in the orchard. For a halfpenny, she was ready to grant any favors her young master might demand. Yet another maid, who had left because Bouchard's half brother, the Prior of Cassan, had tried to seduce her, now re-entered the family's service and soon became Jean-Jacques's guinea pig and co-worker in the sexual experimentation described in the second half of the Confessions.

Between Bouchard and the heir to the throne of France the gulf was wide and deep. And yet the moral atmosphere in which the future Louis XIII was brought up is similar in many respects to that breathed by his humbler contemporary. In the Journal of Dr. Jean Héroard, the little prince's physician, we possess a long and detailed record of a seventeenth-century childhood. True, the Dauphin was a very exceptional child — the

first son born to a King of France in more than eighty years. But the very preciousness of this unique infant throws into yet sharper relief certain, to us, most extraordinary features of his upbringing. If this sort of thing was good enough for a child, for whom, by definition, nothing was good enough, then what, we may ask ourselves, was good enough for ordinary children? To start with, the Dauphin was brought up with a whole flock of his father's illegitimate children by three or four different mothers. Some of these left-handed brothers and sisters were older than himself, some younger. By the age of three — and perhaps earlier — he knew very clearly what bastards were and in what manner they were fabricated. The language in which this information was communicated was so consistently coarse that the child was often shocked by it. "Fi donc!" he would say of his Gouvernante, Mme. de Montglat, "how nasty she is!"

Henry IV was very partial to dirty songs, and his courtiers and servants knew large numbers of them, which they were forever singing as they went about their business in the palace. And when they were not vocalizing their smut, the Prince's attendants, male and female, liked to joke obscenely with the child about his father's bastards and his own future wife (for he was already as good as betrothed), the Infanta, Anne of Austria. Moreover, the Dauphin's sexual education was not merely verbal. At night the child would often be taken into the beds of his waiting women — beds which they shared (without nightdresses or pajamas) either with other women or their husbands. It seems likely enough that, by the time he was four or five, the little boy knew all the facts of life, and knew them not merely by hearsay, but by inspection. This seems all the more probable since a seventeenth-century palace was totally without privacy. Architects had not yet invented the corridor. To get from one part of the building to another, one simply walked through a succession of other people's rooms, in which literally anything might be going on. And there was also the matter of etiquette. Less fortunate in this respect than his or her inferiors, a royal personage was never permitted to be alone. If one's blood were blue, one was born in a crowd, one died in a crowd, one even relieved nature in a crowd and on occasion one had to make love in a crowd. And the character of the circumambient architecture was such that one could scarcely avoid the spectacle of others being born, dying, relieving nature and making love. In later life Louis XIII displayed a decided aversion for women, a decided, though probably platonic, inclination for men, and a decided repugnance for all kinds of physical deformity and disease. The behavior of Mme. de Montglat and the other ladies of the court may easily have accounted for the first and also, by a natural reaction, for the second of these two traits; as for the third — who knows what repulsive squalors the child may not have stumbled upon in the all too public bedchambers of Saint-Germain-en-Laye?

Such, then, was the kind of world in which the new parson had been brought up — a world in which the traditional sexual taboos lay very lightly on the ignorant and poverty-stricken majority and not too heavily upon their betters; a world where duchesses joked like Juliet's nurse and the conversation of great ladies was a nastier and stupider echo of the Wife of Bath's; where a man of means and good social standing could (if he were not too squeamish in the matter of dirt and lice) satisfy his appetites

almost *ad libitum*; and where, even among the cultivated and the thoughtful, the teachings of religion were taken for the most part in a rather *Pickwickian* sense, so that the gulf between theory and overt behavior, though a little narrower than in the medieval Ages of Faith, was yet sufficiently enormous. A product of this world, Urbain Grandier went to his parish with every intention of making the best both of it and of the other, the heavenly universe beyond the abhorred chasm. Ronsard was his favorite poet, and Ronsard had written certain Stanzas which perfectly expressed the young parson's point of view.

Quand au temple nous serons,
Agenouillés nous ferons
Les dévots selon la guise
De ceux qui, pour louer Dieu,
Humbles se courbent au lieu
Le plus secret de l'Eglise.
Mais quand au lit nous serons,
Entrelacés nous ferons
Les lascifs selon les guises
Des amants qui librement
Pratiquent folâtement
Dans les draps cent mignardises.

It was a description of "the well-rounded life," and a well-rounded life was what this healthy young humanist was resolved to lead. But a priest's life is not supposed to be well-rounded; it is supposed to be one-pointed — a compass, not a weathercock. In order to keep his life one-pointed, the priest assumes certain obligations, makes certain promises. In Grandier's case the obligations had been assumed and the vows pronounced with a mental restriction, which he was to make public — and then only for a single reader — in a little treatise on the celibacy of the clergy, written some ten years after his first coming to Loudun.

Against celibacy Grandier makes use of two main arguments. The first may be summed up in the following syllogism. "A promise to perform the impossible is not binding. For the young male, continence is impossible. Therefore no vow involving such continence is binding." And if this does not suffice, here is a second argument based on the universally accepted maxim that we are not bound by promises extorted under duress. "The priest does not embrace celibacy for the love of celibacy, but solely that he may be admitted to holy orders." His vow "does not proceed from his will, but is imposed upon him by the Church, which compels him, willy-nilly, to accept this hard condition, without which he may not practice the sacerdotal profession." The upshot of all this was that Grandier felt himself at perfect liberty ultimately to marry and, meanwhile, to lead the well-rounded life with any pretty woman who was ready to be co-operative.

To the prudes in his congregation the new parson's amorous propensities seemed the most horrible of scandals; but the prudes were in a minority. To the rest, even to

those who had every intention of remaining virtuous, there was something pleasantly exciting in the situation created by the incumbency of a man of Grandier's appearance, habits and reputation. Sex mingles easily with religion, and their blending has one of those slightly repulsive and yet exquisite and poignant flavors, which startle the palate like a revelation — of what? That, precisely, is the question.

Grandier's popularity with the women was enough, of itself, to make him extremely unpopular among the men. From the first, the husbands and fathers of his female parishioners were deeply suspicious of this clever young dandy with his fine manners and his gift of the gab. And even if the new parson had been a saint, why should such a plum as the living of St. Peter's go to a foreigner? What was wrong with the local boys? Loudun's tithes should go to Loudun's own sons. And, to make matters worse, the foreigner had not come alone. He had brought with him a mother, three brothers and a sister. For one of those brothers he had already found a job in the office of the town's chief magistrate. Another, who was a priest, had been appointed chief vicar of St. Peter's. The third, also in orders, had no official position, but prowled around hungrily on the lookout for clerical odd jobs. It was an invasion.

Even the grumblers had to admit, however, that M. Grandier could preach a thundering good sermon, and was a very able priest, full of sound doctrine and even of secular learning. But his very merits told against him. Because he was a man of wit and wide reading, Grandier was from the first received by the most aristocratic and cultivated personages in the town. Doors which had always remained closed to the rich bumpkins, the uncouth officials, the louts of gentle birth, who constituted the high, but not the highest, society of Loudun, were immediately opened to this young whippersnapper from another province. Bitter was the resentment of the excluded notables, when they heard of his intimacy, first with Jean d'Armagnac, the newly appointed Governor of the town and castle, and then with Loudun's most famous citizen, the aged Scévole de Sainte-Marthe, eminent alike as jurisconsult and statesman, as historian and poet. D'Armagnac thought so highly of the parson's abilities and discretion that, during his absences at court, he entrusted to Grandier the entire management of his affairs. To Sainte-Marthe the Curé recommended himself, above all, as a humanist who knew the classics and could therefore appreciate at its true worth the old gentleman's Virgilian masterpiece, *Paediotrophiae Libri Tres* — a didactic poem on the care and feeding of infants, so popular that no less than ten editions were called for during the author's lifetime, and at the same time so elegant, so correct, that Ronsard could say that "he preferred the author of these verses to all the poets of our age, and would maintain it however great the displeasure he might thereby give to Bembo, to Navagero and the divine Fracastoro." Alas, how transitory is fame, how absolute the vanity of human pretensions! For us, Cardinal Bembo is hardly more than a name, Andrea Navagero rather less, and such immortality as is enjoyed by the divine Fracastoro belongs to him solely in virtue of the fact that he gave a politer nickname to the pox by writing, in flawless Latin, a medical eclogue about the unhappy Prince Syphilus who, after many sufferings, was relieved of the *morbis Gallicus* by copious

draughts of a decoction of guaiacum. The dead languages grow ever deader, and the three books of *Paediotrophia* treat of a less dramatic phase of the sexual cycle than the *libri tres* of the *Syphilid*. Once read by everyone, once reckoned as diviner than the divine, Scévole de Sainte-Marthe has now vanished into the darkness. But at the time when Grandier made his acquaintance, he was still in his sunset glory, the grandest of Grand Old Men, a kind of National Monument. To be received into his intimacy was like dining with Notre Dame de Paris or dropping in for a chat with the Pont du Gard. In the splendid house to which this Elder Statesman and Dean of Humaner Letters had now retired Grandier talked familiarly with the great man and his hardly less distinguished sons and grandsons. And there were visiting celebrities — the Prince of Wales, incognito; Théophraste Renaudot, unorthodox physician, philanthropist and father of French journalism; Ismaël Boulliau, the future author of the monumental *Astronomia Philolaica* and the first observer to determine with precision the periodicity of a variable star. To these were joined such local lights as Guillaume de Cerisay, the Bailli, or Chief Magistrate of Loudun, and Louis Trincant, the Public Prosecutor, a pious and learned man who had been a schoolfellow of Abel de Sainte-Marthe and who shared the family's taste for literature and antiquarian research.

Hardly less gratifying than the friendship of these choice spirits was the enmity displayed by all the others, the outsiders. To be mistrusted by the stupid because he was so clever, to be envied by the inept because he had made good, to be loathed by the dull for his wit, by the boors for his breeding and by the unattractive for his success with women — what a tribute to his universal superiority! And the hatred was not one-sided. Grandier detested his enemies as heartily as they detested him. “ ‘Damn’ braces, ‘bless’ relaxes.” There are many people for whom hate and rage pay a higher dividend of immediate satisfaction than love. Congenitally aggressive, they soon become adrenalin addicts, deliberately indulging their ugliest passions for the sake of the ‘kick’ they derive from their psychically stimulated endocrines. Knowing that one self-assertion always ends by evoking other and hostile self-assertions, they sedulously cultivate their truculence. And, sure enough, very soon they find themselves in the thick of a fight. But a fight is what they most enjoy; for it is while they are fighting that their blood chemistry makes them feel most intensely themselves. ‘Feeling good,’ they naturally assume that they are good. Adrenalin addiction is rationalized as Righteous Indignation and finally, like the prophet Jonah, they are convinced, unshakably, that they do well to be angry.

Almost from the first moment of his arrival at Loudun, Grandier was involved in a series of unseemly but, so far as he was concerned, thoroughly enjoyable quarrels. One gentleman actually drew his sword against the parson. With another, the Lieutenant Criminel, who headed the local police force, he indulged in a public slanging match, which soon degenerated into physical violence. Outnumbered, the parson and his acolytes had to barricade themselves in the chapel of the castle. Next day Grandier complained to the ecclesiastical court and the Lieutenant Criminel was duly reprimanded for his part in the scandalous affair. For the Curé it was a triumph — but at

a price. An influential man who had merely felt an unreasoned dislike for him was now his mortal and inveterate enemy, on the watch for any opportunity to be revenged.

As a matter of elementary prudence no less than of Christian principle, the parson should have done his utmost to conciliate the enmities by which he was surrounded. But in spite of all those years with the Jesuits, Grandier was still very far from being a Christian; and in spite of all the good advice he received from d'Armagnac and his other friends, he was incapable, where his passions were involved, of acting with prudence. A long religious training had not abolished or even mitigated his self-love; it had served only to provide the ego with a theological alibi. The untutored egotist merely wants what he wants. Give him a religious education, and it becomes obvious to him, it becomes axiomatic, that what he wants is what God wants, that his cause is the cause of whatever he may happen to regard as the True Church and that any compromise is a metaphysical Munich, an appeasement of Radical Evil. "Agree with thine adversary while thou art in the way with him." To men like Grandier, Christ's advice seems like a blasphemous invitation to make a pact with Beelzebub. Instead of trying to come to terms with his enemies, the parson set to work to exacerbate their hostility by every means in his power. And his power, in this respect, amounted almost to genius.

The Good Fairy, who visits the cradles of the privileged, is often the Bad Fairy in a luminous disguise. She comes loaded with presents; but her bounty, all too often, is fatal. To Urbain Grandier, for example, the Good Fairy had brought, along with solid talents, the most dazzling of all gifts, and the most dangerous — eloquence. Spoken by a good actor — and every great preacher, every successful advocate and politician is, among other things, a consummate actor — words can exercise an almost magical power over their hearers. Because of the essential irrationality of this power, even the best-intentioned of public speakers probably do more harm than good. When an orator, by the mere magic of words and a golden voice, persuades his audience of the rightness of a bad cause, we are very properly shocked. We ought to feel the same dismay whenever we find the same irrelevant tricks being used to persuade people of the rightness of a good cause. The belief engendered may be desirable, but the grounds for it are intrinsically wrong, and those who use the devices of oratory for instilling even right beliefs are guilty of pandering to the least creditable elements in human nature. By exercising their disastrous gift of the gab, they deepen the quasi-hypnotic trance in which most human beings live and from which it is the aim and purpose of all true philosophy, all genuinely spiritual religion to deliver them. Moreover, there cannot be effective oratory without oversimplification. But you cannot oversimplify without distorting the facts. Even when he is doing his best to tell the truth, the successful orator is ipso facto a liar. And most successful orators, it is hardly necessary to add, are not even trying to tell the truth; they are trying to evoke sympathy for their friends and antipathy for their opponents. Grandier, alas, was one of the majority. Sunday after Sunday, in the pulpit of St. Peter's, he gave his celebrated imitations of Jeremiah

and Ezekiel, of Demosthenes, of Savonarola, even of Rabelais — for he was as good at derision as at righteous indignation, at irony as at apocalyptic thunder.

Nature abhors a vacuum, even in the mind. Today the aching void of boredom is filled and perpetually renewed by movies and radio, television and the comic strips. More fortunate than we, or else less fortunate (who knows?), our ancestors depended, for the assuagement of their ennui, on the weekly performances of their parish priest, supplemented from time to time by the discourses of visiting Capuchins or traveling Jesuits. Preaching is an art, and in this, as in all other arts, the bad performers far outnumber the good. The parishioners of St. Peter's in the Market could congratulate themselves on possessing, in the Reverend Grandier, a superb virtuoso, ready and able to improvise entertainingly on the sublimest Christian mystery as well as on the most touchy, the most delicate and scabrous of parochial issues. How roundly he denounced abuses, how fearlessly he reproved even those in high places! The chronically bored majority were delighted. Their applause merely served to increase the fury of those who had been made the victims of the parson's eloquence.

Among these victims were the monks of the various orders which had, since the cessation of open hostilities between Huguenots and Catholics, established houses in the once Protestant city. Grandier's prime reason for disliking the monks was the fact that he himself was a secular priest and as loyal to his caste as the good soldier is loyal to his regiment, the good undergraduate to his school, the good Communist or Nazi to his party. Loyalty to organization A always entails some degree of suspicion, contempt or downright loathing of organizations, B, C, D and all the rest. And this is true even of component groups within a larger, superordinated whole. Ecclesiastical history exhibits a hierarchy of hatreds, descending by orderly degrees from the Church's official and ecumenical hatred of heretics and infidels to the particular hatreds of Order for Order, school for school, province for province and theologian for theologian.

"It would be good," St. Francis de Sales wrote in 1612, "it would be good, through the intervention of pious and prudent prelates, to bring about union and mutual understanding between the Sorbonne and the Jesuit Fathers. If in France the bishops, the Sorbonne and the Orders were thoroughly united, in ten years it would be all up with heresy." (*Œuvres* XV, 188) It would be all up with heresy because, as the saint says in another place, "Whoever preaches with love preaches sufficiently against heresy, though he may never utter a controversial word." (*Œuvres* VI, 309) A Church divided by intestine hatreds cannot systematically practice love and cannot, without manifest hypocrisy, preach it. But instead of union there was continued dissension; instead of love there was the odium theologicum and the aggressive patriotism of caste and school and order. To the feud between the Jesuits and the Sorbonne was soon added the feud between the Jansenists and an alliance of Jesuits and Salesians. And after that came the long-drawn battle over Quietism and Disinterested Love. In the end the Gallican Church's quarrels, internal and external, were settled, not by love or persuasion, but by authoritarian ukase. For the heretics there were the dragonnades and finally the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. For the squabbling ecclesiastics there were papal

bulls and threats of excommunication. Order was restored, but in the most unedifying way possible, by means the most coarsely unspiritual, the least religious and humane.

Partisan loyalty is socially disastrous; but for individuals it can be richly rewarding — more rewarding, in many ways, than even concupiscence or avarice. Whoremongers and money-grubbers find it hard to feel very proud of their activities. But partisanship is a complex passion which permits those who indulge in it to make the best of both worlds. Because they do these things for the sake of a group which is, by definition, good and even sacred, they can admire themselves and loathe their neighbors, they can seek power and money, can enjoy the pleasures of aggression and cruelty, not merely without feeling guilty, but with a positive glow of conscious virtue. Loyalty to their group transforms these pleasant vices into acts of heroism. Partisans are aware of themselves, not as sinners or criminals, but as altruists and idealists. And with certain qualifications, this is in fact what they are. The only trouble is that their altruism is merely egotism at one remove, and that the ideal, for which they are ready in many cases to lay down their lives, is nothing but the rationalization of corporate interests and party passions.

When Grandier criticized the monks of Loudun, it was, we may be sure, with a sense of righteous zeal, a consciousness of doing God's work. For God, it went without saying, was on the side of the secular clergy and of Grandier's good friends, the Jesuits. Carmelites and Capuchins were all very well within the walls of their monasteries, or conducting missions in out-of-the-way villages. But they had no business to poke their noses into the affairs of an urban bourgeoisie. God had decreed that the rich and respectable should be guided by the secular clergy, with a little assistance perhaps from the good fathers of the Company of Jesus. One of the new parson's first acts was to announce from the pulpit that the faithful were under an obligation to make confession to their parish priest, not to any outsider. The women, who did most of the confessing, were only too ready to obey. Their parish priest was now a clean, good-looking young scholar, with the manners of a gentleman. One could not say as much of the average Capuchin or Carmelite director. Almost overnight the monks lost most of their fair penitents and, along with them, most of their influence in the town. Grandier followed up this first broadside with a succession of uncomplimentary references to the Carmelites' principal source of income — a miracle-working image called Notre-Dame de Recouvrance. There had been a time when a whole quarter of the city was filled with inns and boardinghouses for the accommodation of the pilgrims who came to beg the image for health or a husband, for an heir or better luck. But now Notre-Dame de Recouvrance had a formidable rival in Notre-Dame des Ardilliers, whose church was at Saumur only a few leagues from Loudun. There are fashions in saints, just as there are fashions in medical treatment and women's hats. Every great church has its history of upstart images, of parvenu relics ruthlessly displacing the older wonder-workers, only to be elbowed out of public favor, in their turn, by some newer and momentarily more attractive thaumaturge. Why did Notre-Dame des Ardilliers come to seem, almost suddenly, so vastly superior to Notre-Dame de Recouvrance? The most

obvious of the doubtless very numerous reasons was that Notre-Dame des Ardilliers was in charge of the Oratorians and, as Grandier's first biographer, Aubin, remarks, "All the world agrees that the Priests of the Oratory are able men and more cunning than the Carmelites." The Oratorians, it should be recalled, were secular priests. Perhaps this helps to explain Grandier's skeptical coolness toward Notre-Dame de Recouvrance. Loyalty to his caste impelled him to work for the profit and glory of the secular clergy and for the discredit and ruin of the monks. Notre-Dame de Recouvrance would certainly have sunk into oblivion, even if Grandier had never come to Loudun. But the Carmelites preferred to have another opinion. To think about events realistically, in terms of multiple causations, is hard and emotionally unrewarding. How much easier, how much more agreeable to trace each effect to a single and, if possible, a personal cause! To the illusion of understanding will be joined, in this case, the pleasure of hero worship, if the circumstances are favorable, and the equal, or even greater pleasure, if they should be unfavorable, of persecuting a scapegoat.

To these petty enemies Grandier soon added another capable of doing him immeasurably greater harm. Early in 1618, at a religious convention attended by all the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the neighborhood, Grandier went out of his way to offend the Prior of Coussay by rudely claiming precedence over him in a solemn procession through the streets of Loudun. Technically the parson's position was unassailable. In a procession originating in his own church, a Canon of Sainte-Croix had a right to walk in front of the Prior of Coussay. And this right held good even when, as was here the case, the Prior was at the same time a Bishop. But there is such a thing as courtesy; and there is also such a thing as circumspection. The Prior of Coussay was the Bishop of Luçon, and the Bishop of Luçon was Armand-Jean du Plessis de Richelieu.

At the moment — and this was an additional reason for behaving with magnanimous politeness — Richelieu was out of favor. In 1617 his patron, the Italian gangster, Concini, had been assassinated. This coup d'état was engineered by Luynes and approved by the young King. Richelieu was excluded from power and unceremoniously driven from the court. But was there any reason for supposing that this exile would be perpetual? There was no reason at all. And, in effect, a year later, after a brief banishment to Avignon, the indispensable Bishop of Luçon was recalled to Paris. By 1622 he was the King's First Minister and a Cardinal.

Gratuitously, for the mere pleasure of asserting himself, Grandier had offended a man who was very soon to become the absolute ruler of France. Later, the parson would have reason to regret his incivility. Meanwhile the thought of his exploit filled him with a childish satisfaction. A commoner, an obscure parish priest, he had lowered the pride of a Queen's favorite, a bishop, an aristocrat. He felt the elation of a small boy who has made a long nose at the teacher and "got away with it" unpunished.

Richelieu himself, in later years, derived an identical pleasure from behaving toward princes of the blood exactly as Urbain Grandier had behaved toward him. "To think," said his old uncle, as he watched the Cardinal calmly taking precedence of the Duke of Savoy, "to think that I should have lived to see the grandson of lawyer Laporte

walking into a room before the grandson of Charles VI!" Another horrid little boy had triumphantly got away with it.

The pattern of Grandier's life at Loudun was now set. He fulfilled his clerical duties and in the intervals discreetly frequented the prettier widows, spent convivial evenings in the houses of his intellectual friends and quarreled with an ever widening circle of enemies. It was a thoroughly agreeable existence, satisfying alike to head and heart, to the gonads and the adrenals, to the social persona and his private self. There had as yet been no gross or manifest misfortune in his life. He could still imagine that his amusements were gratuitous, that he could desire with impunity and abhor without effect. In fact, of course, destiny had already begun to render its account, but unobtrusively. He had suffered no hurt that he could feel, only an imperceptible coarsening and hardening, only a progressive darkening of the inner light, a gradual narrowing of the soul's window on the side of eternity. To a man of Grandier's temperament — the sanguine-choleric, according to the Constitutional Medicine of his day — it still seemed obvious that all was right with the world. And if all was right with the world, then God must be in His Heaven. The parson was happy. Or, to put it a little more precisely, in the alternation of his moods, it was the manic that still predominated.

In the spring of 1623, full of years and honors, Scévole de Sainte-Marthe died and was buried with all due pomp in the church of St. Pierre du Marché. Six months later, at a memorial service attended by all the notables of Loudun and Châtellerault, of Chinon and Poitiers, Grandier spoke the great man's oraison funèbre. It was a long and splendid oration in the manner (not yet old-fashioned, for the first edition of Balzac's stylistically revolutionary letters did not appear until the following year) of the "devout humanists." The elaborate sentences glittered with quotations from the classics and the Bible. A showy and superfluous erudition exhibited itself complacently at every turn. The periods rumbled with an artificial thunder. For those who liked this sort of thing — and in 1623 who did not? — this, most decidedly, was the sort of thing they would like. Grandier's oration was received with general applause. Abel de Sainte-Marthe was so much moved by the parson's eloquence that he penned and published a Latin epigram on the subject. No less flattering were the lines which M. Trincant, the public prosecutor, wrote in the vernacular.

Ce n'est pas sans grande raison
Qu'on a choisi ce personnage
Pour entreprendre l'oraison
Du plus grand homme de son âge;
Il fallait véritablement
Une éloquence sans faconde
Pour louer celui dignement
Qui m'eut point de second au monde.

Poor M. Trincant! His passion for the Muses was genuine but hopeless. He loved them, but they, it is evident, did not love him. But if he could not write poetry, he could at least talk about it. After 1623 the Public Prosecutor's drawing room became the

center of Loudun's intellectual life. It was a pretty feeble life, now that Sainte-Marthe was gone. Trincant himself was a well-read man; but most of his friends and relatives were not. Excluded from the Hotel Sainte-Marthe, these people had, unfortunately, a prescriptive right to an invitation from the Public Prosecutor. But when they came in at the door, learning and good conversation flew out of the window. How could it be otherwise with those bevvies of cackling women; those lawyers who knew about nothing except statutes and procedure; those country squires whose only interests were dogs and horses? And finally there were M. Adam, the apothecary, and M. Mannoury, the surgeon — Adam, the long-nosed, Mannoury, the moon-faced and pot-bellied. With all the gravity of doctors of the Sorbonne, they held forth on the virtues of antimony and blood-letting, on the value of soap in clysters and the cautery in the treatment of gunshot wounds. Then, lowering their voices, they would speak (always, of course, in strictest confidence) of the Marquis's pox, of the King's Counsel's wife's second miscarriage, of the Bailiff's sister's young daughter's green sickness. At once absurd and pretentious, solemn and grotesque, the apothecary and the surgeon were predestined butts. They invited sarcasm, they solicited the shafts of derision. With the merciless ferocity of a clever man who will go to any lengths for the sake of a laugh, the parson gave them what they asked for. In a very little while he had two new enemies.

And meanwhile another was in the making. The Public Prosecutor was a middle-aged widower with two marriageable daughters, of whom the elder, Philippe, was so remarkably pretty that, throughout the winter of 1623, the parson found himself looking more and more frequently in her direction.

Watching the girl as she moved among her father's guests, he compared her appraisingly with his mental image of that spritely young widow whom he was now consoling, every Tuesday afternoon, for the untimely death of her poor dear husband, the vintner. Ninon was unschooled, could hardly sign her own name. But under the inconsolable sable of her weeds, the full-blown flesh was only just beginning to lose its firmness. There were treasures there of warmth and whiteness; there was an inexhaustible fund of sensuality, at once frenzied and scientific, violent and yet admirably docile and well-trained. And, thank God, there had been no barriers of prudery to be laboriously demolished, no wearisome preliminaries of Platonic idealization and Petrarchian courtship to be gone through! At their third meeting, he had ventured to quote the opening lines of one of his favorite poems.

Souvent j'ai menti les ébats
Des nuits, t'ayant entre mes bras
Folâtre toute nue;
Mais telle jouissance, hélas!
Encor m'est inconnue.

There had been no protest, only the frankest laughter and a look out of the corner of the eye, very brief but unequivocal. At the end of his fifth visit, he had been in a position to quote Tahureau again.

Adieu, ma petite maîtresse,

Adieu, ma gorgette et mon sein,
Adieu, ma délicate main,
Adieu, donc, mon téton d'albâtre,
Adieu, ma cuissette folâtre,
Adieu, mon oeil, adieu, mon cœur,
Adieu, ma friande douceur!
Mais avant que je me départe,
Avant que plus loin je m'écarte,
Que je tâte encore ce flanc
Et le rond de ce marbre blanc

Good-by, but only until the day after tomorrow, when she would come to St. Peter's for her weekly confession — he was a stickler for weekly confessions — and the usual penance. And between then and next Tuesday he would have preached the sermon he was now preparing for the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin — the finest thing he had done since M. de Sainte-Marthe's funeral oration. What eloquence, what choice and profound learning, what subtle, but eminently sound theology! Applause, felicitations! The Lieutenant Criminel would be furious, the friars green with envy. "M. le Curé, you have surpassed yourself. Your Reverence is incomparable." He would go to his next assignation in a blaze of glory, and for a victor's crown she would give him her encircling arms, for guerdon those kisses of hers, those caresses, that ultimate deification in the heaven of her embrace. Let the Carmelites talk of their ecstasies, their celestial touches, their extraordinary graces and spiritual nuptials! He had his Ninon, and Ninon was enough. But looking again at Philippe he wondered whether, after all, she was enough. Widows were a great consolation, and he saw no reason for giving up his Tuesdays; but widows were most emphatically not virgins, widows knew too much, widows were beginning to run to fat. Whereas Philippe still had the thin bony arms of a little girl, the apple-round breasts and smooth columnar neck of an adolescent. And how ravishing was this mixture of youthful grace and youthful awkwardness! How touching and at the same time how provocative and exciting were these transitions from a bold, almost foolhardy coquetry to sudden panic! Overacting the part of Cleopatra, she invited every man to constitute himself an Antony. But let any man show signs of accepting the invitation, and the Queen of Egypt vanished; only a frightened child remained, begging for mercy. And then, as soon as mercy had been granted, back came the Siren, chanting allurements, dangling forbidden fruits with an effrontery of which only the totally depraved and the totally innocent are capable. Innocence, purity — what a glorious peroration he had composed upon that sublimest of themes! Women would weep when he pronounced it — now thunderously, now in the tenderest whisper — from the pulpit of his church. Even the men would be touched. The purity of the dew-dabbled lily, the innocence of lambs and little children. Yes, the friars would be green with envy. But, except in sermons and in heaven, all lilies fester sooner or later into rottenness; the ewe lamb is predestined, first to the indefatigably lustful ram, then to the butcher; and in Hell the damned walk on a living pavement,

tessellated with the tiny carcasses of unbaptized babies. Since the Fall, total innocence has been identical, for all practical purposes, with total depravity. Every young girl is potentially the most knowing of widows and, thanks to Original Sin, every potential impurity is already, even in the most innocent, more than half actualized. To help it to complete actualization, to watch the still virginal bud unfold into the rank and blowzy flower — this would be a pleasure not only of the senses, but also of the reflective intellect and will. It would be a moral and, so to say, a metaphysical sensuality.

And Philippe was not merely young and virginal. She was also of good family, piously brought up and highly accomplished. Pretty as paint, but knew her catechism; played the lute, but went regularly to church; had the manners of a fine lady, but liked reading and even knew some Latin. The capture of such a prey would tickle the hunter's self-esteem and be regarded, by all who knew of it, as a great and memorable exploit.

In the aristocratic world of a few years later, "women," according to Bussy-Rabutin, "gained as much esteem for men as arms." The conquest of a celebrated beauty was equivalent, very nearly, to the conquest of a province. For their triumphs in the boudoir and the bed, such men as Marsillac and Nemours and the Chevalier de Grammont enjoyed a fame almost equal, while it lasted, to that of Gustavus Adolphus or Wallenstein. In the fashionable slang of the time, one "embarked" on one of these glorious affairs, embarked deliberately and self-consciously for the express purpose of cutting a more considerable figure in the world. Sex can be used either for self-affirmation or for self-transcendence — either to intensify the ego and consolidate the social persona by some kind of conspicuous "embarkation" and heroic conquest, or else to annihilate the persona and transcend the ego in an obscure rapture of sensuality, a frenzy of romantic passion or, more creditably, in the mutual charity of the perfect marriage. With his peasant girls and his middle-class widows of little scruple and large appetite, the parson could get all the self-transcendence he wanted. Philippe Trincant now offered an occasion for the most agreeable and modish kind of self-affirmation — with a hoped-for sequel, when the conquest had been consummated, of some peculiarly rare and precious kind of sensual self-transcendence.

Delicious dream! But a most troublesome obstacle stood in the way of its fulfillment. Philippe's father was Louis Trincant, and Louis Trincant was the parson's best friend, his staunchest and most resolute ally against the monks, the Lieutenant Criminel and the rest of his adversaries. Louis Trincant trusted him, trusted him so completely that he had made his daughters give up their old confessor so that they might become Grandier's penitents. And would the Curé be good enough to read them an occasional lecture on filial duty and maidenly modesty? Didn't he agree that Guillaume Rogier was not quite good enough for Philippe, but would make a very suitable match for Françoise? And surely Philippe ought to keep up her Latin. Could he possibly find time to give her an occasional lesson? To abuse such trust would be the blackest of crimes. And yet its very blackness was a reason for committing it. On all the levels of our being, from the muscular and sensational to the moral and the intellectual, every tendency

generates its own opposite. We look at something red, and visual induction intensifies our perception of green and even, in certain circumstances, causes us to see a green halo round the red object, a green afterimage when the object has been removed. We will a movement; one set of muscles is stimulated and, automatically, by spinal induction, the opposing muscles are inhibited. The same principle holds good on the higher levels of consciousness. Every yes begets a corresponding no. "There is more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in all the creeds." And there is (as Butler pointed out long since, and as we shall have occasion to observe on many occasions during the course of this history), there is more doubt in honest faith, believe me, than in all the Bradlaughs and all the Marxist textbooks. In moral education induction poses a peculiarly difficult problem. If every yes tends automatically to evoke its corresponding no, how can we inculcate right conduct without at the same time inductively inculcating the wrong conduct which is its opposite? Methods for circumventing induction exist; but that they are not always well applied is sufficiently proved by the existence of vast numbers of stubborn and "contrary" children, of adolescents who are consistently "agin the government," of perverse and antinomian adults. Even the well-balanced and the self-controlled are sometimes aware of a paradoxical temptation to do the exact opposite of what they know they ought to do. It is a temptation, very often, to an evil without point or profit, to a gratuitous and, so to say, disinterested outrage against common sense and common decency. Most of these inductive temptations are successfully resisted — most, but by no means all. Every now and then sensible and fundamentally decent people will embark, all of a sudden, on courses of which they themselves are the first to disapprove. In these cases the evil-doer acts as though he were possessed by some entity different from and malignantly hostile to his ordinary self. In fact, he is the victim of a neutral mechanism, which (as not uncommonly happens with machines) has got out of hand and, from being the servant of its possessor, has become his master. Philippe was exceedingly attractive and "the strongest oaths are straw to the fire in the blood." But as well as fire in the blood there is induction in the brain. Trincant was the parson's best friend. The very act of recognizing that such a thing would be monstrous created in Grandier's mind a perverse desire to betray him. Instead of making a supreme effort to resist the temptation the parson tried to find reasons for yielding. He kept telling himself that the father of such a delicious morsel as Philippe had no right to behave so trustfully. It was sheer folly — no, worse than folly; it was a crime that deserved condign punishment. Latin lessons, indeed! It was the story all over again of Héloïse and Abelard, with the Public Prosecutor as Uncle Fulbert, inviting the ravisher to make himself at home. Only one thing was lacking — the privilege, so freely accorded to Héloïse's tutor, of using the birch. And perhaps if he asked for it, the imbecile Trincant would grant him even that. . . .

Time passed. The widow continued to enjoy her Tuesdays; but on most of the other days of the week Grandier was to be found at the Public Prosecutor's. Françoise was already married; but Philippe was still at home and making excellent progress with her Latin.

Omne adeo genus in terris hominumque ferarum
et genus aequoreum, pecudes, pictaeque volucres
in furias, ignesque ruunt; amor omnibus idem.
And even the vegetables feel the tender passion.
Nutant et mutua palmae
foedera, populeo suspirat populus ictu,
et platano platanus, alnoque assibilat alnus.

Laboriously Philippe translated for him the tenderer passages in the poets, the more scabrous episodes in mythology. With a self-denial which his widow made it rather easy for him to practice, the parson refrained from anything like an assault upon his pupil's honor, from anything that might even be interpreted as a declaration or a proposition. He merely made himself charming and interesting, told the girl two or three times a week that she was the most intelligent woman he had ever known and occasionally looked at her in a way that made Philippe drop her eyes and blush. It was all rather a waste of time, but not unamusing. And luckily there was always Ninon; luckily, too, the girl could not read his thoughts.

They sat in the same room, but not in the same universe. No longer a child, but not yet a woman, Philippe was the inhabitant of that rosy limbo of phantasy which lies between innocence and experience. Her home was not at Loudun, not among these frumps and bores and boors, but with a god in a private Elysium, transfigured by the radiance of dawning love and imaginary sex. Those dark eyes of his, those mustaches, those white and well-kept hands — they haunted her like a guilty conscience. And what wit he had, what profundity of knowledge! An archangel, as wise as he was beautiful and as kind as he was wise. And he thought her clever, he praised her diligence; above all he had a certain way of looking at her. Was it possible that he . . . ? But no, no, it was sacrilegious even to think such thoughts, it was a sin. But how could she ever confess it — to him?

She concentrated all her attention on the Latin.

Turpe senex miles, turpe selinis amor.

But a moment later she was overwhelmed by a vague but violent longing. In her imagination memories of inchoate pleasures found themselves suddenly associated with those all-seeing eyes, those white yet hairy hands. The printed page swam before her eyes; she hesitated, stammered. "The filthy old soldier," she brought out at last. He gave her a little rap over the knuckles with his ruler and told her she was lucky not to be a boy; for if a boy had made that kind of blunder, he would have felt obliged to take decidedly sterner measures. He flourished the ruler. Most decidedly sterner. She looked at him, then quickly turned away. The blood rushed into her cheeks.

Already firmly established in the prosaic and disillusioned contentment of a happy marriage, Françoise brought back to her sister firsthand reports from the matrimonial front. Philippe listened with interest, but knew that, where she herself was concerned, everything would always be quite different. The daydream prolonged itself, was elaborated into greater and ever greater detail. At one moment she was living at the

parsonage as his housekeeper. At another he had been elevated to the see of Poitiers and there was an underground passage between the episcopal palace and her house in the suburbs. Alternatively she had inherited a hundred thousand crowns, whereupon he left the Church and they passed their time between the court and their estate in the country.

But always, sooner or later, she had to wake up again to the dismal realization that she was Philippe Trincant and he, M. le Curé; that even if he loved her (and she had no reason for supposing that he did) he could never say so; and that even if he were to say so, it would always be her duty to stop her ears. But meanwhile what happiness it was, over her seam, her book, her embroidery frame, to imagine the impossible! And then the excruciating joy of hearing his knock, his step, his voice! The delicious ordeal, the heavenly purgatory of sitting with him in her father's library, translating Ovid, deliberately making mistakes so that he would threaten to whip her, listening to that rich sonorous voice as it talked of the Cardinal, of the rebellious Protestants, of the war in Germany, of the Jesuits' position on prevenient Grace, of his own prospects for preferment. If only matters could go on like this forever! But it was like asking (just because the end of a madrigal is so beautiful, just because the evening light turns everything it touches into something else, something incomparably lovelier) it was like asking for a lifetime of summer sunsets, for dying falls in perpetuity. With a part of her mind she knew that she was deceiving herself; but for a few blissful weeks she was able, by closing the eyes of her reason, to believe that life had come to a halt in Paradise and would never resume its march. It was as though the gulf between fantasy and the actual had been abolished. Real life and her daydreams were momentarily the same. Her imaginings were no longer the consoling denial of the facts; the facts had identified themselves with her imaginings. It was a bliss, she felt, without sin, because so eventless, so completely inward; a bliss like that of Heaven, a bliss to which she could give herself wholeheartedly, without fear or self-reproach. And the more completely she abandoned herself to it, the intenser it became until at last she found it impossible to keep it to herself. One day she spoke of it in the confessional — guardedly, of course, without hinting, as she imagined, that it was the confessor himself who was the cause of these emotions.

Confession succeeded confession. The parson listened attentively, and every now and then put a question which proved to her how far he was from suspecting the truth, how completely he had been taken in by her innocent deception. Gaining courage, Philippe told him everything, everything in the most intimate detail. Her happiness at this time seemed to have passed the limits of the possible and was a kind of enduring paroxysm, an exquisite frenzy which she could renew at will, could go on renewing forever. Forever, forever. And then the day came when she made her slip of the tongue, when, instead of "him," she said "you," and then tried to withdraw the word, became confused and, under his questioning, burst into tears and confessed the truth.

"At last," Grandier said to himself, "at last!"

And now it was all plain sailing — just a matter of carefully graduated words and gestures, of a tenderness modulating by insensible degrees from the professionally Christian to the Petrarchian, and from the Petrarchian to the all too human and the self-transcendently animal. Descent is always easy, and in this case there would be plenty of casuistry to lubricate the slide, and, after the bottom had been reached, all the absolution a girl could ask for.

A few months later there was an embarkation in form. Frankly, it was a little disappointing. Why couldn't he have been content with the widow?

For Philippe, meanwhile, eventless and inner bliss had given place to the frightening reality of passion avowed and reciprocated, to the long-drawn torments of moral struggle, to prayers for strength, to vows that she would never yield, and at last, in a kind of despair, as though she were throwing herself over a cliff, to surrender. Surrender had brought with it none of the things she had imagined it would bring. Instead, it had brought the revelation, in her archangel, of a demented brute and the discovery, in the depths of her own mind and body, at first of the predestined victim, the suffering and therefore happy martyr, and then, suddenly, apocalyptically, of an alien no less unlike herself than that ferocious embodiment of passion had been unlike the eloquent preacher, the witty and exquisitely polished humanist with whom originally she had fallen in love. But falling in love, as she now perceived, was not the same as loving. It was as an imagination that one fell in love, and what one fell in love with was only an abstraction. When one loved, one loved a complete existence and loved it with one's whole being, with the soul and every fiber of the body, with the self and this other, this new-found alien beneath, beyond and within the self. She was all love and only love. Nothing but love existed — nothing.

Nothing? With an almost audible snigger, Fate sprung the trap she had been preparing for herself. And there she was, pinned helplessly between physiology and the social order — pregnant but unmarried, dishonored beyond redemption. The inconceivable had become the actual; that which had been out of the question was now a fact. The moon waxed, hung for a glorious night or two in its full splendor, then waned, like the last hope, and disappeared. There was nothing for it but to die in his arms — to die, or if that were impossible, at least forget for a little and be someone else.

Alarmed by so much violence, such a recklessness of self-abandonment, the parson tried to modulate her passion into a lighter and less tragic key. He accompanied his caresses with apt quotations from the livelier classics. *Quantum, quale latus, quam juvenile femur!* In the intermissions of love he told improper stories from the *Dames Galantes* of Brantôme, he whispered into her ear a few of the enormities so diligently catalogued by Sanchez in his folio on matrimony. But her face never changed its expression. It was like a face in marble, a face on a tomb, closed, unresponsive, pure even of life. And when at last she reopened her eyes, it was as though she were looking at him from another world, a world where there was only suffering and a fixed despair. The look disquieted him; but to his solicitous questioning her only answer was to lift

her hands, catch him by his thick black curls and pull him down to her mouth, to her proffered throat and breast.

Then one day, in the middle of his story about King Francis's drinking cups for debutantes — those flagons engraved on the inside with amorous postures, which revealed themselves a little more completely with every sip of the concealing wine — she interrupted him with the curt announcement that she was going to have a baby, and immediately burst into a paroxysm of uncontrollable sobbing.

Shifting his hand from the bosom to the bowed head and changing his tone, without any transition, from the bawdy to the clerical, the parson told her that she must learn to bear her cross with Christian resignation. Then, remembering the visit he had promised to pay to poor Mme. de Brou, who had a cancer of the womb and needed all the spiritual consolation he could give her, he took his leave.

After that he was too busy to give her any more lessons. Except as a penitent, Philippe never saw him alone. And when, in the confessional, she tried to speak to him as a person — as the man she had loved, the man who, as she still believed, had loved her — she found, confronting her, only the priest, only the transubstantiator of bread and wine, the giver of absolution and the assigner of penance. How eloquently he urged her to repent, to throw herself on the divine mercy! And when she mentioned their past love, he rebuked her with an almost prophetic indignation, for thus complacently wallowing in her filth; when she asked him despairingly what she was to do, he told her with unction that, as a Christian, she must be, not merely resigned to the humiliation which it was God's good pleasure that she should suffer; she must embrace and actively will it. Of his own share in her misadventure he would not allow her to speak. Every soul must bear the burden of its own wrongdoing. One's own sins were not excused by the sins which others might, or might not, have committed. If she came to the confessional, it was in order to ask forgiveness for what she had done, not to inquire into the conscience of others. And with that, bewildered and in tears, she would be dismissed.

The spectacle of her unhappiness evoked in him neither pity nor remorse, but only a sense of grievance. The siege had been tedious, the capture without glory, the subsequent enjoyment only moderate. And now with this precipitate and untimely fecundity, she was threatening his honor, his very existence. A little bastard on top of all his other troubles — it would be the ruin of him! He had never really cared for the girl; now he actively disliked her. And she was no longer even pretty. Pregnancy and worry had conspired to give her the expression of a whipped dog, the complexion of a child with worms. In conjunction with all the rest, her temporary unattractiveness made him feel not only that he had no further obligations toward her, but that she had done him an injury and, by impugning his taste, insulted him into the bargain. It was with a good conscience that he now took the course which, since there was no acceptable alternative, he would have had to take even with a bad one. He decided to brazen it out, to deny everything. Not only would he act and speak, he would even think and inwardly feel, as though nothing of the kind had ever, or could have, happened, as

though the very idea of an intimacy with Philippe Trincant were absurd, preposterous, utterly out of the question.

Le cœur le mieux donné tient toujours à demi,
Chacun s'aime un peu mieux toujours que son ami.

Chapter Two

THE WEEKS PASSED. Philippe went abroad less and less frequently and at last even gave up going to church. She was ill, she said, and had to keep to her room. Her friend, Marthe le Pelletier, a girl of good family, but orphaned and very poor, came to live in the house as her nurse and companion. Still suspecting nothing, still indignant if anyone even so much as hinted at the truth or breathed a word against the parson, M. Trincant talked with parental concern about peccant humors and impending phthisis. Dr. Fanton, the attending physician, discreetly said nothing to anybody. The rest of Loudun either winked and sniggered, or else indulged in the pleasures of righteous indignation. When they met him, the parson's enemies dropped envenomed hints; his graver friends shook their heads at him, the more Rabelaisian dug him in the ribs and offered ribald congratulations. To all of them Grandier replied that he did not know what they were talking about. For those who were not already prejudiced against him, his frank yet dignified manner and the manifest sincerity of his words were proof enough of his innocence. It was morally impossible that such a man could have done the things his calumniators accused him of. In the houses of such distinguished persons as M. de Cerisay and Mme. de Brou he was still a welcome guest. And their doors remained open to him, even after that of the Public Prosecutor had been closed. For, in the end, even Trincant's eyes were opened to the true nature of his daughter's indisposition. Cross-questioned, she confessed the truth. From having been the parson's staunchest friend Trincant became, overnight, the most implacable and the most dangerous of his enemies. Grandier had forged another and an essential link in the chain that was to draw him to his doom.

The baby came at last. Through the closed shutters, through the heavy quilts and curtains, by which it had been hoped to stifle every sound, the screaming of the young mother, muffled but perfectly distinct, gave notice of the blessed event to all M. Trincant's eagerly expectant neighbors. Within an hour the news was all over town and by the following morning a scurrilous "Ode to the Public Prosecutor's Bastard Granddaughter" had been pinned to the doors of the law court. Some Protestant hand was suspected; for M. Trincant was exceedingly orthodox and had taken every opportunity to thwart and harass his heretical fellow citizens.

Meanwhile, with a self-sacrificing generosity, which stands out all the more conspicuously because of the prevailing moral squalor, Marthe le Pelletier had publicly assumed the baby's maternity. It was she who had sinned, she who had been forced to hide her shame. Philippe was merely the benefactress who had given her a place of refuge. No-

body, of course, believed a word of it; but the gesture was admired. When the infant was a week old, Marthe placed it with the young peasant woman who had agreed to serve as its foster mother. The act was done conspicuously, so that all the world could see. Still unconvinced, the Protestants went on talking. To silence their ribald skepticism, the Public Prosecutor resorted to a peculiarly odious legal stratagem. He had Marthe le Pelletier arrested in the open street and brought before a magistrate. There, under oath and in the presence of witnesses, she was required to sign an act, whereby she officially recognized the child as hers and accepted the responsibility for its future maintenance. Because she loved her friend, Marthe signed. One copy of the act was filed in the record office, the other M. Trincant triumphantly pocketed. Duly attested, the lie was now legally true. For minds trained in the law, legal truth is the same thing as truth without qualification. To everyone else, as the Public Prosecutor discovered to his chagrin, the equivalence seems very far from evident. Even after he had read the act aloud, even after they had seen the signature with their own eyes, touched the official seal with their own fingers, his friends only smiled politely and talked about something else, while his enemies laughed aloud and made offensive remarks. Such was the malignity of the Protestants, that one of their ministers publicly maintained that perjury is a graver sin than fornication, and that the liar who forswears himself in order to conceal a scandal is more deserving of hell-fire than the person by whose lewdness the scandal was originally caused.

A long and eventful century separated the middle age of Dr. Samuel Garth from the youth of William Shakespeare. In government, in social and economic organization, in physics and mathematics, in philosophy and the arts, there had been revolutionary changes. But there was at least one institution that remained, at the end of the period, exactly what it had been at the beginning — the drugstore. In the apothecary's shop described by Romeo,

a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins
Of ill-shap'd fishes, and about the shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds.
In his Dispensary Garth paints an almost identical picture.
Here mummies lay, most reverently stale,
And there the tortoise hung her coat of mail;
Not far from some large shark's devouring head
The flying fish their finny pinions spread.
Aloft in rows large poppy heads were strung
And, near, a scaly alligator hung;
In this place drugs in musty heaps decay'd
In that dried bladders and drawn teeth were laid.

This temple of science, which is at the same time a magician's laboratory and a side show at a country fair, is a most expressive symbol of that strange agglomeration

of incongruities, the seventeenth-century mind. For the age of Descartes and Newton was also the age of Fludd and Sir Kenelm Digby; the age of logarithms and analytical geometry was no less the age of the weapon salve, the Sympathetic Powder, the theory of Signatures. Robert Boyle, who wrote *The Sceptical Chemist* and was one of the founders of the Royal Society, left a volume of recipes for home remedies. Culled from an oak at the full moon, mistletoe berries dried, powdered and mixed with black cherry water, will cure epilepsy. For apoplectic fits, one must take mastic (the resin exuded by lentisk bushes on the island of Chios), extract the essential oil by distillation in a copper alembic and blow two or three drops, through a quill, into one of the patient's nostrils, "and after a while into the other." The scientific spirit was already vigorously alive. But no less vigorously alive was the spirit of the medicine man and the witch.

M. Adam's pharmacy in the Rue des Marchands was of the middle rank, neither beggarly nor grandiose, but solidly provincial. Too modest for mummies or a rhinoceros horn, it could yet boast of several West Indian turtles, the foetus of a whale and an eight-foot crocodile. And the stock was plentiful and varied. On the shelves were all the herbs of the Galenists' repertory, all the new-fangled chemicals of the followers of Valentine and Paracelsus. Rhubarb and aloes were there in plenty; but so was calomel or, as M. Adam preferred to call it, *Draco mitigatus*, the mitigated Dragon. There was colocynth, if you liked a vegetable liver pill; but there was also Tartar emetic and metallic antimony, if you were ready to venture on a more modern treatment. And if you had had the misfortune to be lucky in love with the wrong kind of nymph or swain, you could take your choice between *Arbor vitae* and *Hydrargyrum cum Creta*, between Sarsaparilla and an inunction of Blue Ointment. With all these, as well as with dried vipers, horses' hoofs and human bones, M. Adam could supply his customers out of stock. The more costly specifics — powdered sapphires, for example, or pearls — had to be specially ordered and paid for in advance.

From this time forth the apothecary's shop became the regular meeting place and headquarters of a cabal, whose single aim was to be revenged on Urbain Grandier. The leading spirits in this conspiracy were the Public Prosecutor, his nephew, Canon Mignon, the Lieutenant Criminel, and his father-in-law, Mesmin de Silly, Mannoury, the surgeon, and M. Adam himself, whose position as pill-maker, tooth-drawer and clyster-giver to the community provided him with unrivaled opportunities for the collection of information.

Thus, from Mme. Chauvin, the notary's wife, he had learned (in strictest confidence, while he made up a vermifuge for her little Théophile) that the parson had just invested eight hundred livres in a first mortgage. The rascal was growing rich.

And here was a piece of bad news. From M. d'Armagnac's second footman's sister-in-law, who had a female complaint and was a regular customer for dried mugwort, the apothecary had heard that Grandier was to dine next day at the Castle. At this the Public Prosecutor frowned, the Lieutenant Criminel swore and shook his head. D'Armagnac was not merely the Governor; he was one of the King's favorites. That such a man should be the parson's friend and protector was indeed deplorable.

There was a long and gloomy silence, broken at last by Canon Mignon, who declared that their only hope lay in a good scandal. Somehow or other they would have to arrange to catch him in flagrante delicto. What about the vintner's widow?

Sadly the apothecary had to admit that, in that quarter, he had nothing to report that was at all satisfactory. The widow herself knew how to keep her mouth shut, her maid had proved incorruptible, and when, the other night, he had tried to peep through a chink in the shutters, someone had leaned out of an upper window with a brimming chamber pot. . . .

Time passed. With a serene and majestic impudence, the parson went about his business and his pleasures as usual. And soon the strangest rumors began to reach the apothecary's ears. The parson was spending more and more of his time with the town's most distinguished prude and *dévôte*, Mlle. de Brou.

Madeleine was the second of the three daughters of René de Brou, a man of substantial fortune and noble birth, related to all the best families of the province. Her two sisters were married, one to a physician, the other to a country gentleman; but at thirty Madeleine was still unwed and fancy free. Suitors had not been lacking; but she had rejected every offer, preferring to stay at home, look after her aging parents and think her own thought. She was one of those quiet and enigmatic young women, who repress strong emotions under a grave aloofness of manner. Esteemed by her elders, she had few friends among her contemporaries and juniors, who regarded her as a prig and, because she did not take pleasure in their loud amusements, a spoilsport. Besides she was altogether too pious. Religion was all very well; but it should never be allowed to invade the sanctities of private life. And when it came to frequent communion, confessing every other day and kneeling for hours, as Madeleine used to do, in front of the image of Our Lady — well, that was really too much of a good thing. They left her alone. It was precisely what Madeleine wanted them to do.

Then her father died. And a little later her mother developed a cancer. During her long and painful illness, Grandier had found time, in the intervals between Philippe Trincant and the vintner's widow, to visit the poor lady and bring her the consolations of religion. On her deathbed Mme. de Brou recommended her daughter to his pastoral care. The parson promised to guard Madeleine's material and spiritual interests as though they were his own. In his peculiar fashion he was to keep that promise.

Madeleine's first thought, after her mother's death, was to sever all her worldly ties and enter religion. But when she consulted her spiritual director, she found that he was against the plan. Outside the cloister, Grandier insisted, she could do more good than within. Among the Ursulines or the Carmelites, she would be hiding her light under a bushel. Her place was here, at Loudun; her vocation, to give a shining example of wisdom to all those foolish virgins whose thought was only of perishable vanities. He spoke eloquently and there was a divine unction in his words. His eyes were bright, his whole face seemed to shine with an inner fire of zeal and inspiration. He looked, Madeleine thought, like an apostle, like an angel. Everything he said was true, axiomatically, self-evidently.

She went on living in the old house; but it seemed very dark now, very empty, and she took to spending a great part of each day with her friend (almost her only friend), Françoise Grandier, who lived with her brother at the parsonage. Sometimes — what could be more natural? — Urbain would join them as they sat there, stitching for the poor or richly embroidering for Our Lady or one of the saints; and suddenly the world would seem brighter and so full of a divine significance that she felt her soul overflowing with happiness.

This time Grandier fell into his own trap. His strategy — the old familiar strategy of the professional seducer — had called for coolness in the face of a deliberately kindled fire, for a detached sensuality pitting itself against passion and exploiting the infinities of love for its own strictly limited purposes. But as the campaign advanced, something went wrong — or rather something went right. For the first time in his life Grandier found himself in love; in love not merely with the prospect of future sensualities, not merely with an innocence which it would be fun to corrupt, a social superiority whose humiliation would be his triumph, but with a woman recognized as a person and loved for what she actually was. The rake underwent a conversion to monogamy. It was a great step forward — but a step forward which a priest of the Roman Church could not take without involving himself in endless difficulties, ethical and theological, ecclesiastical and social. It was in order to get clear of some of these difficulties that Grandier wrote the little treatise on the celibacy of the clergy, to which reference was made in an earlier chapter. Nobody likes to think of himself as immoral and heretical; but at the same time nobody likes to renounce a course of action dictated by powerful impulses, especially when these impulses are recognized as being in their nature good, as tending toward a higher and more abundant life. Hence all the curious literature of rationalization and justification — rationalization of impulse or intuition in terms of whatever philosophy happens, at the given time and place, to be fashionable, justification of unorthodox actions by reference to the current moral code, reinterpreted to fit the particular occasion. Grandier's treatise is a characteristic specimen of this touching and often exceedingly odd branch of apologetics. He loves Madeleine de Brou and knows that this love of his is something intrinsically good; but according to the bylaws of the organization to which he belongs, even this intrinsically good love is bad. He must therefore find some argument to prove that the bylaws do not mean what they say or that he himself did not mean what he said when he agreed, under oath, to abide by them. For a clever man, nothing is easier than to find arguments that will convince him that he is doing right when he is doing what he wants to do. For Grandier the arguments in his treatise seemed irrefragably convincing. What is somewhat more remarkable, they seemed irrefragably convincing to Madeleine. Religious almost to scrupulosity, virtuous not only on principle, but by habit and temperament, she regarded the rules of the Church as so many categorical imperatives and would have died rather than sin against chastity. But she was in love — for the first time and with a passion the more violent for having taken possession of a nature so inward, so long and so consistently held in check. The heart had its

reasons, and when Grandier argued that the vow of celibacy was not binding and that a priest might marry, she believed him. If she became his wife, she would be allowed to love him — indeed, it would be her duty to love him. Ergo — for logic is irresistible — the ethics and theology of her lover's treatise were beyond reproach. And so it came to pass that one midnight, in the empty, echoing church, Grandier fulfilled his promise to Mme. de Brou by going through a ceremony of marriage with the orphan she had left to his care. As priest he asked himself whether he took this woman to be his wedded wife, and as bridegroom he answered in the affirmative, he slipped the ring upon her finger. As priest he invoked a blessing, and as groom he knelt to receive it. It was a fantastic ceremony; but in defiance of law and custom, of Church and state, they chose to believe in its validity. Loving one another, they knew that, in the sight of God, they were truly married.

In the sight of God, perhaps — but most certainly not in the sight of men. So far as the good people of Loudun were concerned, Madeleine was merely the latest of their parson's concubines — a little *sainte nitouche*, who looked as though butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, but in fact was no better than she should be; a prude who had suddenly revealed herself as a whore and was prostituting her body in the most shameless manner to this cassocked Priapus, this goat in a biretta.

Among those who met each afternoon under M. Adam's crocodile, indignation was louder, malignity more venomous than in any other quarter. Loathing the parson, but unable, so discreetly had he managed his affairs, to turn this latest outrage to his disadvantage, they indemnified themselves for their enforced inaction by resorting to bad language. There was nothing they could do; but at least they could talk. And talk they did — to so many people and in terms so insulting that Madeleine's relatives decided at last that something would have to be done about it. What they thought of Madeleine's liaison with her confessor is not recorded. All we know is that, like Trincant, they were strong believers in the power of legal truth to take the place of truth unqualified. *Magna est veritas legitima, et praevalerebit*. Acting upon this maxim, they persuaded Madeleine to bring an action for slander against M. Adam. The case was heard before the Parlement of Paris and the apothecary was found guilty. A local landowner, who was no friend of the de Brous and who detested Grandier, stood surety for him and an appeal was lodged. There was a second hearing, and the decision of the lower court was confirmed. Poor M. Adam was sentenced to pay six hundred and forty livres parisis in damages, to bear the entire costs of the two trials and, in the presence of the magistrates of the city and of Madeleine de Brou and her relations, to kneel, bareheaded, and to say "in a loud and intelligible voice that he had, temerarily and maliciously, uttered atrocious and scandalous words against the said damsel, for the which he was to ask pardon of God, of the King, of Justice and of the said Mademoiselle de Brou, acknowledging her to be a maiden of virtue and honor." And so it was done. Legal truth had triumphantly prevailed. Lawyers themselves, the Public Prosecutor and the Lieutenant Criminel admitted defeat. In any future attack on Grandier, Madeleine, they saw, would have to be left in peace.

After all, her mother had been a Chauvet; de Cerisay was her cousin; de Brous had intermarried with the Tabarts, the Dreux, the Genebauts. Whatever she might do, a girl with relatives of such importance could not possibly be anything but *fille de bien et d'honneur*. Meanwhile, it was too bad that the apothecary should have been completely ruined. However, such is life, such the mysterious dispensations of Providence. All of us have our little crosses, and every man, as the apostle so justly remarked, shall bear his own burden.

Two new recruits were now added to the cabal against Grandier. The first was a lawyer of some importance, Pierre Menuau, the King's Advocate. For years past he had pestered Madeleine with proposals of marriage. Her refusals had not discouraged him and he still had hopes of some day winning the girl, the dowry and the ramifying family influence. Great, therefore, was his fury on discovering that Madeleine had bilked him of what he regarded as his rights by bestowing herself upon the parson. Trincant listened sympathetically to his outcry and, by way of consolation, offered him a place on the council of war. The invitation was accepted with alacrity and from now on Menuau was one of the most active members of the cabal.

The second of Grandier's new enemies was a friend of Menuau's, called Jacques de Thibault, a country gentleman who had been a soldier and was now, as an unofficial agent for Cardinal Richelieu, dabbling in provincial politics. From the first Thibault had disliked the parson. A twopenny-halfpenny little priest, a member of the lower middle classes — and he sports the mustaches of a cavalryman, he affects the manners of a lord, he shows off his Latin as though he were a Doctor of the Sorbonne! And now he has the impudence to debauch the King's Advocate's intended bride! Obviously this sort of thing could not be allowed to go on.

Thibault's first step was to address himself to one of Grandier's most powerful friends and protectors, the Marquis du Bellay. He talked so loud and backed up his denunciations with a catalogue of so many real and imaginary offenses that the Marquis changed camps and henceforward treated his erstwhile friend as *persona non grata*. Grandier was deeply hurt and not a little disquieted. Officious friends hastened to tell him of the part which Thibault had played in the affair and, the next time the two men met, the parson (who was in full canonicals and about to enter the church of Sainte-Croix) accosted his enemy with bitter words of reproach. For all answer Thibault lifted his malacca cane and aimed a blow at Grandier's head. A new phase of the battle of Loudun had begun.

Grandier was the first to act. Vowing vengeance on Thibault, he set off the very next morning for Paris. Violence against the person of a priest was sacrilege, was blasphemy in action. He would appeal to the Parlement, to the Attorney General, to the Chancellor, to the King himself.

Within the hour M. Adam was fully informed of his departure and the purpose of his journey. Dropping his pestle, he hurried off to tell the Public Prosecutor, who immediately sent a servant to summon the other members of the cabal. They came and, after some discussion, worked out a plan of counterattack. While the parson was

away in Paris complaining to the King, they would go to Poitiers and complain to the Bishop. A document was drawn up in the best legal style. In it Grandier was accused of having debauched innumerable married women and young girls, of being profane and impious, of never reading his breviary and of having committed fornication within the precincts of his church. To transform these statements into legal truths was easy. M. Adam was dispatched to the cattle market and soon came back with two seedy-looking individuals who professed themselves willing, for a small consideration, to sign anything that might be set before them. Bougreau knew how to write, but Cherbonneau could only make his mark. When it was all over, they took their money and went gleefully away to get drunk.

Next morning the Public Prosecutor and the Lieutenant Criminel mounted their horses and rode at their leisure to Poitiers. There they called on the Bishop's legal representative, the Promoter of the Officiality. To their great delight they found that Grandier was already on the diocesan black list. Rumors of the parson's amorous exploits had reached the ears of his superiors. And to lubricity and indiscretion had been added the graver sin of uppishness. Only recently, for example, the fellow had had the insolence to encroach on episcopal authority by granting, and being paid for, a dispensation to marry without the preliminary publication of banns. It was time to clip the cockerel's wings. These gentlemen from Loudun had arrived most opportunely.

Carrying a letter of recommendation from the Promoter of the Officiality, Trincant and Hervé trotted off to see the Bishop, who was residing in his splendid castle of Dissay some four leagues out of town.

Henry-Louis Chasteignier de la Rochepozay was that rare phenomenon, a prelate by grace of noble birth who was at the same time a man of learning and the author of portentous works of Biblical exegesis. His father, Louis de la Rochepozay, was the patron and lifelong friend of Joseph Scaliger, and the young lord and predestined bishop had had the advantage of being tutored by that incomparable scholar, "the greatest intellect," in Mark Pattison's words, "that has ever spent itself in acquiring knowledge." It is greatly to his credit that, in spite of Scaliger's Protestantism and in the teeth of the Jesuits' abominable campaign of slander against the author of *De emendatione temporum*, he remained steadfastly loyal to his old master. Toward all other heretics M. de la Rochepozay showed himself implacably hostile. He detested the Huguenots, who were so numerous in his diocese, and did everything in his power to make their lives uncomfortable. But like charity, like the rain which falls on the garden parties of the just as well as on those of the unjust, bad temper is divinely impartial. When his own Catholics annoyed him, the Bishop was ready to treat them just as badly as he treated the Protestants. Thus, in 1614, according to a letter written by the Prince de Condé to the Regent, Marie de Médicis, there were two hundred families encamped outside the town and unable to return to their houses because their pastor, plus meschant que le diable, had ordered his arquebusiers to shoot at them if they tried to pass through the gates. And what was their crime? Fidelity to the governor appointed by the Queen, but disliked by M. de la Rochepozay. The Prince asked Her

Majesty to punish “the unheard-of insolence of this priest.” Nothing, of course, was done, and the good Bishop continued to reign at Poitiers until, in 1651, at a ripe old age, he was carried off by an apoplectic stroke.

A testy aristocrat and petty tyrant, a book-loving scholar, for whom the world beyond his study door was merely a source of maddening interruptions to the serious business of reading — such was the man who now gave audience to Grandier’s enemies. In half an hour he had come to a decision. The parson was a nuisance and must be taught a lesson. A secretary was sent for and an order for Grandier’s arrest and transfer to the episcopal prisons at Poitiers was drawn up, signed and sealed. The document was then handed over to Trincant and the Lieutenant Criminel to be made use of at their discretion.

In Paris, meanwhile, Grandier had lodged his complaint with the Parlement and been received (thanks to d’Armagnac) in private audience by the King. Deeply moved by the parson’s recital of his wrongs, Louis XIII gave orders that justice should be done with all possible expedition, and within a matter of days Thibault was served a summons to appear before the Parlement of Paris. He set out immediately, taking with him the order for Grandier’s arrest. The case was heard. Everything seemed to be going in favor of the parson, when Thibault dramatically produced the Bishop’s warrant and handed it to the judges. They read it and immediately adjourned the case until such time as Grandier should have cleared himself with his superior. It was a triumph for the parson’s enemies.

At Loudun, in the meantime, an official inquiry into Grandier’s behavior was being conducted, at first under the impartial presidency of the Lieutenant Civil, Louis Chauvet, and later, when Chauvet had resigned in disgust, under that, pre-eminently partial, of the Public Prosecutor. Accusations now poured in from all sides. The Reverend Meschin, one of Grandier’s vicars at St. Peter’s, affirmed that he had seen the parson sporting with women on the floor (surely a little too stony for such amusements) of his own church. Another clergyman, the Reverend Martin Boulliau, had hidden behind a pillar and spied upon his colleague while he talked to Mme. de Dreux, the deceased mother-in-law of M. de Cerisay, the Bailli, in the family pew. Trincant improved this testimony by substituting the words, “committing the veneric act,” for the original statement, in which there was merely a question of “speaking to the said lady while laying his hand upon her arm.” The only persons who did not bear witness against the parson were those whose testimony would have been the most convincing — the easy-going servant girls, the dissatisfied wives, the all too consolable widows, and Philippe Trincant, and Madeleine de Brou.

On the advice of d’Armagnac, who promised to write on his behalf to M. de la Rochepozay and the Promoter of the Officiality, Grandier decided to present himself voluntarily before the Bishop. Returning secretly from Paris, he spent only a single night at the parsonage. Next day, at sunrise, he was in the saddle again. By breakfast time the apothecary knew everything. An hour later, Thibault, who had returned to Loudun two days before, was galloping along the road to Poitiers. Going directly to

the episcopal palace, he informed the authorities that Grandier was in town, trying to avoid the humiliation of arrest by a show of voluntary submission. At all costs he must not be allowed to play such a trick. The Promoter of the Officiality agreed with him. As Grandier left his lodging to walk to the palace, he was arrested by the King's Sergeant and led off, protesting, but sans scandale, ès prisons episcopales dudict Poitiers.

The episcopal prisons of the said Poitiers were situated in one of the towers of his lordship's palace. Here Grandier was consigned to the jailer, Lucas Gouiller, and locked up in a dank and almost lightless cell. The date was November 15, 1629. Less than a month had passed since the quarrel with Thibault.

It was bitterly cold, but the prisoner was not allowed to send for warm clothes and when, a few days later, his mother asked permission to visit him, it was refused. After two weeks of this horribly rigorous confinement he wrote a piteous letter to M. de la Rochepozay. "My lord," it began, "I had always believed and even taught that affliction was the true road to heaven, but I had never made trial of it until your goodness, moved by fear for my perdition and a desire for my salvation, flung me into this place, where fifteen days of misery have brought me nearer to God than forty years of previous prosperity had ever done." This is followed by an elaborately literary passage, full of conceits and Biblical allusions. God, it seems, has "happily conjoined the face of a man with that of the lion, in other words your moderation with the passion of my enemies who, wishing to destroy me like another Joseph, have brought about my advancement in the kingdom of God." So much so that his hate has been turned into love, his thirst for vengeance into a desire to serve those who have wronged him. And after a flowery paragraph about Lazarus, he concludes with the plea that, since the end of punishment is amendment of life and since, after two weeks in prison, his own life has been amended, he should forthwith be released.

It is always hard to believe that frank and unaffected emotion can find expression in the curious devices of a labored style. But literature is not the same as life. Art is governed by one set of rules, conduct by another. The early seventeenth-century absurdity of Grandier's epistolary manner is perfectly compatible with a real sincerity of feeling. There is no reason to doubt the genuineness of his belief that affliction had brought him nearer to God. Unfortunately for himself, he knew too little about his own nature to realize that a renewal of prosperity would infallibly (unless he made enormous and persistent efforts) undo the work of affliction, and undo it, not in fifteen days, but in the first fifteen minutes.

Grandier's letter did not mollify the Bishop. Still less did the letters he now received from M. d'Armagnac and M. d'Armagnac's good friend, the Archbishop of Bordeaux. That this odious little man should have such influential friends was bad enough. But that these friends should venture to dictate to him, a de la Rochepozay, a scholar compared with whom the Archbishop was no better than one of his own horses, that they should presume to advise him what to do with an insubordinate priestling — this was absolutely intolerable. He gave orders that Grandier should be treated even worse than before.

The parson's only visitors, during all this unhappy time, were the Jesuits. He had been their pupil and they did not now desert him. Along with spiritual consolations the good fathers brought him warm socks and letters from the outside world. From these last he learned that d'Armagnac had won over the Attorney General, that the Attorney General had ordered Trincant, as Public Prosecutor of Loudun, to reopen the case against Thibault, that Thibault had come to d'Armagnac with a view to an accommodation, but that Messieurs les esclezeasticques (the governor's orthography is consistently astounding) had advised against any compromise, since it would faire tort à vostre ynosance. The parson took new heart, wrote another letter to the Bishop about his own case, but got no answer; wrote yet another, when Thibault directly approached him with an offer to settle out of court, and still got no answer. Early in December the witnesses who had been paid to accuse him were heard at Poitiers. Even upon judges prejudiced in their favor, the impression they made was altogether deplorable. Next it was the turn of Grandier's vicar, Gervais Meschin, and the other clerical Peeping Tom who had seen him in the pew with Mme. de Dreux. Their testimony turned out to be almost as unconvincing as that of Bougreau and Cherbonneau. To find anyone guilty on such evidence seemed impossible. But M. de la Rochepozay was not the man to be turned aside from his course by such trifles as equity or legal procedure. On the third of January, sixteen hundred and thirty, judgment was finally pronounced. Grandier was condemned to fast on bread and water every Friday for three months and was forbidden, for five years in the diocese of Poitiers and forever in the town of Loudun, to exercise the sacerdotal function. For the parson this sentence spelled financial ruin and the blasting of all his hopes of future preferment. But meanwhile he was a free man again — free to live once more in his own well-warmed house, to eat a good dinner (except on Fridays), to talk with his relatives and friends, to be visited (with what an infinity of precautions!) by the woman who believed herself to be his wife — and free, finally, to appeal from M. de la Rochepozay to his ecclesiastical superior, the Archbishop of Bordeaux. With copious expressions of respect, but none the less firmly, Grandier wrote to Poitiers announcing his decision to take the case to the metropolitan. Incensed beyond measure, M. de la Rochepozay could yet do nothing to prevent this intolerable affront to his pride. Canon law — could anything be more subversive? — conceded that worms had rights and even permitted them, in certain circumstances, to turn.

To Trincant and the other members of the cabal, the news that Grandier intended to appeal was most unwelcome. The Archbishop was on intimate terms with d'Armagnac, and disliked M. de la Rochepozay. There was every reason to fear that the appeal, if made, would be successful. In which case Loudun would be saddled with the parson forever. To prevent that appeal from being made, Grandier's enemies themselves appealed — not to the higher ecclesiastical court, but to the Parlement of Paris. The Bishop and his officiality were ecclesiastical judges and could impose only spiritual punishments, such as fasting and, in extreme cases, excommunication. There could be no hanging, no maiming or branding, no condemnation to the galleys, except at

the decree of a civil magistrate. If Grandier was guilty enough to merit interdiction a *divinis*, then most certainly he was guilty enough to be tried before the high court. The appeal was lodged and a date at the end of the following August was set for the trial.

This time it was the parson's turn to feel disturbed. The case of René Sophier, the country parson who, only six years before, had been burned alive for "spiritual incests and sacrilegious impudicities" was as fresh in his memory as in that of the Public Prosecutor. D'Armagnac, at whose country house he spent most of that spring and summer, reassured him. After all, Sophier had been caught in the act, Sophier had no friends at court. Whereas here there was no evidence and the Attorney General had already promised his assistance, or at least his benevolent neutrality. Everything would be all right. And, in effect, when the case came up for a hearing, the judges did the very thing which Grandier's enemies had hoped they would not do: they ordered a new trial before the Lieutenant Criminel of Poitiers. This time the judges would be impartial, the witnesses would find themselves subjected to the most searching cross-examination. The prospects were so alarming that Cherbonneau vanished into thin air and Bougreau not merely withdrew his accusation, but confessed that he had been paid to put his name to it. Of the two priests the elder, Martin Boulliau had long since disavowed the statements attributed to him by the Public Prosecutor, and now, a few days before the opening of the new trial, the younger, Gervais Meschin, came to Grandier's brother and, in a fit of panic mingled perhaps with remorse, dictated a statement to the effect that everything he had said as to Grandier's impiety, his sporting with maids and matrons on the floor of the church, his midnight parties with women in the parsonage, was totally untrue and that he had made statements at the suggestion and on the solicitation of those who were conducting the inquiry. No less damning was the testimony volunteered by one of the canons of Sainte-Croix who now revealed that Trincant had come to him secretly and had tried first to wheedle and then to browbeat him into making unfounded accusations against his colleague.

When the case came to trial there was no evidence against the parson, but a great deal of evidence against his accusers. Thoroughly discredited, the Public Prosecutor found himself on the horns of a dilemma. If he told the truth about his daughter, Grandier would be condemned and his own disgraceful conduct explained and in some measure excused. But to tell the truth would be to expose Philippe to dishonor and himself to contempt or a derisive pity. He held his peace. Philippe was saved from ignominy; but Grandier, the object of all his hatred, was absolved and his own reputation, as a gentleman, as a lawyer, as a public servant, was irreparably tarnished.

There was now, for Grandier, no more danger of being burned alive for spiritual incests; but the interdiction a *divinis* remained in force and, since M. de la Rochepozay would not relent, there was nothing for it but to proceed with the appeal to the metropolitan. The archbishopric of Bordeaux was at this time a family living of the house of Escoubleau de Sourdis. Thanks to the fact that his mother, Isabeau Babou de la Bourdaisière, was the aunt of Gabrielle d'Estrées, the favorite mistress of Henri IV,

François de Sourdis had risen very rapidly in his chosen career. At twenty-three he was given a cardinal's hat and the following year, 1599, became Archbishop of Bordeaux. In 1600 he made a journey to Rome, where he was nicknamed, a little unkindly, *Il Cardinale Sordido*, *arcivescovo di Bordello*. Returning to his see, he divided his time between founding religious houses and quarreling, over trifles but ferociously, with the local Parlement, which at one moment he excommunicated with all the solemnities of bell, book and candle. In 1628, after a reign of almost thirty years, he died and was succeeded by his younger brother, Henri de Sourdis.

Tallemant's notes on the new Archbishop begin as follows. "Mme. de Sourdis, his mother, told him on her deathbed that he was the son of the Chancellor de Chiverny, that she had procured for him the bishopric of Maillezais and several other benefices, and that she begged him to be content with a diamond, without asking anything from the property of her late husband. He answered: 'Mother, I was never willing to believe that you were no better than you should be (*que vous ne valiez rien*); but I now perceive that it is true.' This did not prevent him from getting the fifty thousand crowns of his lawful portion like the other brothers and sisters, for he won his lawsuit."

As Bishop of Maillezais (another family living, which his uncle had occupied before him), Henri de Sourdis led the life of a gay young courtier. Debarred from the responsibilities of marriage, he did not feel it necessary to deny himself the pleasures of love. Because he wasted so much of his substance upon these pleasures, Mlle. du Tillet, with characteristically Gallic thriftiness, advised his brother's wife, Jeanne de Sourdis, to *faire l'amour avec M. l'évesque de Maillezais, vostre beau-frère*. "'Jesus, Mademoiselle! What are you saying?' cried Mme. de Sourdis. 'What am I saying?' the other retorted. 'I am saying that it is not good that money should go out of the family. Your mother-in-law did the same thing with her brother-in-law, who was also Bishop of Maillezais.' "

In the intervals of love the young Bishop occupied himself chiefly with war, first on land as Quartermaster General and Intendent of Artillery, and later at sea, as a captain of ships and as First Lord of the Admiralty. In this last capacity he virtually created the French Navy.

At Bordeaux Henri de Sourdis followed in his brother's footsteps by quarreling with the Governor, M. d'Epéron, over such questions as the Archbishop's right to a state entry and the Governor's claim to a first choice of the freshest fish. Matters were carried to such a pitch that one day the Governor ordered his men to stop and turn back the Archbishop's coach. To avenge this insult the Archbishop excommunicated M. d'Epéron's guards and suspended in advance any priest who should say Mass in his private chapel. At the same time he gave orders that public prayers for the Duke of Epéron's conversion should be read in all the churches of Bordeaux. The infuriated Duke counterattacked by forbidding the holding of any meeting of more than three persons within the precincts of the archiepiscopal palace. When this order was communicated to him, M. de Sourdis rushed out into the streets, calling upon the people to protect the liberty of the Church. Issuing from his own quarters to quell the tumult,

the Governor came face to face with the Archbishop and, in a frenzy of exasperation, struck him with his cane. M. de Sourdis pronounced him ipso facto excommunicate. The dispute was referred to Richelieu, who chose to support M. de Sourdis. The Duke was banished to his estates and the Archbishop remained in triumphant possession of the field. In later life M. de Sourdis himself fell into disgrace. "During his exile," writes Tallement, "he learned a little theology."

Such a man was perfectly fitted to understand and appreciate Urbain Grandier. Himself devoted to the sex, he viewed the parson's peccadilloes with sympathetic indulgence. Himself a fighter, he admired pugnacity even in an underling. Besides, the parson talked well, refrained from cant, had a fund of useful information and amusing anecdotes, and was altogether a most agreeable companion. "Il vous affectionne bien fort," d'Armagnac wrote to the parson, after the latter's visit to M. de Sourdis in the spring of 1631, and the liking soon found a practical expression. The Archbishop gave orders that the case should be reviewed by the Officiality of Bordeaux.

All this time the great nationalistic revolution, initiated by Cardinal Richelieu, had been making steady progress and now, almost suddenly, it began to affect the private life of every personage involved in this petty provincial drama. To break the power of the Protestants and the feudal magnates, Richelieu had persuaded the King and Council to order the demolition of every fortress in the realm. Innumerable were the towers already razed, the moats filled in, the ramparts transformed into tree-lined alleys. And now it was the turn of the castle of Loudun. Founded by the Romans, rebuilt and enlarged again and again throughout the Middle Ages, it was the strongest fortress in all Poitou. A circuit of walls defended by eighteen towers crowned the hill upon which the city was built, and within this circuit was a second moat, a second wall and, overtopping all the rest, the huge medieval keep, restored in 1626 by the present Governor, Jean d'Armagnac. The repairs and interior remodelling had cost him a pretty penny; but he had received private assurances from the King, whom he served as first lord of the bedchamber, that, even if the rest of the castle were destroyed, the donjon would be left standing.

Richelieu, meanwhile, had his own views on the matter, and they did not coincide with the King's. For him d'Armagnac was merely an unimportant little courtier and Loudun a nest of potentially dangerous Huguenots. True, these Huguenots had remained loyal during all the recent uprisings of their coreligionists — in the South under the Duc de Roharn, at La Rochelle in alliance with the English. But today's loyalty was no guarantee against tomorrow's rebellion. And anyhow they were heretics. No, no, the castle must be razed and, along with the castle, must go all the ancient privileges of a town which, by remaining predominantly Protestant, had proved itself unworthy of them. The Cardinal's plan was to transfer these privileges to his own town, the neighboring and still hypothetical city of Richelieu, which was now building, or to be built, around the home of his ancestors.

At Loudun public sentiment was strongly against the demolition of the castle. It was a time when domestic peace was still a precarious novelty. Deprived of their fortress, the

townspeople, Catholic as well as Protestant, felt that they would be (in d'Armagnac's words) "at the mercy of all kinds of soldiery and subject to frequent pillage." Moreover, rumors of the Cardinal's secret intentions were already abroad. By the time he had done with it, poor old Loudun would be no better than a village — and a half-deserted village at that. Because of his friendship with the Governor, Grandier was unequivocally on the side of the majority. His private enemies, almost without exception, were Cardinalists, who cared nothing for the future of Loudun, but were only concerned to curry favor with Richelieu by clamoring for demolition and working against the Governor. At the very moment when Grandier seemed about to score a final victory, he was threatened by a power enormously greater than any with which he had yet had to cope.

All this time the parson's social position was oddly paradoxical. He had been interdicted a *divinis*; but he was still the Curé of St. Peter's, where his brother, the first vicar, acted on his behalf. His friends were still kind; but his enemies treated him as an outcast, beyond the pale of respectable society. And yet, from behind the scenes, this outcast was exercising most of the functions of a royal governor. D'Armagnac was compelled to spend the greater part of his time at court, in attendance upon the King. During his absence he was represented at Loudun by his wife and a faithful lieutenant. Both the lieutenant and Mme. d'Armagnac had been given explicit orders to consult with Grandier on every important issue. The disgraced and suspended priest was acting as the town's vice-governor and the guardian of the family of its first citizen.

In the course of that summer of 1631 M. Trincant retired into private life. His colleagues and the public at large had been profoundly shocked by the revelations made at Grandier's second trial. A man who was prepared, for the sake of private vengeance, to commit perjury, to suborn witnesses, to falsify written testimony, was obviously unfitted to hold a responsible legal position. Under quiet but persistent pressure Trincant resigned. Instead of selling (as he was entitled to do) the reversion of his post, he gave it away to Louis Moussaut — but gave it on a condition. The young lawyer would not become Loudun's Public Prosecutor until after his marriage with Philippe Trincant. For Henri IV, Paris had been worth a Mass. For M. Moussaut a good job was worth his fiancée's lost virginity and the ribaldry of the Protestants. After a quiet wedding, Philippe settled down to serve her sentence — forty years of loveless marriage.

In the following November Grandier was summoned to the Abbey of Saint-Jouin-de-Marnes, one of the favorite residences of the much-beneficed Archbishop of Bordeaux. Here he learned that his appeal from M. de la Rochepozay's sentence had been successful. The interdiction a *divinis* was lifted and he was free once again to exercise his functions as Curé of St. Peter's. M. de Sourdis accompanied this announcement with some friendly and eminently sensible advice. Legal rehabilitation, he pointed out, would not disarm the fury of his enemies, it would tend rather to intensify it. Seeing that these enemies were numerous and powerful, would it not be wiser, more conducive to a quiet life, to leave Loudun and start afresh in some other parish? Grandier promised to consider these suggestions, but had already made up his mind to do noth-

ing about them. He was the parson of Loudun and at Loudun he intended to stay, in spite of his enemies — or rather because of them. They wanted him to go; very well, he would remain, just to annoy them and because he enjoyed a fight, because, like Martin Luther, he loved to be angry.

Besides these, the parson had other and less discreditable reasons for wishing to stay. Loudun was Madeleine's home, and it would be very difficult for her to leave it. And there was his friend, Jean d'Armagnac, who now had as much need of Grandier's help as Grandier had once had need of his. To leave Loudun in the midst of the battle over the castle would be like deserting an ally in the face of the enemy.

On his way home from Saint-Jouin, Grandier dismounted at the parsonage of one of the villages on his road and asked if he might cut a branch from the handsome bay tree growing in the garden. The old priest gladly gave his permission. Nothing like bay leaves, he remarked, for improving the flavor of wild duck and roast venison. And nothing like bay leaves, Grandier added, for celebrating a triumph. It was with the victor's laurel in his hand that he rode through the streets of Loudun. That evening, after nearly two years of silence, the parson's ringing voice was heard again in St. Peter's. Beneath the apothecary's crocodile, meanwhile, the members of the cabal acknowledged their defeat and grimly debated their next move.

A new phase of the struggle was to open sooner than they or anyone else expected. A day or two after Grandier's triumphant return from Saint-Jouin, a distinguished visitor arrived in town and took lodgings at the Swan and Cross. This visitor was Jean de Martin, Baron de Laubardemont, First President of the Court of Appeal (*cour des aides*) of Guyenne, a member of the Council of State and now His Majesty's special Commissioner for the demolition of the castle of Loudun. For a man of only forty-one M. de Laubardemont had gone far. His career was a demonstration of the fact that, in certain circumstances, crawling is a more effective means of locomotion than walking upright, and that the best crawlers are also the deadliest biters. All his life Laubardemont had systematically crawled before the powerful and bitten the defenseless. And now he was reaping his reward; he had become one of His Eminence's favorite subordinates.

In appearance and manner the Baron had modeled himself, two hundred and some odd years before the event, on Dickens's Uriah Heep. The long, squirming body, the damp hands incessantly rubbed, the constant protestations of humility and good will — all were there. And so was the underlying malignancy, so was the ruthless eye to the main chance.

This was Laubardemont's second visit to Loudun. He had come there in the previous year to represent the King at the baptism of one of d'Armagnac's children. For this reason the Governor, somewhat naïvely, believed that Laubardemont was his devoted friend. But the Baron had no friends and was devoted only to the powerful. D'Armagnac wielded no effective power; he was merely the favorite of a King, who had invariably shown himself too weak to say no to his first minister. The favorite had had His Majesty's assurance that the donjon would not be razed; but His Eminence

had made up his mind that it must go. This being so, it was a foregone conclusion that sooner or later (and more probably sooner) the King would withdraw his promise. Whereupon the favorite would be revealed for what he was — a mere cipher, a titled nonentity. Before leaving for Poitou, Laubardemont had called on the Governor and made the usual offers of service, the customary protestations of everlasting friendship. And while at Loudun he was assiduous in his attentions to Mme. d'Armagnac, he went out of his way to be polite to the parson. Secretly, however, he held long consultations with Trincant, Hervé, Mesmin de Silly and the other Cardinalists. Grandier, whose private intelligence service was at least as good as the apothecary's, was very soon apprised of these meetings. He wrote to the Governor, warning him to be on his guard against Laubardemont and, above all, against Laubardemont's master, the Cardinal. D'Armagnac replied triumphantly that the King had just written personally to his Commissioner with explicit orders that the keep was to be left standing. That would settle the matter, once and for all.

The royal missive was delivered about the middle of December, 1631. Laubardemont merely put it in his pocket and said nothing about it. The demolition of the outer walls and towers went steadily forward and when, in January, Laubardemont left Loudun to attend to more pressing business elsewhere, the wreckers were getting very close to the keep. Grandier questioned the engineer in charge of the work. His orders were to demolish everything. Acting on his own initiative, the parson gave orders to the soldiers under the Governor's command to form a cordon round the inner fortress.

In February Laubardemont returned and, perceiving that, for the moment, the game was up, apologized to Mme. d'Armagnac for his unaccountable oversight and finally published the King's letter. Temporarily the keep had been saved, but for how long and at what price? Michel Lucas, His Majesty's private secretary and a faithful agent of the Cardinal, received orders to undermine d'Armagnac's influence with his royal master. As for the parson — he would be dealt with in due course and as occasion offered.

Grandier and d'Armagnac scored their last and their most suicidal victory in the early summer of 1632. A courier was bribed, a budget of letters from the Cardinalists to Michel Lucas was intercepted. These letters contained, along with much malicious slander against the Governor, clear proofs that the men who had written them were working wholeheartedly for the ruin of Loudun. D'Armagnac, who was staying at his country house of Lamotte, rode unannounced into the city and, to the sound of the tocsin, summoned an assembly of the people. The incriminating letters were read aloud, and such was the popular fury that Hervé, Trincant and the rest had to go into hiding. But the Governor's triumph was short-lived. Returning a few days later to court, he found that the news of his exploit had preceded him and that the Cardinal had taken it very badly. La Vrillière, the Secretary of State, and a faithful friend, took him aside and told him that he would have to choose between his donjon and his offices under the crown. In no circumstances would His Eminence permit him to keep both. And in any case, whatever might be the present intentions of His Majesty, the donjon was

going to be demolished. D'Armagnac took the hint. From that time forth he offered no further resistance. A year later the King wrote another letter to his Commissioner. "Monsieur de Laubardemont, having heard of your diligence . . . I write this letter to express my satisfaction, and because the donjon still remains to be demolished, you will not fail to cause it to be razed entirely, without reserving anything." As usual, the Cardinal had had his way.

Meanwhile Grandier had been fighting his own battles as well as the Governor's. Within a few days of his reinstatement as Curé of St. Peter's, his enemies appealed to the Bishop of Poitiers for permission to receive the sacraments from other hands than those, so notoriously impure, of their parish priest. M. de la Rochepozay was only too happy to oblige. By doing so he would be punishing the man who had dared to appeal against his sentence and at the same time would be telling the Archbishop exactly what he thought of him and his precious absolutions. This dispensation gave occasion for new scandals. In the summer of 1632 Louis Moussaut and his wife, Philippe, came to St. Peter's with their first-born. Instead of leaving the christening to one of his vicars, Grandier offered, with inconceivable bad taste, to perform the rite himself. Moussaut produced the Bishop's dispensation. Grandier insisted that it was illegal and, after a violent altercation with his ex-mistress's husband, brought a lawsuit to enforce his claims.

While the new case was pending, an old one had been revived. Forgotten were all the Christian sentiments of the letter he had written from prison — all those fine phrases about hate having turned into love, the thirst for vengeance giving place to a desire to serve those who had wronged him. Thibault had struck him, and Thibault should be made to pay. D'Armagnac repeatedly advised him to settle out of court. But the parson ignored all Thibault's offers of an accommodation and, as soon as he had been rehabilitated, pressed the old charges for all they were worth. But Thibault had friends at court, and though Grandier finally won his case, the damages assigned were humiliatingly small. For the sake of twenty-four livres parisis he had destroyed the last hope of reconciliation, or at least of an understanding, with his enemies.

Chapter Three

WHILE URBAIN GRANDIER was thus engaged in riding the wheel of fortune from triumph to defeat and back again to precarious triumph, a younger contemporary of his was fighting another kind of battle for a prize incomparably higher. As a school-boy at the College of Bordeaux, Jean-Joseph Surin must often have seen, among the theological students or the Jesuit novices, a particularly handsome young priest, must often heard his masters speak approvingly of M. Grandier's zeal and M. Grandier's abilities. Grandier left Bordeaux in 1617, and Surin was never to set eyes on him again. When he came to Loudun in the late autumn of 1634, the parson was already dead, and his ashes had been scattered to the four winds.

Grandier and Surin — two men nearly of an age, brought up in the same school, by the same masters, in the same humanistic and religious discipline, both priests, the one secular, the other a Jesuit, and yet predestined to be the inhabitants of incommensurable universes. Grandier was the average sensual man — only a little more so. His universe, as the record of his life sufficiently proves, was “the world,” in the sense in which that word is used so frequently in the Gospels and Epistles. “Woe unto the world because of offenses!” “I pray not for the world.” “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

“The world” is man’s experience as it appears to, and is molded by, his ego. It is that less abundant life, which is lived according to the dictates of the insulated self. It is nature denatured by the distorting spectacles of our appetites and revulsions. It is the finite divorced from the Eternal. It is multiplicity in isolation from its non-dual Ground. It is time apprehended as one damned thing after another. It is a system of verbal categories taking the place of the fathomlessly beautiful and mysterious particulars which constitute reality. It is a notion labeled “God.” It is the Universe equated with the words of our utilitarian vocabulary.

Over against “the world” stands “the other world,” the Kingdom of God within. Towards this Kingdom Surin had, since the beginnings of his self-conscious life, always felt himself attracted. Rich and distinguished, his family was also pious, with a piety that was practical and self-sacrificing. Before he died, Jean-Joseph’s father had deeded a considerable property to the Society of Jesus, and after her husband’s death, Mme. Surin realized a long-cherished dream by entering the cloister as a Carmelite nun. The elder Surins must have brought up their son with a systematic and conscientious severity. Fifty years later, looking back over his childhood, Surin could discover only one short interlude of happiness. He was eight, and there had been a case of plague in the household. The child was quarantined in a cottage in the country. The season was summer, the place most beautiful, his governess had orders to let him enjoy himself, his relations came to visit him, bringing all kinds of wonderful presents. “My days were spent in playing and running wild, without having to be afraid of anyone.” (What a painfully revealing phrase!) “After this quarantine, I was sent to learn my letters, and my bad times began, and a leading of Our Lord that lay so heavy upon me that, from that time until four or five years ago, my sufferings were very great and went on increasing until they reached the highest pitch of which, so I think, our nature is capable.”

Jean-Joseph was put to school with the Jesuits. They taught him all he knew, and when the time came for him to choose a vocation, it was to the Society that he unquestioningly turned. From another source, meanwhile, he had learned something even better than good Latin, something even more important than scholastic theology. During some five years of Surin’s boyhood and adolescence the Prioress of the Carmelite

convent at Bordeaux was a Spanish nun, called Sister Isabel of the Angels. Sister Isabel had been a companion and disciple of St. Teresa and, in middle life, was assigned, with several other nuns, to the missionary work of bringing to France St. Teresa's new model of an order and St. Teresa's spiritual practices and mystical doctrine. To any pious soul who genuinely desired to listen, Sister Isabel was always ready to expound these high and arduous teachings. Among those who came to her most regularly and listened most earnestly, was a rather undersized schoolboy of twelve. The boy was Jean-Joseph, and this was the way he liked to spend his half-holidays. Through the bars of the parlor grating, he listened spellbound to a voice that talked, in laboring and guttural French, of the love of God and the bliss of union, of humility and self-naughting, of the purification of the heart and the emptying of the busy and distracted mind. Listening, the boy felt himself filled with the heroic ambition to do battle with world and flesh, with principalities and powers — to fight and conquer, that he might be fit, at last, to give himself to God. Wholeheartedly he threw himself into the spiritual combat. Shortly after his thirteenth birthday he was vouchsafed what seemed to be a sign of God's favor, a presage of ultimate victory. Praying one day in the Carmelite church, he became aware of a supernatural light, a light that seemed to reveal the essential nature of God and at the same time to manifest all the divine attributes.

The memory of that illumination and of the unearthly bliss by which the experience had been accompanied never left him. It preserved him, in the same sort of social and educational environment as Grandier's and as Bouchard's, from identifying himself, as these others had done, with "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life." It was not that that pride and those lusts left him unmoved. On the contrary, he found them horribly attractive. Surin was one of those frail, nervous beings in whom the sexual impulse is powerful almost to frenzy. Moreover, his talents as a writer were considerable and in later years he was tempted, not unnaturally, to equate his total personality with those gifts and become a professional man of letters, primarily concerned with the problems of aesthetics. This invitation to succumb to the most respectable of "the lusts of the eye" was reinforced by vanity and worldly ambition. He would have relished the taste of fame, would have enjoyed, while seeming of course to deprecate, the praise of critics, the plaudits of an adoring public. But the last infirmity of noble mind is just as fatal, so far as the spiritual life is concerned, as the first infirmity of the ignoble. Jean-Joseph's temptations, the creditable no less than the discreditable, were very powerful; but in the light of that remembered glory he could recognize them for what they were. Surin died a virgin, burned the greater part of his literary productions and was content to be not merely not famous, but (as we shall see) positively infamous. Painfully, with heroic perseverance and against the unimaginable obstacles which will be described in a later chapter, he addressed himself to the task of achieving Christian perfection. But before we embark on the history of his strange pilgrimage, let us pause for a little to examine what it is that drives men and women to undertake such voyages into the unknown.

II

Introspection, observation and the records of human behavior in the past and at the present time, make it very clear that an urge to self-transcendence is almost as widespread and, at times, quite as powerful as the urge to self-assertion. Men desire to intensify their consciousness of being what they have come to regard as “themselves,” but they also desire — and desire, very often, with irresistible violence — the consciousness of being someone else. In a word, they long to get out of themselves, to pass beyond the limits of that tiny island universe, within which every individual finds himself confined. This wish for self-transcendence is not identical with the wish to escape from physical or mental pain. In many cases, it is true, the wish to escape from pain reinforces the desire for self-transcendence. But the latter can exist without the former. If this were not so, healthy and successful individuals, who have (in the jargon of psychiatry) “made an excellent adjustment to life,” would never feel the urge to go beyond themselves. But in fact they do. Even among those whom nature and fortune have most richly endowed, we find, and find not infrequently, a deep-seated horror of their own selfhood, a passionate yearning to get free of the repulsive little identity to which the very perfection of their “adjustment to life” has condemned them (unless they appeal to the Higher Court) without reprieve. Any man or woman, the most happy (by the world’s standards) no less than the most wretched, may come, suddenly or gradually, to what the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* calls “the naked knowing and feeling of thine own being.” This immediate awareness of selfhood begets an agonizing desire to go beyond the insulated ego. “I am gall,” writes Hopkins,

I am gall, I am heartburn. God’s most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

Complete damnation is being one’s sweating self, but worse. Being one’s sweating self, but not worse, merely no better, is partial damnation, and this partial damnation is everyday life, is our consciousness, generally dulled, but sometimes acute and “naked,” of behaving like the average sensual human beings we are. “All men have matter of sorrow,” says the author of *The Cloud*, “but most specially he feeleth matter of sorrow who knoweth and feeleth that he is. All other sorrows in comparison to this be but as it were game to earnest. For he may make sorrow earnestly that knoweth and feeleth not only what he is, but that he is. And who has never felt this sorrow, let him make sorrow; for he hath never yet felt perfect sorrow. This sorrow, when it is had, cleanseth the soul not only of sin, but also of the pain it hath deserved for sin; and also it maketh a soul able to receive that joy, the which reaveth from a man all knowing and feeling of his being.”

If we experience an urge to self-transcendence, it is because, in some obscure way and in spite of our conscious ignorance, we know who we really are. We know (or, to be more accurate, something within us knows) that the ground of our individual knowing is identical with the Ground of all knowing and all being; that Atman (Mind in the act of choosing to take the temporal point of view) is the same as Brahman (Mind in its eternal essence). We know all this, even though we may never have heard of the doctrines in which the primordial Fact has been described, even though, if we happen to be familiar with them, we may regard these doctrines as so much moonshine. And we also know their practical corollary, which is that the final end, purpose and point of our existence is to make room in the “thou” for the “That,” is to step aside so that the Ground can come to the surface of our consciousness, is to “die” so completely that we can say, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” When the phenomenal ego transcends itself, the essential Self is free to realize, in terms of a finite consciousness, the fact of its own eternity, together with the correlative fact that every particular in the world of experience partakes of the timeless and the infinite. This is liberation, this is enlightenment, this is the beatific vision, in which all things are perceived as they are “in themselves” and not in relation to a craving and abhorring ego.

The primordial Fact that That art thou is a fact of individual consciousness. For the purposes of religion, this fact of consciousness has to be externalized and objectified by the projection of an infinite deity, standing apart from the finite. At the same time the primordial Duty of getting out of the way, so that the Ground can come to the surface of the finite consciousness, is projected outward as the duty to win salvation within the framework of the Faith. From these two original projections religions have derived their dogmas, their theories of mediation, their symbols, their rites, their rules and precepts. Those who conform to the rules, who worship the mediators, who perform the rites, who believe in the dogmas and adore a God “out there,” beyond the finite, may expect, with the aid of divine grace, to achieve salvation. Whether or not they achieve the enlightenment, which accompanies the realization of the primordial Fact, depends on something other than the faithful practice of religion. Insofar as it helps the individual to forget himself and his ready-made opinions about the universe, religion will prepare the way for realization. Insofar as it arouses and justifies such passions as fear, scrupulosity, righteous indignation, institutional patriotism and crusading hate, insofar as it harps on the saving virtues of certain theological notions, certain hallowed arrangements of words, religion is an obstacle in the way of realization.

The primordial Fact and the primordial Duty can be formulated, more or less adequately, in the vocabulary of all the major religions. In the terms employed by Christian theology we may define realization as the soul’s union with God as a Trinity, a three in one. It is simultaneously union with the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost — union with the source and Ground of all being, union with the manifestation of that Ground in a human consciousness and union with the spirit which links the Unknowable to the known.

Union with any single person of the Trinity, to the exclusion of the other two, is not realization. Thus, union exclusively with the Father is a knowledge, by ecstatic participation, of the Ground in its eternal essence and not, at the same time, in its manifestation in the finite. The completely liberating and enlightening experience is that of the eternal in time, the non-dual in multiplicity. For the Bodhisattva, according to the Mahayanist tradition, the world-obliterating ecstasies of the Hinayanist Sravaka are not realization, but barriers to realization. In the West the assault on Quietism was motivated by ecclesiastical considerations and resulted in persecution. In the East the Sravaka was not punished; he was merely told that he was on the wrong track. "The Sravaka," says Ma-tsu, "is enlightened, and yet going astray. The ordinary man is off the right path, and yet in a way enlightened. The Sravaka fails to perceive that Mind as it is in itself knows no stages, no causation, no imagination. Disciplining himself in the cause, he has attained the result and abides in the Samadhi of Emptiness for ever so many aeons. However enlightened in this way, the Sravaka is not at all on the right track. From the point of view of the Bodhisattva this (the abiding in the Samadhi of Emptiness) is like suffering the tortures of hell. The Sravaka has buried himself in emptiness and does not know how to get out of his quiet contemplation, for he has no insight into the Buddha-nature."

Unitive knowledge of the Father alone excludes a knowledge of the world as it is "in itself" — a multiplicity manifesting the non-dual Infinite, a temporal order participating in the eternal. If the world is to be known as it is "in itself," there must be union not only with the Father, but with the Son and Holy Spirit as well.

Union with the Son is the assimilation of the personality to a model of loving selflessness. Union with the Holy Spirit is at once the means to, and the fruit of the individual's self-transcendence into loving selflessness. Together they make possible the awareness of what, unconsciously, we enjoy at every moment — union with the Father. In cases where union with the Son is pursued too exclusively — where attention is centered upon the humanity of the historical mediator — religion tends to become an affair, outwardly, of "works" and inwardly of imaginings, visions and self-induced emotions. But in themselves neither works, nor visions, nor emotions directed toward a remembered or imagined person, are enough. Their value, so far as liberation and enlightenment are concerned, is purely instrumental. They are means to selflessness (or to be more precise, they may be means to selflessness) and thus make it possible for the individual, who does the works, or sees the visions and feels the emotions, to become conscious of the divine Ground in which, without knowing it, he has always had his being. The complement of works, imaginings and emotions is faith — not faith in the sense of belief in a set of theological and historical affirmations, nor in the sense of a passionate conviction of being saved by someone else's merits, but faith as confidence in the order of things, faith as a theory about human and divine nature, as a working hypothesis resolutely acted upon in the expectation that what began as an assumption will come to be transformed, sooner or later, into an actual experience, by participation, of a reality which, for the insulated self, is unknowable.

Unknowableness, we may remark, is normally an attribute not only of the divine Ground of our being, but also of much else that lies, so to speak, between this Ground and our everyday consciousness. To those, for example, who undergo tests for ESP, or prevision, there is no perceptible distinction between success and failure. The process of guessing feels exactly the same, whether the result be a score attributable to mere chance, or markedly above or below that figure. This is consistently true of test situations in the laboratory. But it is not always true of situations of a more significant kind. From the many well-authenticated cases on record it is clear that ESP and prevision sometimes take place spontaneously, and that the persons in whom they occur are aware of the event and strongly convinced of the truth of the information which is being conveyed. In the spiritual field we find analogous records of spontaneous theophanies. By a grace of sudden intuition, the normally unknowable makes itself known, and the knowledge is self-validating beyond the possibility of doubt. In men and women who have achieved a high degree of selflessness, these insights, from being rare and brief, may become habitual. Union with the Son through works and union with the Holy Spirit, through docility to inspiration, make possible a conscious and transfiguring union with the Father. In this state of union objects are no longer perceived as related to an insulated ego, but are known “as they are in themselves” — in other words, as they are in relation to, in ultimate identity with, the divine Ground of all being.

For the purposes of enlightenment and liberation, a too exclusive union with the Spirit is no less unsatisfactory than a too exclusive union with the Father in world-obliterating ecstasy, or with the Son in outward works and inward imaginings and emotions. Where union with Spirit is sought to the exclusion of the other unions, we find the thought-patterns of occultism, the behavior-patterns of psychics and sensitives. Sensitives are persons who have been born with, or have acquired, the knack of being conscious of events taking place on those subliminal levels, where the embodied mind loses its individuality and there is a merging with the psychic medium (to use a physical metaphor), out of which the personal self has been crystallized. Within this medium are many other crystallizations, each one with its blurred edges, its melting and interpenetrating boundaries. Some of these crystallizations are the minds of other embodied beings; others, the “psychic factors” which survive bodily death. Some, no doubt, are the idea-patterns, created by suffering, enjoying and reflecting individuals and persisting, as objects of possible experience, “out there” in the psychic medium. And, finally, yet others of these crystallizations may be nonhuman entities, beneficent, malicious or merely alien. Foredoomed to failure are all those who aim exclusively at union with the Spirit. If they ignore the call to union with the Son through works, if they forget that the final end of human life is the liberating and transfiguring knowledge of the Father, in whom we have our being, they will never reach their goal. For them, there will be no union with the Spirit; there will be a mere merging with spirit, with every Tom, Dick and Harry of a psychic world, most of whose inhabitants are no

nearer to enlightenment than we are, while some may actually be more impenetrable to the Light than the most opaque of incarnate beings.

Obscurely, we know who we really are. Hence our grief at having to seem to be what we are not, and hence the passionate desire to overstep the limits of this imprisoning ego. The only liberating self-transcendence is through selflessness and docility to inspiration (in other words, union with the Son and the Holy Spirit) into the consciousness of that union with the Father in which, without knowing it, we have always lived. But liberating self-transcendence is easier to describe than to achieve. For those who are deterred by the difficulties of the ascending road, there are other, less arduous alternatives. Self-transcendence is by no means invariably upward. Indeed, in most cases, it is an escape either downward into a state below that of personality, or else horizontally into something wider than the ego, but not higher, not essentially other. We are forever trying to mitigate the effects of the collective Fall into insulated selfhood by another, strictly private fall into animality and mental derangement, or by some more or less creditable self-dispersion into art or science, into politics, a hobby or a job. Needless to say, these substitutes for upward self-transcendence, these escapes into subhuman or merely human surrogates for Grace, are unsatisfactory at the best and, at the worst, disastrous.

III

The Provincial Letters take rank among the most consummate masterpieces of literary art. What precision, what verbal elegance, what a pregnant lucidity! And what delicate sarcasm, what an urbane ferocity! The pleasure we derive from Pascal's performance is apt to blind us to the fact that, in the squabble between Jesuits and Jansenists, our incomparable virtuoso was fighting for what, in the main, was the worse cause. That the Jesuits finally triumphed over the Jansenists was certainly no unmixed blessing. But at least it was less of a curse than would have been, in all probability, the triumph of Pascal's party. Committed to the Jansenist doctrine of predestined damnation for almost everyone and to the Jansenist ethic of unbending puritanism, the Church might easily have become an instrument of almost unmitigated evil. As it actually turned out, the Jesuits prevailed. In doctrine, the extravagances of Jansenist Augustinianism were tempered by a dose of semi-Pelagian common sense. (At other periods the extravagances of Pelagianism — those of Helvétius, for example, those of J. B. Watson and Lysenko in our own day — have had to be tempered by appropriate doses of semi-Augustinian common sense.) In practice rigorism gave place to a more indulgent attitude. This more indulgent attitude was justified by a casuistry whose aim was always to prove that what looked like a mortal sin was in fact venial; and this casuistry was rationalized in terms of the theory of Probabilism, by means of which the multiplicity of authoritative opinions was used in order to give the sinner the benefit of every possible doubt. To the rigid and all too consistent Pascal,

Probabilism seemed utterly immoral. For us, the theory and the kind of casuistry it justified possess one enormous merit: between them they reduce to absurdity the hideous doctrine of everlasting damnation. A hell, from which one can be saved by a quibble that would carry no weight with a police magistrate, cannot be taken very seriously. The intention of the Jesuit casuists and moral philosophers was, by leniency, to keep even the worldliest and most sinful men and women within the bounds of the Church and thereby to strengthen the organization as a whole and their own Order in particular. To some extent they achieved this intended end. But at the same time they achieved a considerable schism within the fold and, implicitly, a *reductio ad absurdum* of one of orthodox Christianity's cardinal doctrines — the doctrine of infinite punishment for finite offenses. The rapid spread, from 1650 onward, of deism, "free thought" and atheism was an end-product of many co-operating causes. Among those causes were Jesuit casuistry, Jesuit Probabilism and those Provincial Letters, in which, with unsurpassable artistic skill, Pascal ferociously caricatured them.

The Jesuits who played a part, directly or at one remove, in our strange drama were singularly unlike the good fathers of the Provincial Letters. They had nothing to do with politics; they had hardly any contacts with "the world" and its denizens; the austerity of their lives was heroic almost to madness, and they preached the same austerity to their friends and disciples, who were all, as were they themselves, contemplatives dedicated to the achievement of Christian perfection. They were mystics in that school of Jesuit mysticism, whose most eminent representative had been Father Alvarez, the director of St. Teresa. Alvarez was censured by one General of the Society for practicing and teaching contemplation, as opposed to discursive meditation along the lines of the Ignatian exercises. A later General, Aquaviva, exonerated him and, in so doing, laid down what may be called the official Jesuit policy in regard to contemplative prayer. "Those persons are to be blamed who attempt prematurely and temerarily to launch out into high contemplation. However, we must not go to the lengths of flying in the face of the constant experience of the holy Fathers by despising contemplation and forbidding it to our members. For it is well established by the experience and authority of many Fathers that true and profound contemplation possesses more force and efficacy than all other methods of prayer, both for subduing and casting down human pride and for exciting lukewarm souls to execute their Superiors' commands and work with ardor for the salvation of souls." During the first half of the seventeenth century those members of the Society who showed a marked vocation for the mystical life were permitted, and indeed encouraged, to devote themselves to contemplation within the framework of their essentially active Order. At a later period, after the condemnation of Molinos and during the bitter controversy over Quietism, passive contemplation came to be regarded by the majority of Jesuits with considerable suspicion.

In the last two volumes of his *Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France*, Bremond picturesquely dramatizes the conflict between the "asceticist" majority within the Order and a minority of frustrated contemplatives. Pottier, the learned Jesuit

historian of Lallemant and his disciples, has subjected Bremond's thesis to severe and destructive criticism. Contemplation, he insists, was never officially condemned and individual contemplatives continued, even in the worst days of the anti-Quietist movement, to flourish within the Society.

In the sixteen-thirties Quietism was still half a century in the future, and the debate over contemplation had not yet been envenomed by accusations of heresy. For Vitelleschi, the General, and his hierarchy of Superiors, the problem was purely practical. Did the practice of contemplation produce better Jesuits than the practice of discursive meditation, or did it not?

From 1628 until his retirement, for reasons of health, in 1632, a great Jesuit contemplative, Father Louis Lallemant held the post of Instructor at the College of Rouen. Surin was sent to Rouen in the autumn of 1629 and remained there, with a group of twelve or fifteen other young priests, who had come for their "second novitiate," until the late spring of 1630. Throughout that memorable semester he listened to daily lectures by the Instructor and prepared himself, by prayer and penance, for a life of Christian perfection within the framework of the Ignatian rule.

The outlines of Lallemant's teaching as recorded briefly by Surin and, at greater length, by his fellow pupil, Father Rigoleuc, were worked up from the original notes by a later Jesuit, Father Champion, and issued, in the last years of the seventeenth century, under the title of *La Doctrine Spirituelle du Père Louis Lallemant*.

In Lallemant's doctrine there was nothing basically novel. How could there be? The end pursued was that unitive knowledge of God, which is the goal of all who aspire to upward self-transcendence. And the means to that end were strictly orthodox — frequent communion, a scrupulous fulfillment of the Jesuit vow of obedience, systematic mortification of the "natural man," self-examination and a constant "guard of the heart," daily meditations on the Passion and, for those who were ready for it, the passive prayer of "simple regard," the alert waiting on God in the hope of an infusion of the grace of contemplation. The themes were ancient; but the manner, in which Lallemant first experienced and then expressed them, was personal and original. The Doctrine, as formulated by the master and his pupils, has its own special character, its tone and peculiar flavor.

In Lallemant's teaching special emphasis was laid on purification of the heart and docility to the leadings of the Holy Ghost. In other words, he taught that conscious union with the Father can only be hoped for, where there has been union with the Son through works and devotion, and union with the Spirit in the alert passivity of contemplation.

Purification of the heart is to be achieved by intense devotion, by frequent communion and by an unsleeping self-awareness, aimed at the detection and mortification of every impulse to sensuality, pride and self-love. Of devotional feelings and imaginings, and of their relations to enlightenment, there will be occasion to speak in a later chapter. In this place our themes are the processes of mortification and the "natural man," who has to be mortified. The corollary of "Thy kingdom come" is "our kingdom go."

On that matter all are agreed. But all are not agreed as to the best way of making our kingdom go. Should it be conquered by force of arms? Or should it be converted? Lallemand was a rigorist, who took a very gloomy and Augustinian view of the total depravity of fallen nature. As a good Jesuit, he advocated leniency toward sinners and the worldly. But the tone of his theological thought was deeply pessimistic, and toward himself and all those who aspired to perfection he was implacable. For them, as for him, no course was open but that of a mortification pushed to the limits of human endurance. "It is certain," writes Champion in his brief biography of Father Lallemand, "that his bodily austerities exceeded his strength and that their excess, in the judgment of his most intimate friends, greatly shortened his life."

It is interesting, in this context, to read what Lallemand's other contemporary, John Donne, the Romanist turned Anglican, the repentant poet turned preacher and theologian, has to say on this matter of self-punishment. "Foreign crosses, other men's merits are not mine; spontaneous and voluntary crosses, contracted by mine own sin, are not mine; neither are devious, and remote, and unnecessary crosses, my crosses. Since I am bound to take up my cross, there must be a cross that is mine to take up, a cross prepared by God, and laid in my way, which is temptations or tribulations in my calling; and I must not go out of my way to seek a cross; for so it is not mine, nor laid for my taking up. I am not bound to hunt after a persecution, nor to stand it and not fly, nor to affront a plague and not remove, nor to open myself to an injury and not defend. I am not bound to starve myself by inordinate fasting, nor to tear my flesh by inhuman whipping and flagellations. I am bound to take up my cross; and that is only mine, which the hand of God hath laid for me, that is, in the way of my calling, temptations and tribulations incident to that."

These views are by no means exclusively Protestant. At one time or another they have been expressed by many of the greatest Catholic saints and theologians. And yet physical penance, carried often to extreme lengths, remained a common practice in the Roman Church for long centuries. There were two reasons for this, one doctrinal and the other psycho-physiological. For many, self-punishment was a substitute for purgatory. The alternative was between torture now and much worse torture in the posthumous future. But there were also other and obscurer reasons for bodily austerities. For those whose goal is self-transcendence, fasting, insomnia and physical pain are "alteratives" (to borrow a word from the older pharmacology); they bring about a change of state, they cause the patient to be other than he was. On the physical level these alteratives, if administered to excess, may result in a downward self-transcendence, ending in disease and even, as in Lallemand's case, in premature death. But on the way to this undesirable consummation, or in cases where they are used with moderation, physical austerities may be made the instruments of horizontal and even of upward self-transcendence. When the body goes hungry, there is often a period of unusual mental lucidity. A lack of sleep tends to lower the threshold between the conscious and the subconscious. Pain, when not too extreme, is a tonic shock to organisms deeply and complacently sunk in the ruts of habit. Practiced by men of prayer, these self-punishments may actually

facilitate the process of upward self-transcendence. More frequently, however, they give access, not to the divine Ground of all being, but to that queer “psychic” world which lies, so to say, between the Ground and the upper, the more personal levels of the subconscious and conscious mind. Those who gain access to this psychic world — and the practice of physical austerities would seem to be a royal road to the occult — often acquire powers of the kind which our ancestors called “supernatural” or “miraculous.” Such powers and the psychic states accompanying them were often confused with spiritual enlightenment. In fact, of course, this kind of self-transcendence is merely horizontal, and not upward. But psychic experiences are so strangely fascinating that many men and women have been willing and even eager to undergo the self-tortures which make them possible. Consciously and as theologians, Lallemant and his disciples never believed that “extraordinary graces” were the same as union with God, or indeed that they had any necessary connection with it. (Many “extraordinary graces,” as we shall see, are indistinguishable in their manifestations from the workings of “evil spirits.”) But conscious belief is not the sole determinant of conduct and it seems possible that Lallemant and probable that Surin felt themselves strongly drawn toward the austerities which did in fact help them to obtain “extraordinary graces,” and that they rationalized this attraction in terms of such orthodox beliefs as that the natural man is intrinsically evil and must be got rid of at any cost and by any means, however violent.

Lallemant’s hostility to nature was directed outward as well as inward. For him, the fallen world was full of snares and riddled with pitfalls. To take pleasure in creatures, to love their beauty, to inquire overmuch into the mysteries of mind and life and matter — these, to him, were dangerous distractions from the proper study of mankind, which is not man, not nature, but God and the way to a knowledge of God. For a Jesuit the problem of achieving Christian perfection was peculiarly difficult. The Society was not a contemplative order, whose members lived in seclusion and devoted their lives only to prayer. It was an active order, an order of apostles, dedicated to the saving of souls and pledged to fight the battles of the Church in the world. Lallemant’s conception of the ideal Jesuit is summed up in the notes, in which Surin recorded his master’s teaching. The essence, the whole point of the Society consists in this: that it “joins together things which in appearance are contrary, such as learning and humility, youth and chastity, diversity of nations and a perfect charity. . . . In our life we must mingle a deep love of heavenly things with scientific studies and other natural occupations. Now, it is very easy to rush to one extreme or the other. One may have too great a passion for the sciences and neglect prayer and spiritual things. Or, if one aspires to become a spiritual man, one may neglect to cultivate, as one should, such natural talents as doctrinal knowledge, eloquence and prudence.” The excellence of the Jesuit spirit consists in this, “that it honors and imitates the manner in which the divine was united with all that was human in Jesus Christ, with the faculties of his soul, with the members of his body, with his blood, and it deified all. . . . But this alliance is difficult. That is why those among us who do not realize the perfection of our spirit,

tend to cling to natural and human advantages, being destitute of the supernatural and the divine.” The Jesuit who fails to live up to the spirit of the Society turns into the Jesuit of popular imagination, and not infrequently of historical fact — worldly, ambitious, intriguing. “The man who fails to apply himself wholeheartedly to the inner life falls inevitably into these defects; for the poverty-stricken and starving soul must needs cling to something in the hope of satisfying its hunger.”

For Lallemant, the life of perfection is a life simultaneously active and contemplative, a life lived at the same time in the infinite and the finite, in time and in eternity. This ideal is the highest which a rational being can conceive — the highest and at the same time the most realistic, the most conformable to the given facts of human and divine nature. But when they discussed the practical problems involved in the realization of this ideal, Lallemant and his disciples displayed a narrow and self-stultifying rigorism. The “nature” which is to be united with the divine is not nature in its totality, but a strictly limited segment of human nature — a talent for study, or for preaching, for business or for organization. Nonhuman nature finds no place in Surin’s summary and is only passingly referred to in the longer account of Lallemant’s teaching given by Rigoleuc. And yet Christ told his followers to consider the lilies — and to consider them, be it noted, in an almost Taoist spirit, not as emblems of something all too human, but as blessedly other, as autonomous creatures living according to the law of their own being and in union (perfect except for its unconsciousness) with the Order of Things. The author of Proverbs bids the sluggard consider the ways of the prudent ant. But Christ delights in the lilies precisely because they are not prudent, because they neither toil nor spin and yet are incomparably lovelier than the most gorgeous of Hebrew kings. Like Walt Whitman’s “Animals,”

They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania for owning things,
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.

Christ’s lilies are worlds apart from the flowers with which St. Francis de Sales opens his chapter on the purification of the soul. These flowers, he tells Philothea, are the good desires of the heart. The Introduction abounds in references to nature — but to nature as seen through the eyes of Pliny and the authors of the bestiaries, to nature as emblematic of man, nature as consistently the schoolmarm and the moralist. But the lilies of the field enjoy a glory which has this in common with the Order of the Garter — that “there’s no damned merit about it.” That, precisely, is their point; that is why, for us human beings, they are so refreshing and, on a level much deeper than that of morality, so profoundly instructive. “The Great Way,” says the Third Patriarch of Zen,

The Great Way is no harder than men themselves
Make it by not refusing to prefer;

For where there is no abhorrence, where there is no
Frenzy to have, the Way lies manifest.

As always in real life, we are in the midst of paradoxes and antinomies — bound to choose the good rather than the evil, but bound at the same time, if we wish to realize our union with the divine Ground of all being, to choose without craving and aversion, without imposing upon the universe our own notions of utility or morality.

Insofar as they ignore nonhuman nature, or treat it as merely symbolic of human nature, as merely instrumental and subordinate to man, the teachings of Lallemand and Surin are characteristic of their time and country. French literature of the seventeenth century is astonishingly poor in expressions of any but a strictly utilitarian or symbolic interest in birds, flowers, animals, landscape. In the whole of *Tartufe*, for example, there is only one reference to nonhuman nature — a single line, and that most marvelously unpoetical.

La campagne à present n'est pas beaucoup fleurie. No truer word was ever spoken. So far as literature was concerned, the French countryside, during those years which led up to and included the Grand Siècle, were almost flowerless. The lilies of the field were there all right; but the poets did not consider them. The rule had its exceptions, of course; but they were few — Théophile de Viau, Tristan l'Hermite and, later, La Fontaine, who occasionally wrote of the brute creation not as men in fur and feathers, but as beings of another, though related, order, to be looked at as they are in themselves and to be loved for their own sake and for God's. In the *Discours à Madame de la Sablière* there is a beautiful passage on the then fashionable philosophy, whose exponents proclaim:

Que la beste est une machine;
Qu'en elle tout se fait sans choix et par ressorts:
Nul sentiment, point d'âme, en elle tout est corps . . .
L'animal se sent agité
De mouvements que le vulgaire appelle
Tristesse, joye, amour, plaisir, douleur cruelle,
Ou quelque autre de ces estats.
Mais ce n'est point cela; ne vous y trompez pas.

This summary of the odious Cartesian doctrine — a doctrine, incidentally, not so far removed from the orthodox Catholic view that the brutes are without souls and may therefore be used by human beings as though they were mere things — is followed by a series of examples of animal intelligence, in the stag, the partridge and the beaver. The whole passage is as fine, in its own way, as anything in the whole range of reflective poetry.

It stands, however, almost alone. In the writings of La Fontaine's great contemporaries, nonhuman nature plays almost no part whatever. The world in which Corneille's enormous heroes act out their tragedies is that of a closely organized, hierarchical society. "L'espace cornélien c'est la Cité," writes M. Octave Nadal. The yet more strictly limited universe of Racine's heroines and the somewhat featureless males, who serve

as pretexts for their anguish, is as windowless as the Cornelian City. The sublimity of these post-Senecan tragedies is stuffy and confined, the pathos without air, without elbow room, without background. We are far indeed from *King Lear* and *As You Like It*, from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Macbeth*. In practically any comedy or tragedy of Shakespeare one cannot read twenty lines without being made aware that, behind the clowns, the criminals, the heroes, behind the flirts and the weeping queens, beyond all that is agonizingly or farcically human, and yet symbiotic with man, immanent in his consciousness and consubstantial with his being, there lie the everlasting data, the given facts of planetary and cosmic existence on every level, animate and inanimate, mindless and purposively conscious. A poetry that represents man in isolation from nature, represents him inadequately. And analogously a spirituality which seeks to know God only within human souls, and not at the same time in the nonhuman universe with which in fact we are indissolubly related, is a spirituality which cannot know the fullness of divine being. "My deepest conviction," writes an eminent Catholic philosopher of our time, M. Gabriel Marcel, "my deepest and most unshakable conviction — and if it is heretical, so much the worse for orthodoxy — is that, whatever all the thinkers and doctors have said, it is not God's will at all to be loved by us against the Creation, but rather glorified through the Creation, and with the Creation as our starting point. That is why I find so many devotional books intolerable." In this respect, the least intolerable book of seventeenth-century devotion would be Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations*. For this English poet and theologian, there is no question of a God set up against the creation. On the contrary, God is to be glorified through the creation, to be realized in the creation — infinity in a grain of sand and eternity in a flower. The man who, in Traherne's phrase, "attains the World" in disinterested contemplation, thereby attains God, and finds that all the rest has been added. "Is it not a sweet thing to have all covetousness and ambition satisfied, suspicion and infidelity removed, courage and joy infused? Yet is all this in the fruition of the World attained. For thereby is God seen in all his wisdom, power, goodness and glory." Lallemand speaks of the mingling of seemingly incompatible elements, the natural and the supernatural, in the life of perfection. But, as we have seen, what he calls "nature" is not nature in its fullness, but merely an excerpt. Traherne advocated the same mingling of incompatibles, but accepted nature in its totality and in its smallest details. The lilies and the ravens are to be considered, not *quoad nos*, but selflessly, *an sich* — which is the same as saying "in God." And here is sand and a flower growing from among the grains: contemplate these things lovingly and you will see them transfigured by the immanence of eternity and infinity. It is worth remarking that this experience of a divinity immanent in natural objects came also to Surin. In a few brief notations he records that there were times when he actually perceived the full majesty of God in a tree, a passing animal. But, strangely enough, he never wrote at any length about this beatific vision of the Absolute in the relative. And even to the recipients of his spiritual letters he never suggested that obedience to Christ's injunction to consider the lilies might help the blindly groping soul to come to a knowledge of God. One

can only suppose that the acquired belief in the total depravity of fallen nature was stronger, in his mind, than the givenness of his own experience. The dogmatic words he had learned at Sunday School were opaque enough to eclipse the immediate Fact. “If you wish to see It before your eyes,” writes the Third Patriarch of Zen, “have no fixed notions either for or against It.” But fixing notions is the professional occupation of theologians, and both Surin and his master were theologians before they were seekers for enlightenment.

In Lallemant’s scheme of ascesis purification of the heart was to be accompanied and completed by constant docility to the leadings of the Holy Ghost. One of the seven Gifts of the Spirit is Intelligence, and the vice opposed to Intelligence is “coarseness in regard to spiritual things.” This coarseness is the ordinary state of the unregenerate, who are more or less completely blind to the inner light and more or less completely deaf to inspiration. By mortifying his self-regarding impulses, by setting up a witness to his thoughts and “a little sentinel to keep an eye on the movements of the heart,” a man can sharpen his perceptions to the point where he becomes aware of the messages coming up from the obscure depths of the mind — messages in the form of intuitive knowledge, of direct commands, of symbolic dreams and phantasies. The heart that is constantly watched and guarded becomes capable of all the graces and in the end is truly “possessed and governed by the Holy Spirit.”

But on the way to this consummation there may be possessions of a very different kind. For by no means all inspirations are divine, or even moral, even relevant. How are we to distinguish between the leadings of the not-I who is the Holy Spirit and of that other not-I who is sometimes an imbecile, sometimes a lunatic and sometimes a malevolent criminal? Bayle cites the case of a pious young Anabaptist, who felt inspired one day to cut off his brother’s head. The predestined victim had read his Bible, knew that this sort of thing had happened before, recognized the divine origin of the inspiration and, in the presence of a large assemblage of the faithful, permitted himself, like a second Isaac, to be decapitated. Such teleological suspensions of morality, as Kierkegaard elegantly calls them, are all very well in the Book of Genesis, but not in real life. In real life we have to guard against the gruesome pranks of the maniac within. Lallemant was very well aware that many of our inspirations are most certainly not from God, and was careful to take due precautions against illusion. To those of his colleagues who objected that his doctrine of docility to the Holy Ghost was suspiciously like the Calvinist doctrine of the inner spirit, he answered: first, that, it was an article of faith that no good work could be accomplished without a leading of the Holy Spirit in the form of an inspiration and, second, that divine inspiration presupposed the Catholic Faith, the traditions of the Church and the obedience due to ecclesiastical superiors. If an inspiration prompted a man to go against the faith or the Church, it could not possibly be divine.

This is one way — and a very effective way — of guarding against the extravagances of the indwelling maniac. The Quakers had another. Persons who felt a concern to do something unusual or momentous were advised to consult with a number of “weighty

Friends” and to abide by their opinion as to the nature of the inspiration. Lallemand advocates the same procedure. Indeed, he asserts that the Holy Ghost actually “prompts us to consult with judicious persons and to conform our conduct to the opinion of others.”

No good work can be accomplished without an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This, Lallemand could point out to his critics, is an article of the Catholic faith. To those of his colleagues who “complained that they did not have this kind of leading by the Holy Spirit and that they were unable to experience it,” he answered that, if they were in a state of grace, such inspirations were never wanting, even though they might be unaware of them. And he added that they would certainly become aware of divine inspiration if they behaved themselves as they ought. But instead of that, “they chose to live outside themselves, hardly ever coming home to look into their own souls, making the examination of conscience (to which they were bound by their vows) in a very superficial way and taking into consideration only such faults as are obvious to outsiders, without trying to seek out their inner roots in the passions and in dominant habits, and without examining the state and tendency of the soul and the feelings of the heart.” That such persons could not experience the leading of the Holy Ghost was hardly surprising. “How could they know it? They do not even know their inward sins, which are their own acts freely performed by themselves. But as soon as they choose to create within themselves the appropriate conditions for such knowledge, they will infallibly have it.”

All this explains why most would-be good works are ineffective to the point of being almost bad. If hell is paved with good intentions, it is because most people, being self-blinded to the inner light, are actually incapable of having a purely good intention. For this reason, says Lallemand, action must always be in direct proportion to contemplation. “The more inward we are, the more we may undertake outward activities; the less inward, the more we should refrain from trying to do good.” Again, “one busies oneself with works of zeal and charity; but is it from a pure motive of zeal and charity? Is it not, perhaps, because one finds a personal satisfaction in this kind of thing, because one does not care for prayer or study, because one cannot bear to stay in one’s room, cannot stomach seclusion and recollectedness?” A priest may have a large and devoted congregation; but his words and works will bear fruit “only in proportion to his union with God and his detachment from his own interests.” The appearances of doing good are often profoundly deceptive. Souls are saved by the holy, not by the busy. “Action must never be allowed to be an obstacle to our union with God, but must serve rather to bind us more closely and lovingly to Him.” For “just as there are certain humors which, when they are too abundant, cause the death of the body, so in the religious life, when action predominates to excess and is not tempered by prayer and meditation, it infallibly stifles the spirit.” Hence the fruitlessness of so many lives, seemingly so meritorious, so brilliant and so productive. Without the selfless inwardness which is the condition of inspiration, talent is fruitless, zeal and hard work produce nothing of spiritual value. “A man of prayer can do more in a single year

than another can accomplish in a whole lifetime.” Exclusively outward work may be effective in changing outward circumstances; but the worker who wishes to change men’s reactions to circumstances — and one can react destructively and suicidally to even the best environment — must begin by purifying his own soul and making it capable of inspiration. A merely outward man may work like a Trojan and talk like Demosthenes; but “an inward man will make more impression on hearts and minds by a single word animated by the spirit of God” than the other can do by all his efforts, all his cleverness and learning.

How does it actually feel to be “possessed and governed by the Holy Spirit?” This state of conscious and continuous inspiration was described, with the most delicate precision of self-analysis, by Surin’s younger contemporary, Armelle Nicolas, affectionately known throughout her native Brittany as *la bonne Armelle*. This uneducated servant girl, who lived the life of a contemplative saint while cooking the dinner, scrubbing floors and looking after the children, was incapable of writing her own story. But fortunately it was written for her by a very intelligent nun, who succeeded in drawing her out and in recording her confidences almost verbatim. “Losing sight of herself and all the workings of her mind, Armelle no longer envisaged herself as acting in anything, but as suffering and passively submitting to the workings which God accomplished in and by her; so that it seemed to her that, while she possessed a body, it was only that she might be moved and governed by the Spirit of God. It was into this state that she entered after God had so peremptorily commanded her to make room for Him. . . . When she thought of her body or her mind, she no longer said “my body,” or “my mind”; for the word “my” had been banished, and she used to say that everything belonged to God.

“I remember hearing her say that, from the time that God had made Himself the absolute master of her being, she had been dismissed as effectively as, in the past, she herself had given notice” (Armelle’s metaphors were all drawn from the professional vocabulary of a maid of all work) “to those other things” (her bad habits, her self-regarding impulses). “Once dismissed, her mind was not permitted to see or understand what God was working in the inmost recesses of her soul, nor to interfere with its own workings. It was as though her mind remained, huddled up, outside the door of this central chamber, where God alone might freely enter, waiting there like a lackey for his master’s orders. And the mind did not find itself alone in this situation; but it seemed sometimes that an infinite number of angels kept it company, standing around the dwelling-place of God, so as to prevent anything from crossing the threshold.” This state of things lasted some time. Then God permitted her conscious self to enter the central chamber of the soul — to enter and actually see the divine perfections with which it was now filled, with which, indeed, it had always been filled; but like everyone else, she had not known it. The inner Light was intense beyond her capacity to bear it, and for a time her body suffered excruciatingly. In the end, she acquired some measure of tolerance and was able to support the consciousness of her enlightenment without too much distress.

Remarkable in itself; Armelle's self-analysis is doubly interesting as being yet another piece among the many pieces of evidence all pointing to the same conclusion: namely, that the phenomenal self is underlain by a Pure Ego or Atman, which is of the same nature as the divine Ground of all being. Outside the central chamber where (until the soul has become selfless) "none but God may enter," between the divine Ground and the conscious self, lies the subliminal mind, almost impersonal at its melting fringe, but crystallizing, as the phenomenal self is approached, into the personal subconscious with its accumulations of septic rubbish, its swarms of rats and black beetles and its occasional scorpions and vipers. This personal subconscious is the haunt of our indwelling criminal lunatic, the locus of Original Sin. But the fact that the ego is associated with a maniac is not incompatible with the fact that it is also associated (all unconsciously) with the divine Ground. We are born with Original Sin; but we are also born with Original Virtue — with a capacity for grace, in the language of Western theology, with a "spark," a "fine point of the soul," a fragment of unfallen consciousness, surviving from the state of primal innocence and technically known as the *synteresis*. Freudian psychologists pay far more attention to Original Sin than to Original Virtue. They pore over the rats and the black beetles, but are reluctant to see the inner Light. Jung and his followers have shown themselves to be somewhat more realistic. Overstepping the limits of the personal subconscious, they have begun to explore the realm where the mind, growing more and more impersonal, merges into the psychic medium, out of which individual selves are crystallized. Jungian psychology goes beyond the immanent maniac, but stops short of the immanent God.

And yet, I repeat, there is plenty of evidence for the existence of an Original Virtue underlying Original Sin. Armelle's experience was not unique. The knowledge that there is a central chamber of the soul, blazing with the light of divine love and wisdom, has come, in the course of history, to multitudes of human beings. It came, among others, to Father Surin — and came, as will be recorded in a later chapter, in conjunction with a knowledge, no less immediate and no less overpowering, of the horrors at large in the psychic medium and the poisonous vermin in the personal subconscious. At one and the same instant he was aware of God and of Satan, he knew beyond all doubt that he was eternally united with the divine Ground of all being, and yet was convinced that he was already and irrevocably damned. In the end, as we shall see, it was the consciousness of God that prevailed. In that tormented mind, Original Sin was finally swallowed up in the infinity of a much more Original, because timeless, Virtue.

Mystical experiences, theophanies, flashes of what has been called cosmic consciousness — these are not to be had for the asking, cannot be repeated uniformly and at will in the laboratory. But if the experience of the central chamber of the soul is not to be commanded, certain experiences of approach to that center, of being within its field, of standing at the door (in Armelle's words) among a company of angels, are repeatable, if not uniformly indeed (for only the most elementary psychological experiences can be repeated with anything like uniformity), but at least sufficiently often to indicate the nature of the transcendent Limit, toward which they all converge. For

example, those who have experimented with hypnosis find that, at a certain depth of trance, it happens not too infrequently that subjects, if they are left alone and not distracted, will become aware of an immanent serenity and goodness that is often associated with a perception of light and of spaces vast but not solitary. Sometimes the entranced person feels impelled to speak about his or her experience. Deleuze, who was one of the best observers in the second generation of Animal Magnetists, records that this state of somnambulism is characterized by a complete detachment from all personal interests, by the absence of passion, by indifference to acquired opinions and prejudices and by “a novel manner of viewing objects, a quick and direct judgment, accompanied with an intimate conviction. . . . Thus the somnambulist possesses at the same time the torch which gives him his light and the compass that points out his way. This torch and this compass,” Deleuze concludes, “are not the product of somnambulism; they are always in us, but the distracting cares of the world, the passions and, above all, pride, and attachment to perishable things prevent us from perceiving the one and consulting the other.” (Less dangerously and more effectively than the drugs which sometimes produce “anaesthetic revelations,” hypnotism temporarily abolishes distractions and allays the passions, leaving the consciousness free to occupy itself with what lies beyond the haunt of the immanent maniac.) “In this new situation,” Deleuze continues, “the mind is filled with religious ideas, with which, perhaps, it was never before occupied.” Between the somnambulist’s new way of viewing the world and his normal state there is a difference “so prodigious that he sometimes feels as though he were inspired; he regards himself as the organ of a superior intelligence, but this does not excite his vanity.”

Deleuze’s findings are confirmed by those of an experienced woman psychiatrist who for many years has made a study of automatic writing. In conversation this lady has informed me that, sooner or later, most automatists produce scripts in which certain metaphysical ideas are set forth. The theme of these scripts is always the same: namely, that the ground of the individual soul is identical with the divine Ground of all being. Returning to their normal state, the automatists read what they have written and often find it in complete disharmony with what they have always believed.

In this context it seems worth while to remark that (as F. W. H. Myers pointed out many years ago) the moral tone of mediumistic utterances about life in general is almost invariably above reproach. Because of their style, such utterances may be dismissed as mere twaddle. But however soggy the language, however commonplace the thoughts (and for the last thirty centuries at least, all the great truths have been commonplaces), the twaddle is always harmless and might even, if psychics could only write a little better, be uplifting. The inference to be drawn from all this is that in certain states of trance mediums go beyond the personal subconscious, beyond the verminous realm of Original Sin, into an area of subliminal mind in which, like a radiation from some distant source, the influence of Original Virtue makes itself faintly but still distinctly felt. Meanwhile, of course, if they neglect to make union with the Father their end and union with the Son, through works, a means to that end, they are in constant

danger of finding themselves inspired, not by the Holy Ghost, but by all manner of inferior entities, some indigenous to their own personal subconscious, others existing “out there” in the psychic medium, some harmless or positively helpful, but others in the highest degree undesirable.

With these inferential confirmations of the reality of mystical experience, with this evidence at one remove, Lallemant and his disciples did not have to concern themselves. They had their firsthand knowledge and, to validate it, an authoritative literature ranging from the Mystical Theology of Dionysius the Areopagite to the almost contemporary writings of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. Of the reality and the divine nature of the end, to which purification of the heart and docility to the Holy Spirit were the principal means, there was never, in their minds the slightest question. In the past great servants of God had written of their experiences, and the orthodoxy of these writings had been guaranteed by the Doctors of the Church. And now, in the present, they themselves had lived through the agonizing Dark Nights of the senses and the will, and had known the peace which passeth all understanding.

Chapter Four

FOR THOSE WHO had no vocation for it, life in a seventeenth-century convent was merely a succession of boredoms and frustrations, mitigated in some slight degree by an occasional Schwaermerei, by gossip with visitors in the parlor, and by absorption, during leisure hours, in some innocent but entirely footling hobby. Father Surin, in his Letters, speaks of the ornaments in plaited straw, upon which many good sisters of his acquaintance spent the greater part of their spare time. Their masterpiece, in this line, was a miniature straw coach, drawn by six straw horses, and destined to adorn the dressing table of an aristocratic patroness. Of the nuns of the Visitation Father de la Colombière writes that, though the rules of the order are admirably designed to lead souls to the highest perfection, and though he has met certain Visitandines of exalted holiness, it remains true, nevertheless, “that religious houses are filled with persons who keep their rules, get up, go to Mass, to prayer, to confession, to communion merely because it is the habit, because the bell tolls and because others do the same. Their heart has almost no part in what they do. They have their little notions, their little plans, which keep them busy; the things of God enter their minds only as things indifferent. Relatives and friends, whether within the convent or without, use up all their affections, so that there is left over for God only some kind of sluggish and forced emotion by no means acceptable to Him. . . . Communities which ought to be furnaces in which souls are forever on fire with the love of God, remain instead in a condition of frightful mediocrity, and God grant that things may not go from bad to worse.”

To Jean Racine, Port-Royal seemed uniquely admirable because of “the solitude of the parlor, the little eagerness shown by the nuns to enter into conversation, their lack of curiosity about the things of the world and even about the affairs of their neighbors.”

From this catalogue of Port-Royal's merits we can infer the corresponding defects of other, less remarkable convents.

The house of Ursuline nuns, which was established at Loudun in 1626, was neither better nor worse than the average. Most of the seventeen nuns were young noblewomen, who had embraced monastic life, not out of any overmastering desire to follow the evangelical counsels and achieve Christian perfection, but because there was not enough money at home to provide them with dowries commensurate with their birth and acceptable to suitors of corresponding rank. There was nothing scandalous in their conduct and nothing particularly edifying. They observed their rule, but observed it with resignation rather than enthusiasm.

Life at Loudun was hard. The nuns of the new foundation had arrived without money in a town that was half Protestant and wholly stingy. The only house they could afford to rent was a gloomy old building, which nobody else would live in because it was notoriously haunted. They had no furniture and for some time were compelled to sleep on the floor. The pupils, on whom they relied for their living, were slow in presenting themselves, and for a time these blue-blooded de Sazillys and d'Escoubleaus, these de Barbèziers and de la Mottes, these de Belciels and de Dampierres, were compelled to work with their hands and to go without meat, not only on Fridays, but on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays as well. After a few months, snobbery came to their rescue. When bourgeois Loudun discovered that, for a very modest fee, it could have its female offspring taught good French and courtly manners by a second cousin once removed of Cardinal de Richelieu, by an even closer relative of Cardinal de Sourdis, by the younger daughter of a marquis and a niece of the Bishop of Poitiers, boarders and day pupils came thick and fast.

With them, at last, came prosperity. Servants were hired to do the dirty work, beef and mutton reappeared on the refectory table and the mattresses were taken off the floor and placed on wooden bedsteads.

In 1627 the Prioress of the new community was transferred to another house of the order and a new superior was appointed in her place. Her name in religion was Jeanne des Anges; in the world it had been Jeanne de Belciel, daughter of Louis de Belciel, Baron de Coze, and of Charlotte Goumart d'Eschillais, who came of a family hardly less ancient and eminent than his own. Born in 1602, she was now in her middle twenties, her face rather pretty, but her body diminutive almost to dwarfishness and slightly deformed — presumably by some tubercular affection of the bones. Jeanne's education had been only slightly less rudimentary than that of most young ladies of her time; but she was possessed of considerable native intelligence, combined, however, with a temperament and a character, which had made her a trial to others and her own worst enemy. Because of her deformity the child was physically unattractive; and the consciousness of being misshapen, the painful knowledge that she was an object either of repugnance or of pity, aroused in her a chronic resentment, which made it impossible for her either to feel affection or to permit herself to be loved. Disliking and consequently disliked, she lived in a defensive shell, issuing forth only to attack

her enemies — and everybody, a priori, was an enemy — with sudden sarcasms or strange outbursts of jeering laughter. “I noticed,” Surin was to write of her, “that the Mother Superior had a certain jocosity of nature which excited her to laugh and crack jokes (*bouffonner*) and that the demon, Balaam, did his best to cherish and maintain this humor. I saw that this spirit was wholly opposed to the seriousness with which one ought to take the things of God, and that it fostered in her a certain glee which destroys the compunction of heart indispensable to a perfect conversion to God. I saw that a single hour of this kind of jocularly was enough to ruin everything I had built up in the course of many days, and I induced in her a strong desire to rid herself of this enemy.” There is a laughter that is perfectly compatible with “the things of God” — a laughter of humility and self-criticism, a laughter of good-natured tolerance, a laughter in lieu of despair or indignation at the world’s perverse absurdity. Very different from any of these, Jeanne’s laughter was either of derision or of cynicism. Directed against others, never against herself, the first was a symptom of the unreconciled hunchback’s desire to be revenged on destiny by putting other people in their place — and their place, in spite of all appearances, was below her. Motivated by the same craving for compensatory dominance, the second was a more impersonal jeering and joking at all that, by current standards, was most solemn, lofty and grand.

Persons of Jeanne’s character are apt to make a good deal of trouble, both for themselves and for other people. Incapable of coping with a very unpleasant child, her parents packed her off to an elderly aunt, who was the prioress of a neighboring abbey. After two or three years she was ignominiously returned; the nuns could do nothing with her. Time passed, and life in the paternal château became so odious to her that even a cloister seemed preferable to home. She entered the Ursuline house at Poitiers, passed through the usual novitiate and took her vows. As might have been expected, Jeanne did not make a very satisfactory nun; but her family was rich and influential, and the Superior deemed it expedient to put up with her. And then, almost overnight, there was a marvelous change for the better. Ever since her coming to Loudun Sœur Jeanne had behaved with exemplary piety and diligence. The young woman who, at Poitiers, had been so insubordinate, so wanting in zeal, so slack in the performance of her duties, was now the perfect religious — obedient, hard-working and devout. Deeply impressed by this conversion, the retiring Prioress recommended Sister Jane as the person best fitted to take her place.

Fifteen years later the convert gave her own version of this episode. “I took good care,” she wrote, “to make myself indispensable to those in authority, and since there were but few nuns, the Superior was obliged to assign me to all the offices of the community. It was not that she could not do without me, for she had other nuns more capable and better than I; it was merely that I imposed upon her by a thousand little compliances and so made myself necessary to her. I knew so well how to adapt myself to her humor and to prevail upon her, that at last she found nothing well done except what was done by me; she even believed that I was good and virtuous. This puffed up my heart to such an extent that I had no difficulty in performing actions which seemed

to be worthy of esteem. I knew how to dissimulate and I made use of hypocrisy, so that my Superior might go on thinking well of me and be favorable to my inclinations; and in effect she granted me many privileges which I abused, and since she was herself good and virtuous and believed that I too intended to go to God with Christian perfection, she often invited me to converse with worthy monks, which I did in order to humor her and to pass the time.”

When the worthy monks took their leave, they would push through the grille some newly translated classic of the spiritual life. One day it was a treatise by Blosius; another, the life of the Blessed Mother Teresa of Avila, written by herself, with St. Augustine’s *Confessions* and Del Rio on angels thrown in for good measure. As she read these books, as she learned to discuss their contents with the prioress and the good fathers, Sœur Jeanne found her attitude insensibly changing. These pious talks in the parlor, these studies in the literature of mysticism, ceased to be mere time-killers and became means to a specific end. If she read the mystics, if she talked with the visiting Carmelites of perfection, it was not at all “for the sake of her own advancement in the spiritual life, but solely in order to seem clever and to outshine all the other nuns in every kind of company.” The unreconciled hunchback’s craving for superiority had found another outlet, a new and fascinating field in which to operate. There were still occasional outbursts of sarcasm and cynical buffoonery; but in the graver intervals Sister Jane was now the expert in spirituality, the learned consultant on all matters of mystical theology. Exalted by her new-found knowledge, she could now look down on her sisters with an altogether delightful mingling of contempt and pity. True, they were pious, they were trying, poor things, to be good — but with what a piddling kind of virtue, what an ignorant and, one might say, brutish devotion! What did they know of extraordinary graces? What of spiritual touches, of raptures and inspirations, of aridities and the night of the senses? And the answer, the highly gratifying answer to all these questions was that they knew nothing at all. Whereas she — the little dwarf with one shoulder higher than the other — she knew practically everything.

Mme. Bovary came to a bad end because she imagined herself to be the kind of person she in fact was not. Perceiving that Flaubert’s heroine embodied a very widespread human tendency, Jules de Gaultier coined from her name the word “bovarism” and wrote a book on the subject, which is well worth the reading. Bovarism is by no means invariably disastrous. On the contrary, the process of imagining that we are what we are not, and of acting upon this imagination, is one of the most effective mechanisms of education. The title of the most enduring of all books of Christian devotion — *The Imitation of Christ* — bears eloquent witness to this fact. It is by thinking and acting in any given situation, not as we would normally think and act, but rather as we imagine that we should do, if we were like some other and better person, that we finally cease to be like our old selves and come, instead, to resemble our ideal model.

Sometimes, of course, the ideal is low and the chosen model more or less undesirable. But the bovaristic mechanism of imagining ourselves to be what we are not, and of thinking and acting as though that fancy were a fact, remains the same. There is, for

example, a bovarism in the realm of vice — the bovarism of the good boy who conscientiously takes to drinking and whoring in order to be like some generally admired he-man or daredevil. There is a bovarism in the field of hierarchical relationships — the bovarism of the bourgeois snob who imagines himself to be an aristocrat and tries to behave as such. There is a political bovarism — the bovarism of those who practice the imitation of Lenin or Webb or Mussolini. There is a cultural and aesthetic bovarism — the bovarism of the *précieuses* ridicules, the bovarism of the modern philistine who is converted overnight from the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* to Picasso. And finally there is bovarism in religion — and we have at one end of the scale the saint who wholeheartedly imitates Christ and, at the other, the hypocrite who tries to look like a saint in order the more effectively to pursue his own unholy ends. In the middle ground, somewhere between the two extremes of *Tartufe* and St. John of the Cross, there exists a third, hybrid variety of religious bovarists. These, the absurd but often touching comedians of the spiritual life, are neither consciously wicked nor resolutely holy. Their all too human desire is to make the best of both worlds. They aspire to be saved — but without going to too much trouble; they hope to be rewarded — but only for looking like heroes, only for talking like contemplatives, not for doing or being. The faith which sustains them is the illusion, half recognized as such, half earnestly believed in, that by saying “Lord, Lord” sufficiently often they will contrive, somehow or other, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Without “Lord, Lord,” or some more elaborate doctrinal or devotional equivalent, the process of religious bovarization would be difficult, in some cases all but impossible. The pen is mightier than the sword in this sense; that it is by means of verbalized thought that we direct and maintain our efforts. But it is possible to make use of words as a substitute for effort, to live in a purely verbal universe and not in the given world of immediate experience. To change a vocabulary is easy; to change external circumstances or our own ingrained habits is hard and tiresome. The religious bovarist who is not prepared to undertake a wholehearted imitation of Christ contents himself with the acquisition of a new vocabulary. But a new vocabulary is not the same thing as a new environment or a new character. The letter kills, or merely leaves inert; it is the spirit, it is the reality underlying verbal signs, which gives new life. Phrases which, at their first formulation, expressed significant experiences, tend (such is the nature of human beings and their religious organizations) to become a mere jargon, a pious slang, by means of which the hypocrite disguises his conscious wickedness and the more or less harmless comedian tries to deceive himself and impress his fellows. As we should expect, *Tartufe* speaks and teaches others to speak the language of the sons and servants of God.

De toutes amitiés il détache mon âme,
Et je verrai mourir frère, enfants, mère et femme
Que je m’en soucierais autant que de cela.

We recognize a distorted echo of the Gospels, a parody of the Ignatian and Salesian doctrine of holy indifference. And how movingly, when at last he is unmasked, does the

hypocrite confess his total depravity! All the saints have always believed themselves to be enormous sinners, and Tartufe is no exception to the rule.

Oui, mon frère, je suis un méchant, un coupable,
Un malheureux pécheur, tout plein d'iniquité,
Le plus grand scélérat qui jamais ait été.

It is the language of St. Catherine of Siena — and the language, when she remembers to speak it, of Sœur Jeanne des Anges in her Autobiography.

Even when he is making passes at Elmire, Tartufe employs the phraseology of the devout. “De vos regards divins l’ineffable douceur” — applied to God or to Christ, the words are to be found in the writings of every Christian mystic. “C’en est fait,” cries the indignant Orgon, when at last he discovers the truth,

C’en est fait, je renonce à tous les gens de bien;
J’en aurai désormais une horreur effroyable,
Et m’en vais devenir pour eux pire qu’un diable.

His more sensible brother has to give him a little lecture on semantics. Because some gens de bien are not what they seem to be, it does not follow that all are villains or comedians. Every case must be considered on its own merits.

In the course of the seventeenth century several eminent directors of souls — Cardinal Bona was one of them, the Jesuit, Father Guillore was another — published exhaustive treatises on the problems of distinguishing false spirituality from the genuine article, mere words from living substance, fraud and phantasy from “extraordinary graces.” Subjected to tests of the kind proposed by these writers, it seems most improbable that Sœur Jeanne would for long have succeeded in “getting away with it.” Unhappily, her directors were only too uncritically anxious to give her the benefit of every doubt. Sane or hysterical, but in either condition the consummate actress, Sœur Jeanne had the misfortune to be taken seriously on every occasion except, as we shall see, the one when she was doing her best to tell the plain unvarnished truth.

If her directors took her seriously, it was either because they had their own, not too creditable reasons for believing in her extraordinary graces, or else because they were committed by temperament and Weltanschauung to this kind of illusion. How seriously, we may now ask, did she take herself? How seriously was she taken by her fellow nuns? We can only guess at the answers to these questions.

There must be times when, however word-perfect in their impressive roles, the comedians of the spiritual life become uneasily conscious that something is not quite right, that perhaps, after all, God is not mocked and that even human beings may not (appalling thought!) be quite so dumb as one might be led to suppose.

This last truth seems to have dawned upon Sœur Jeanne at a fairly early stage in her long-drawn impersonation of St. Teresa. “God,” she writes, “very often permitted that things should happen to me at the hands of creatures, which gave me much pain.” Through the obscuring veils of this odd jargon we divine the ironic shrug with which Sister X received some specially eloquent discourse on the Spiritual Marriage, the hard-boiled comment made by Sister Y on Jeanne’s new trick, in church, of rolling up her

eyes and pressing her hands, like some saint in a baroque picture, over a bosom wildly palpitating with extraordinary graces. We all imagine ourselves to be simultaneously clear-sighted and impenetrable; but, except when blinded by some infatuation, other people can see through us just as easily as we can see through them. The discovery of this fact is apt to be exceedingly disconcerting.

Fortunately for Sœur Jeanne — or perhaps very unfortunately — the first Prioress of the Loudun house was less perspicacious than those other creatures, whose ironic skepticism had given her so much pain. Deeply impressed by her young pupil's holy conversation and exemplary behavior, the good mother had felt no hesitation in recommending Jeanne's appointment as Prioress. And now the appointment had been made, and here she was — only twenty-five and the head of a house, the queen of a tiny empire, whose seventeen subjects were bound by Holy Obedience to take her orders and listen to her advice.

Now that victory had been won, now that the fruits of a long and arduous campaign were securely in her grasp, Sœur Jeanne felt that she was entitled to a holiday. She went on with her mystical reading, she continued, on occasion, to talk very learnedly about Christian perfection; but in the intervals she permitted herself — indeed, as Superior, she actually commanded herself — to take it easy. In the parlor, where she was now free to spend as much time as she liked, the new Prioress indulged in interminable conversations with her friends and acquaintances of the uncloistered world. Years later she piously expressed the wish that she might be permitted to set forth "all the faults I committed and caused to be committed in the course of conversations which were not strictly necessary; for then it would be seen how dangerous it is to expose young nuns with such facility at the grilles of their convent parlors, even though their talk may seem to be wholly spiritual." Yes, even the most spiritual discourses, as the Prioress knew only too well, had a curious way of winding up as something very different. One started out with a series of edifying remarks about the devotion to St. Joseph, about meditation and the precise moment when it might be allowed to give place to the prayer of simple regard, about holy indifference and the practice of the presence of God — one started with these things and then, before one knew where one was or how precisely one had got there, one was discussing, yet again, the exploits of the fascinating and abominable M. Grandier.

"That shameless creature in the Rue du Lion d'Or. . . . That young hussy who was M. Hervé's housekeeper before he got married. . . . That cobbler's daughter who was now in the service of Her Majesty, the Queen Mother, and who kept him posted about all that went on at court. . . . And his penitents. . . . One shudders to think. . . . Yes, in the sacristy, Reverend Mother, in the sacristy — not fifteen paces from the Blessed Sacrament. . . . And that poor little Trincant, seduced, you might say, under her father's nose, in his own library. And now it was Mlle. de Brou. Yes, that prude, that precisian. So much attached to virginity that she would never marry. So devout that, when her mother died, she talked of turning Carmelite. Instead of which. . . ."

Instead of which. . . . In her own case, the Prioress reflected, there had been no “instead.” A novice at nineteen, a nun when she was barely of age. And yet, after the death of her sisters and her two brothers, her parents had begged her to come home and get married and give them grandchildren. Why had she refused? Why, though she hated this dismal life between four walls, had she persisted in taking the final vows? Was it for the love of God, or out of dislike for her mother? Was it to spite M. de Coze or to please Jesus?

She thought with envy of Madeleine de Brou. No choleric father, no prying mother; plenty of money; and her own mistress, free to do as she pleased. And now she had Grandier.

Envy modulated into hatred and contempt.

This hypocrite, with her pale face like the face of a virgin martyr in a picture book! This soft-spoken dissembler, with her beads and her long prayers and her pocket edition of the Bishop of Geneva in red morocco! And all the time, under those black weeds, behind those downcast eyes, what a burning, what lechery! No better than that slut in the Rue du Lion d’Or, no better than the cobbler’s daughter, or the little Trincant. And these at least had the excuse of being young or widowed; which was more than could be said for that old maid of thirty-five, with a figure like a Maypole and no looks at all. Whereas she, the Prioress, was still in her twenties, and Sister Claire de Sazilly used to say that her face under its coif was like an angel’s, peeping through a cloud. And what eyes! Everybody had always admired her eyes — even her mother, even her detestable old aunt, the Abbess. If only she could get him as far as the parlor! Then she would look at him through the grille — look at him fixedly, searchingly, with eyes that should reveal her soul in all its nakedness. Yes, in all its nakedness; for the grille was not the adjunct of modesty; it was in lieu of modesty. Restraint had been taken out of the mind and embodied in an iron lattice. Behind bars one could be shameless.

But, alas, the opportunity for shamelessness never presented itself. The parson had no reasons, either professional or personal, for visiting the convent. He was not the nuns’ director, he had no relatives among their pupils. His lawsuits and his parochial duties left him no leisure for mindless chatter, or talk about perfection, and his mistresses left him no appetite for new and hazardous “embarkations.” Month succeeded month, year followed year, and the Prioress had still found no occasion for the deployment of those irresistible eyes of hers; so far as she was concerned, Grandier remained merely a name — but a name of power, a name that conjured up unavowable phantasies, spirits familiar and unclean, a demon of curiosity, an incubus of concupiscence.

A bad reputation is the mental equivalent of the purely physiological appeals issued by animals during their mating seasons — cries, odors and even, in the case of certain moths, infrared radiation. In a woman, a name for promiscuity constitutes a standing invitation to every male within gossip range. And how fascinating, even to the most respectable ladies, is the professional seducer, the hardened breaker of hearts! In the imagination of his female parishioners Grandier’s amorous exploits took on heroic proportions. He became a mythical figure, part Jupiter, part Satyr — bestially lustful

and yet, or therefore, divinely attractive. At the time of his trial, a married lady, belonging to one of Loudun's most honorable families, testified that, after administering communion, the parson had looked at her fixedly, whereupon she "was seized with a violent love for him, which began with a little thrill in all her members." Another met him in the street and was incontinently overcome by "an extraordinary passion." A third merely looked at him as he was entering a church and felt "exceedingly great emotions, together with impulses such that she would very much have liked to sleep with him there and then." All these ladies were notoriously virtuous and of unblemished reputation. Each of them, moreover, had a home with a man in it and a growing family. The poor Prioress had nothing to do, no husband, no children and no vocation. What wonder if she too fell in love with the delicious monster! "La mère prieure en fut tellement troublée, qu'elle ne parlait plus que de Grandier, qu'elle disait estre l'objet de toutes ses affections." That double t in toutes seems to raise all to a higher power, so that Grandier becomes the object of affections beyond the limit of experience, affections which it was impossible for anyone to feel — and yet she felt them in all their monstrous and perverse enormity. The thought of the parson haunted her continuously. Her meditations, which should have been a practice of the presence of God, were a practice, instead, of the presence of Urbain Grandier, or rather of the obscenely fascinating image which had crystallized, in her fancy, around his name. Hers was the unobjective and therefore limitless and insane desire of the moth for the star, of the schoolgirl for the crooner, of the bored and frustrated housewife for Rudolph Valentino. On such merely carnal sins as gluttony and lust, the body imposes, by its very nature and constitution, certain limits. But however weak the flesh, the spirit is always indefinitely willing. To sins of the will and the imagination kind nature sets no limits. Avarice and the lust for power are as nearly infinite as anything in this sublunary world can be. And so is the thing which D. H. Lawrence called "sex in the head." As heroic passion, it is one of the last infirmities of noble mind. As imagined sensuality, it is one of the first infirmities of the insane mind. And in either case (being free of the body and the limitations imposed by fatigue, by boredom, by the essential irrelevance of material happenings to our ideas and fancies), it partakes of the infinite. Behind her bars the Prioress found herself the victim of an insatiable monster, her own imagination. In her own person she combined the trembling and lacerated quarry with an infernal analogue of the Hound of Heaven. As might have been expected, her health broke down and by 1629 Sœur Jeanne was suffering from a psychosomatic "derangement of the stomach which," according to Dr. Rogier and the surgeon Mannoury, "rendered her so weak that it was with difficulty that she could walk."

All this time, let us remember, the Ursulines' pensionnat was purveying reading and writing, the catechism and deportment, to a growing enrollment of young girls. How, one wonders, did the pupils react to the ministrations of a headmistress in the clutch of a sexual obsession, of teachers already infected by the hysteria of their principal? To this question the documents provide, unfortunately, no answer. All we know is that it was not until a later stage of the proceedings that indignant parents began to remove

their children from the good sisters' care. For the present, it would seem, the mental atmosphere of the convent was not so manifestly abnormal as to arouse alarm. Then, early in the fifth year of the Prioress's reign, there occurred a series of events which, though unimportant in themselves, were destined to have enormous consequences.

The first of these events was the death of the Ursulines' director, Canon Moussaut. A most worthy priest, the Canon had conscientiously done his best for the new community, but his best, since he was on the brink of second childhood, had not been very good. He understood nothing of his penitents; and his penitents, on their side, paid no attention to anything he said.

At the news of Moussaut's death, the Prioress tried her hardest to look sad; but inwardly she was filled with an effervescent elation. At last, at last!

As soon as the old gentleman was safely buried, she dispatched a letter to Grandier. It began with a paragraph about the irreparable loss sustained by the community, went on to stress her own and her sisters' need for spiritual guidance by some director no less wise and holy than the dear defunct, and ended with an invitation to Grandier to step into the Canon's shoes. Except for the spelling, which had always been Sœur Jeanne's weakest point, the letter was altogether admirable. Reading through the fair copy, the Prioress could not see how he could possibly resist an appeal at once so heartfelt, so pious, so delicately flattering.

But Grandier's answer, when it came, was a polite refusal. Not only did he feel himself unworthy of so high an honor; he was also much too busy with his duties as a parish priest.

From the pinnacle of joy, the Prioress tumbled headlong into a disappointment in which grief was mingled with hurt pride, and out of which there grew, as she ruminated the bitter cud of her defeat, a cold persistent rage, a steady malignancy of hatred.

To implement this loathing was by no means easy; for the parson inhabited a world into which it was impossible for a cloistered nun to penetrate. She could not go to him; and he would not go to her. Their nearest approach to a personal contact came when Madeleine de Brou called at the convent to visit her niece, who was one of the boarders. Entering the parlor, Madeleine found the Prioress confronting her on the other side of the grille. She uttered a polite greeting and was answered by a torrent of abuse that became more shrilly violent with every passing moment. "Whore, strumpet, debaucher of priests, committer of the ultimate sacrilege!" Through the bars the Prioress spat at her rival. Madeleine turned and fled.

The last hope of a personal, face-to-face vengeance was now gone. But one thing, at least, Sœur Jeanne could still do: she could associate herself and the whole community under her charge with Grandier's avowed enemies. Without delay she sent for the man who, of all the local clerics, had the most cogent reasons for detesting him. Ill-favored, congenitally lame, devoid of talent no less than of charm, Canon Mignon had always envied the parson's good looks, quick wit and easy successes. To this general and, so to say, antecedent antipathy had been added, over the years, a number of more specific grounds for dislike — Grandier's sarcasms, the seduction of Mignon's cousin,

Philippe Trincant, and, more recently, a quarrel over a piece of property disputed between the collegial church of Ste. Croix and the parish of St. Pierre. Acting against the advice of his fellow canons, Mignon had taken the case to court and, as they had all prophesied, lost it. He was still smarting under this humiliation, when the Prioress summoned him to the convent parlor, and, after talking at large about the spiritual life and in particular of the parson's scandalous behavior, invited him to become the nuns' confessor. The offer was immediately accepted. A new ally had joined the forces leagued against Grandier. Precisely how that ally was to be made use of, Mignon did not yet know. But, like a good general, he was prepared to seize every opportunity that might present itself.

In the Prioress's mind, meanwhile, the new hatred for Grandier had not abolished, had not even mitigated, the old obsessive desires. The imagined hero of her waking or nocturnal dreams remained the same; but now he was no longer the Prince Charming, for whom one left the casement open at night, but an importunate incubus, who delighted in inflicting upon his victim the outrage of an unwelcome but irrepressible pleasure. After Moussaut's death Sœur Jeanne dreamed on several occasions that the old man had come back from purgatory to implore his former penitents for the assistance of their prayers. But even as he plaintively spoke, everything changed and "it was no longer the person of her late confessor, but the face and semblance of Urbain Grandier who, altering his words and behavior at the same time as his figure, talked to her of amours, plied her with caresses no less insolent than unchaste, and pressed her to grant him what was no longer hers to dispose of, that which, by her vows, she had consecrated to her divine Bridegroom."

In the mornings the Prioress would recount these nocturnal adventures to her fellow nuns. The tales lost nothing in the telling and, within a very little while, two other young ladies — Sœur Claire de Sazilly (Cardinal Richelieu's cousin) and another Claire, a lay sister, were also having visions of importunate clergymen and hearing a voice that whispered the most indelicate propositions in their ears.

The next, the determining event in the long series which led at last to the parson's destruction, was a rather silly practical joke. Devised by a committee of the younger nuns and their older pupils, for the purpose of frightening the babies and the pious and simple-minded elders, the joke was a simple hallowe'en affair of pretended apparitions and poltergeists. The house, in which the nuns and their boarders were lodged, had a reputation, as we have already seen, for being haunted. Its occupants were therefore well prepared to be terrified when, shortly after the old Canon's death, a white-sheeted figure was seen to glide about the dormitories. After the first visitation, all doors were carefully bolted; but the phantoms either made their way along the leads and entered through the windows, or else were admitted by their fifth column within the rooms. Clothes were plucked off the beds, faces were touched by icy fingers. Overhead, in the attics, there was a groaning and a rattling of chains. The children screamed; the Reverend Mothers crossed themselves and appealed to St. Joseph. In vain. After a few quiet nights the ghosts would be back again. The school and convent were in a panic.

Seated at his listening post in the confessional, Canon Mignon knew about everything — about the incubi in the cells, about the ghosts in the dormitories, about the practical jokers in the attics. He knew about everything — and suddenly a light dawned and the finger of Providence was manifest. All things, he now perceived, were working together for good. He would work with them. To this end, he reprimanded the jokers, but ordered them to say nothing about their pranks. He instilled a new terror into the victims of those pranks by telling them that the things they had taken for ghosts were more probably devils. And he confirmed the Mother Superior and her fellow visionaries in their hallucinations by assuring them that their nightly visitants were real and manifestly satanic. After which he repaired, with four or five of the parson's most influential enemies, to M. Trincant's country house at Puydardane, a league from town. There, before the assembled council of war, he gave an account of what was happening in the convent and showed how the situation might be exploited to Grandier's disadvantage. The matter was discussed and a plan of campaign, complete with secret weapons, psychological warfare and a supernatural intelligence service, was drawn up. The conspirators parted in the highest of spirits. This time, they all felt, they had him — on toast.

Mignon's next step was to call on the Carmelites. What he needed was a good exorcist. Could the Reverend Fathers provide one? Enthusiastically the Prior gave him, not one, but three — Fathers Eusèbe de Saint-Michel, Pierre-Thomas de Saint-Charles and Antonin de la Charité. With Mignon, they set to work at once and were so successful in their operations that, within a few days, all except two or three of the oldest nuns were having nightly visits from the parson.

After a time rumors began to leak out of the haunted nunnery, and in a little while it was a matter of common knowledge that the good sisters were all possessed by devils, and that the devils laid the blame for everything on the sprightly M. Grandier. The Protestants, as can be imagined, were delighted. That a popish priest had conspired with Satan to debauch an entire convent of Ursulines was almost enough to console them for the fall of La Rochelle.

As for the parson himself, he merely shrugged his shoulders. After all, he had never so much as set eyes on the Prioress and her frantic sisters. What these demented women said about him was merely the product of their malady — melancholy adust combined with a touch of furor uterinus. Debarred from men, the poor things must needs imagine an incubus. When these remarks were reported to Canon Mignon he only smiled and remarked that he laughs best who laughs last.

Meanwhile the labor of exorcising all these demoniacs was so great that, after some months of heroic wrestling with the demons, the Canon had to call for reinforcements. The first to be summoned was Pierre Rangier, the Curé of Veniers, a man who owed his very considerable influence in the diocese and his universal unpopularity to the fact that he had made himself the Bishop's spy and secret agent. With Rangier participating in the exorcisms, the Canon could feel confident that there would be no skepticism in high places. The possession would be official and orthodox.

To Rangier's was soon added the collaboration of another priest of a very different stamp. M. Barré, Curé of Saint-Jacques in the neighboring town of Chinon, was one of those negative Christians, to whom the Devil is incomparably more real and more interesting than God. He saw the print of cloven hoofs in everything; he recognized Satan's work in all the odd, all the disastrous, all the too pleasurable events of human life. Enjoying nothing so much as a good tussle with Belial or Beelzebub, he was forever fabricating and exorcising demoniacs. Thanks to his efforts, Chinon was full of raving girls, bewitched cows, husbands unable, because of some sorcerer's malignant spells, to perform their conjugal duties. In his parish nobody could complain that life was uninteresting; what with the Curé and the Devil, there was never a dull moment.

Mignon's invitation was accepted with alacrity, and a few days later Barré arrived from Chinon at the head of a procession formed by a large body of his more fanatical parishioners. To his great disgust he found that, up to this time, the exorcisms had been conducted behind closed doors. To hide one's light under a bushel — what an idea! Why not give the public a chance to be edified? The doors of the Ursulines' chapel were thrown open; the mob poured in. At his third attempt, Barré succeeded in sending the Mother Superior into convulsions. "Bereaved of sense and reason," Sœur Jeanne rolled on the floor. The spectators were delighted, especially when she showed her legs. Finally, after many "violences, vexations, howlings and grindings of teeth, two of which at the back of the mouth were broken," the Devil obeyed the order to leave his victim in peace. The Prioress lay exhausted; M. Barré wiped the sweat from his forehead. And now it was the turn of Canon Mignon and Sœur Claire de Sazilly, of Father Eusebius and the lay sister, of M. Rangier and Sister Gabrielle of the Incarnation. The performance ended only with the ending of the day. The spectators trooped out into the autumnal twilight. It was universally agreed that, not since the coming of those traveling acrobats, with the two dwarfs and the performing bears, had poor old Loudun been treated to such a good show as this. And all free of charge — for of course you didn't have to put anything in the bag, when it was passed round, and if you did give something, a farthing would make as good a jingle as a sixpence.

Two days later, on October 8th, 1632, Barré won his first major victory, by routing Asmodeus, one of the seven devils who had taken up residence in the body of the Prioress. Speaking through the lips of the demoniac, Asmodeus revealed that he was entrenched in the lower belly. For more than two hours Barré wrestled with him. Again and again the sonorous Latin phrases rumbled forth. "Exorciso te, immundissime spiritus, omnis incursio adversarii, omne phantasma, omnis legio, in nomine Domini nostri Jesus Christi; eradicare et effugare ab hoc plasmate Dei." And then there would be a sprinkling of holy water, a laying on of hands, a laying on of the stole, of the breviary, of relics. "Adjuro te, serpens antique, per Judicem vivorum et mortuorum, per factorem tuum, per factorem mundi, per eum qui habet potestatem mittendi te in gehennam, ut ab hoc famulo Dei, qui ad sinum Ecclesiae recurrit, cum metu et exercitu furoris tui festinus discedas." But instead of departing, Asmodeus merely laughed and uttered a few playful blasphemies. Another man would have admitted defeat. Not so

M. Barré. He ordered the Prioress to be carried to her cell and sent in haste for the apothecary. M. Adam came, bringing with him the classical emblem of his profession, the huge brass syringe of Molièresque farce and seventeenth-century medical reality. A quart of holy water was ready for him. The syringe was filled, and M. Adam approached the bed on which the Mother Superior was lying. Perceiving that his last hour was at hand, Asmodeus threw a fit. In vain. The Prioress's limbs were pinioned, strong hands held down the writhing body and, with the skill born of long practice, M. Adam administered the miraculous enema. Two minutes later, Asmodeus had taken his departure.

In the autobiography which she wrote some years later, Sœur Jeanne assures us that during the first months of her possession, her mind was so confused that she could remember nothing of what had happened to her. The statement may be true — or it may not. There are many things which we would like to forget, which we do our best to suppress, but which in fact we go on remembering only too vividly. M. Adam's syringe, for example. . . .

From insulated selfhood there are many ways of escape into a larval condition of subhumanity. This state partakes of the Nothingness, which is the theme of so many of Mallarmé's poems.

Mais ta chevelure est une rivière tiède,
Où noyer sans remords l'âme qui nous obsède,
Et trouver le Néant que tu ne connais pas.

But for many persons, absolute Nothingness is not enough. What they want is a Nothing with negative qualities, a Nonentity that stinks and is hideous.

Une nuit que j'étais près d'une affreuse juive,
Comme au long d'un cadavre un cadavre étendu. . . .

This also is an experience of Nothingness — but with a vengeance. And it is precisely in Nothingness-with-a-vengeance that certain minds discover what is, for them, the most satisfying kind of experienced otherness. In Jeanne des Anges, the longing for self-transcendence was powerful in proportion to the intensity of her native egotism and the frustrating circumstances of her environment. In later years she was to pretend to try, and even actually to try without pretense, to achieve an upward self-transcendence into the life of the spirit. But at this stage in her career the only avenue of escape that presented itself was a descent into sexuality. She had begun by deliberately indulging in the imagination of an intimacy with her beau ténébreux, the unknown but titillatingly notorious M. Grandier. But in time deliberate and occasional indulgence turned into irresistible addiction. Habit converted her sexual phantasies into an imperious necessity. The beau ténébreux took on an autonomous existence that was altogether independent of her will. Instead of being the mistress of her imagination, she was now its slave. Slavery is humiliating; and yet the consciousness of being no longer in control of one's own thoughts and actions is a form, inferior no doubt, but effective, of that self-transcendence to which all human beings aspire. Sœur Jeanne had tried to free herself from her servitude to the erotic images she had conjured up; but the only

freedom she could achieve was freedom to be the self she abhorred. There was nothing for it but to slide down again into the dungeon of her addiction.

And now, after months of this inward struggle, she was in the hands of the egregious M. Barré. The phantasy of a downward self-transcendence had been transformed into the brute fact of his actually treating her as something less than human — as some queer kind of animal, to be exhibited to the rabble like a performing ape, as a less than personal creature fit only to be bawled at, manipulated, sent by reiterated suggestion into fits and finally subjected, against what remained of her will and in spite of the remnants of her modesty, to the outrage of a forcible colonic irrigation. Barré had treated her to an experience that was the equivalent, more or less, of a rape in a public lavatory.

The person who was once Sœur Jeanne des Anges, Prioress of the Ursulines of Loudun, had been annihilated — annihilated, not in the Mallarméan fashion, but in the Baudelairean, with a vengeance. Parodying the Pauline phrase, she could say of herself, “I live, yet not I, but dirt, but humiliation, but mere physiology liveth in me.” During the exorcisms she was no longer a subject; she was only an object with intense sensations. It was horrible, but it was also wonderful — an outrage but at the same time a revelation and, in the literal sense of the word, an ecstasy, a standing outside of the odious and all too familiar self.

At this period, it should be noted, Sœur Jeanne had no intimate sense of being a demoniac. Mignon and Barré told her that she was infested by devils and in the ravings induced by their exorcisms she herself would say as much. But she had, as yet, no feeling of being possessed by the seven demons (six after the departure of Asmodeus) who were supposed to be encamped in her tiny body. Here is her own analysis of the situation.

“I did not then believe that one could be possessed without having given consent to, or made a pact with, the devil; in which I was mistaken, for the most innocent and even the most holy can be possessed. I myself was not of the number of the innocent; for thousands upon thousands of times I had given myself over to the devil by committing sin and making continual resistance to grace. . . . The demons insinuated themselves into my mind and inclinations, in such sort that, through the evil dispositions they found in me, they made of me one and the same substance with themselves. . . . Ordinarily the demons acted in conformity with the feelings I had in my soul; this they did so subtly that I myself did not believe that I had any demons within me. I felt insulted when people showed that they suspected me of being possessed, and if anyone talked to me of my possession by the demons, I felt a violent emotion of anger and could not control the expression of my resentment.” This means that the person who could not help dreaming of M. Grandier, the person whom M. Barré was treating as a kind of laboratory animal, was not conscious, outside the exorcisms and during waking hours, of being in any way abnormal. The ecstasies of humiliation and of hallucinatory sensuality were being inflicted upon a mind that still felt itself to be

that of an average sensual woman who had had the bad luck to land in a convent, when she ought to have married and reared a family.

Of the state of mind of M. Barré and the other exorcists we know nothing at firsthand. They left no autobiographies and wrote no letters. Until Father Surin made his entry upon the scene, some two years later, the history of the men involved in this prolonged psychological orgy is completely lacking in personal touches. Fortunately for us, Surin was an introvert with an urge to self-revelation, a born “sharer” whose passion for confession amply made up for the reticences of his colleagues. Writing of these early years spent at Loudun and, later, at Bordeaux, Surin complains of being subjected to almost continual temptations of the flesh. Given the circumstances of an exorcist’s life in a convent of demoniac nuns, the fact is hardly surprising. At the center of a troop of hysterical women, all in a state of chronic sexual excitement, he was the chartered Male, imperious and tyrannical. The abjection in which his charges were so ecstatically wallowing served only to emphasize the triumphant masculinity of the exorcist’s role. Their passivity heightened his sense of being the master. In the midst of uncontrollable frenzies, he was lucid and strong; in the midst of so much animality he was the only human being; in the midst of demons, he was the representative of God. And as the representative of God, he was privileged to do what he liked with these creatures of a lower order — to make them perform tricks, to send them into convulsions, to manhandle them as though they were recalcitrant sows or heifers, to prescribe the enema or the whip. In their more lucid moments the demoniacs would confide to their masters — with what an obscene delight in thus trampling underfoot the conventions which had been an essential part of their personality! — the most unavowable facts about their physiological condition, the most lurid phantasies dredged up from the oozy depths of the subconscious. The kind of relation that could exist between exorcists and supposedly demoniac nuns is well illustrated by the following extract from a contemporary account of the possession of the Ursulines of Auxonne, which began in 1658 and continued until 1661. “The nuns declare, and so do the priests, that by means of exorcism, they (the priests) relieved them of hernias, qu’ils leur ont fait rentrer des boyaux qui leur sortaient de la matrice, that they cured them in an instant of the lacerations of the womb caused by the sorcerers, that they caused the expulsion des bastons couverts de prépuces de sorciers qui leur avoient esté mis dans la matrice, des bouts de chandelles, des bastons couverts de langes et d’aautres instruments d’infamie, comme des boyaux et aautres choses desquelles les magiciens et les sorciers s’étaient servis pour faire sur elles des actions impures. They also declare that the priests cured them of colics, stomach aches and headaches, that they cured hardenings of the breast by confession; that they checked hemorrhages by exorcism, and, by means of holy water taken through the mouth, that they put an end to bloatings of the belly caused by copulation with demons and sorcerers.

“Three of the nuns announce, without beating about the bush, that they have undergone copulation with demons and been deflowered. Five others declare that they have suffered, at the hands of sorcerers, magicians and demons, actions which modesty

forbids them to mention, but which in fact are none other than those described by the first three. The said exorcists bear witness to the truth of all the above statements.” (See *Barbe Buvée et la prétendue possession des Ursulines d’Auxonne*, by Dr. Samuel Garnier, Paris, 1895, p-15.)

What a cozy squalor, what surgical intimacies! The dirt is moral as well as material; the physiological miseries are matched by the spiritual and the intellectual. And over everything, like a richly smelly fog, hangs an oppressive sexuality, thick enough to be cut with a knife and ubiquitous, inescapable. The physicians who, at the order of the Parlement of Burgundy, visited the nuns, found no evidence of possession, but many indications that all or most of them were suffering from a malady to which our fathers gave the name of *furor uterinus*. The symptoms of this disease were “heat accompanied by an inextinguishable appetite for venery” and an inability, on the part of the younger sisters, to “think or talk about anything but sex.”

Such was the atmosphere in a convent of demoniac nuns, and such the persons with whom, in an intimacy that was a compound of the intimacies existing between gynecologist and patient, trainer and animal, adored psychiatrist and loquacious neurotic, the officiating priest passed many hours of every day and night. For the exorcists of Auxonne the temptations were too powerful and there is good reason to believe that they took advantage of their situation to seduce the nuns committed to their charge. No such accusation was brought against the priests and monks who worked on *Sœur Jeanne* and the other hysterics of Loudun. There was, as Surin bore witness, a constant temptation; but it was resisted. The long-drawn debauch took place in the imagination and was never physical.

The expulsion of Asmodeus was so notable a victory and the nuns were by this time so well trained to act their demoniac parts that Mignon and the other enemies of Grandier now felt themselves strong enough to take official action. Accordingly, on the eleventh of October, Pierre Rangier, the parson of Veniers, was sent to the office of the city’s Chief Magistrate, M. de Cerisay. He gave an account of what had happened and invited the Bailli and his Lieutenant, Louis Chauvet, to come and see for themselves. The invitation was accepted and that same afternoon the two magistrates, with their clerk, called at the convent, were received by Barré and Canon Mignon and taken up “to a high-ceilinged room furnished with seven small beds, one of which was occupied by the lay sister and another by the Mother Superior. The latter was surrounded by several Carmelites, by some nuns of the convent, by Mathurin Rousseau, priest and Canon of Sainte-Croix and by the surgeon, Mannoury.” At the sight of the Bailli and his Lieutenant, the Prioress (in the words of the minutes drawn up by the Magistrate’s clerk) “began to make very violent movements, with certain noises like the grunts of a small pig, then buried herself under the bedclothes, ground her teeth and made various other contortions such as might be made by a person out of her wits. At her right was a Carmelite and on her left hand the said Mignon, who stuck two fingers, namely the thumb and the forefinger, in the said Mother Superior’s mouth and performed exorcisms and conjurations in our presence.”

In the course of these exorcisms and conjurations it transpired that Soeur Jeanne had been possessed through the material agency of two diabolic “pacts” — one consisting of three hawthorn prickles, the other of a bunch of roses which she had found on the stairs and stuck in her belt, “whereupon she was attacked by a great trembling in her right arm and was seized by love for Grandier all the time of her orisons, being unable to keep her mind on anything except the representation of Grandier’s person which had been inwardly impressed upon her.”

Asked in Latin, “Who sent these flowers?” the Prioress, “after having delayed and hesitated, answered as though under constraint, Urbanus. Thereupon the said Mignon said, *Dic qualitatem*. She said, *Sacerdos*. He said, *Cujus ecclesiae?* and the said nun replied, *Santi Petri*, which last words she pronounced rather badly.”

When the exorcism was over, Mignon took the Bailli aside and, in the presence of Canon Rousseau and M. Chauvet, remarked that the present case seemed to bear a striking resemblance to that of Louis Gaufridi, the Provençal priest who, twenty years earlier, had been burned alive for bewitching and debauching certain Ursulines of Marseilles.

With the mention of Gaufridi, the cat was out of the bag. The strategy of the new campaign against the parson stood clearly revealed. He was to be accused of sorcery and magic, brought to trial and, if acquitted, ruined in reputation, if condemned, sent to the stake.

Chapter Five

AND SO GRANDIER was accused of sorcery and the Ursulines were possessed by devils. We read these statements and smile; but before the smile can expand into a grin or explode in a guffaw, let us try to discover what precisely was the meaning attached to these words during the first half of the seventeenth century. And since, at this period, sorcery was everywhere a crime, let us begin with the legal aspects of the problem.

Sir Edward Coke, the greatest English lawyer of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean age, defined a witch as “a person who hath conference with the Devil, to consult with him or to do some act.” Under the Statute of 1563 witchcraft was punished by death only when it could be proved that the witch had made an attempt on someone’s life. But in the first year of James’s reign this statute was replaced by a new and harsher law. After 1603 the capital offense was no longer murder by supernatural means, but the simple fact of being proved a witch. The act performed by the accused might be harmless, as in the case of divination, or even beneficent, as in the case of healing by means of spells and charms. If there were proof that it had been performed through “conference with the Devil,” or by the intrinsically diabolical methods of magic, the act was criminal and the performer of it was to be condemned to death.

This was an English and a Protestant ruling; but it was fully in accord with Canon Law and Catholic practice. Kramer and Sprenger, the learned Dominican authors of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (for almost two centuries the textbook and vade mecum of all witch-hunters, Lutheran and Calvinist no less than Catholic) cite many authorities to prove that the proper penalty for witchcraft, fortune-telling, the practice of any kind of magic art, is death. "For witchcraft is high treason against God's majesty. And so they (the accused) are to be put to the torture to make them confess. Any person, whatever his rank or position, upon such an accusation may be put to the torture. And he who is found guilty, even if he confess his crime, let him be racked, let him suffer all other tortures prescribed by law in order that he may be punished in proportion to his offence."

Behind these laws stood an immemorial tradition of demonic intervention in human affairs and, more specifically, the revealed truths that the devil is the Prince of this World and the sworn enemy of God and God's children. Sometimes the devil works on his own account; sometimes he does his mischiefs through the instrumentality of human beings. "And if it be asked whether the Devil is more apt to injure men and creatures by himself than through a witch, it can be said that there is no comparison between the two cases. For he is infinitely more apt to do harm through the agency of witches. First, because he thus gives greater offence to God by usurping to himself a creature dedicated to Him. Secondly, because, when God is the more offended, He allows him the more power of injuring men. And thirdly, for his own gain, which he places in the perdition of souls."

In medieval and early modern Christendom the situation of sorcerers and their clients was almost precisely analogous to that of Jews under Hitler, capitalists under Stalin, Communists and fellow travelers in the United States. They were regarded as the agents of a Foreign Power, unpatriotic at the best and, at the worst, traitors, heretics, enemies of the people. Death was the penalty meted out to these metaphysical Quislings of the past and, in most parts of the contemporary world, death is the penalty which awaits the political and secular devil-worshippers known here as Reds, there as Reactionaries. In the briefly liberal nineteenth century men like Michelet found it difficult not merely to forgive, but even to understand the savagery with which sorcerers had once been treated. Too hard on the past, they were at the same time too complacent about their present and far too optimistic in regard to the future — to us! They were rationalists who fondly imagined that the decay of traditional religion would put an end to such deviltries as the persecution of heretics, the torture and burning of witches. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*. But looking back and up, from our vantage point on the descending road of modern history, we now see that all the evils of religion can flourish without any belief in the supernatural, that convinced materialists are ready to worship their own jerry-built creations as though they were the Absolute, and that self-styled humanists will persecute their adversaries with all the zeal of Inquisitors exterminating the devotees of a personal and transcendent Satan. Such behavior-patterns antedate and outlive the beliefs which, at any given moment,

seem to motivate them. Few people now believe in the Devil; but very many enjoy behaving as their ancestors behaved when the Fiend was a reality as unquestionable as his Opposite Number. In order to justify their behavior, they turn their theories into dogmas, their bylaws into First Principles, their political bosses into Gods and all those who disagree with them into incarnate devils. This idolatrous transformation of the relative into the Absolute and the all too human into the Divine, makes it possible for them to indulge their ugliest passions with a clear conscience and in the certainty that they are working for the Highest Good. And when the current beliefs come, in their turn, to look silly, a new set will be invented, so that the immemorial madness may continue to wear its customary mask of legality, idealism and true religion.

In principle, as we have seen, the law relating to witchcraft was exceedingly simple. Anyone who deliberately had dealings with the devil was guilty of a capital crime. To describe how this law was administered in practice would require much more space than can here be given. Suffice it to say that, while some judges were manifestly prejudiced, many did their best to give the accused a fair trial. But even a fair trial was, by our present Western standards, a monstrous caricature of justice. “The laws,” we read in *Malleus Maleficarum*, “allow that any witness whatever is to be admitted in evidence against them.” And not only were all and sundry, including children, and the mortal enemies of the accused, admitted as witnesses; all kinds of evidence were also admitted — gossip, hearsay, inferences, remembered dreams, statements made by demoniacs. Always in order, torture was frequently (though by no means invariably) employed to extort confessions. And along with torture went false promises in regard to the final sentence. In the *Malleus* this matter of false promises is discussed with all the authors’ customary acumen and thoroughness. There are three possible alternatives. If he chooses the first, the judge may promise the witch her life (on condition, of course, that she reveal the names of other witches) and may intend to keep the promise. The only deception he practices is to let it be understood by the accused that the death penalty is to be commuted to some mild punishment, such as exile, whereas in petto he has decided to condemn her to perpetual solitary confinement on bread and water.

A second alternative is preferred by those who think that, “after she has been consigned to prison in this way, the promise to spare her life should be kept for a time, but that after a certain period she should be burned.”

“A third opinion is that the judge may safely promise the accused her life, but in such a way that he should afterward disclaim the duty of passing sentence upon her, deputing another judge in his place.”

(How richly significant is that little word, “safely”! Systematic lying is something which puts the liar’s soul into considerable jeopardy. Ergo, if you find it expedient to lie, be sure to make such mental reservations as will cause you to seem to yourself — if not to others, or to a God who is most certainly not mocked — a worthy candidate for paradise.)

To contemporary Western eyes, the most absurd, as well as the most iniquitous feature of a medieval or early-modern witch trial was the fact that almost any of the

odd and untoward events of daily life might legitimately be treated as the effects of diabolic intervention brought about by the magic arts of a sorcerer. Here, for example, is a part of the evidence on which one of the two witches tried in 1664, at Bury St. Edmunds, before the future Lord Chief Justice, Sir Matthew Hale, was condemned to be hanged. In the course of a quarrel, the accused had cursed and threatened one of her neighbors. After this, the man testified, "so soon as his sows pigged, the pigs would leap and caper, and immediately fall down dead." Nor was this all. A little later he was "vexed with a number of lice of extraordinary bigness." Against such supernatural vermin, the current methods of disinfection were unavailing and the witness had no alternative but to consign two of his best suits to the flames. Sir Matthew Hale was a just judge, a lover of moderation, a man of wide learning, scientific as well as literary and legal. That he should have taken this kind of evidence seriously seems now almost incredible. But the fact remains that he did take it seriously. The reason is to be sought, presumably, in the fact that, as well as all the rest, Hale was exceedingly pious. But in a fundamentalist age piety involved belief in a personal devil and the duty to extirpate the witches who were his servants. Moreover, granted the truth of everything contained in the Judeo-Christian tradition, there was an antecedent probability that, if preceded by an old woman's curse, the death of piglets and the multiplication of lice were supernatural events, due to the intervention of Satan on behalf of one of his votaries.

Into the Biblical lore of devils and witches had been incorporated a number of popular superstitions which came at last to be treated with the same veneration as was accorded to revealed truths of Scripture. For example, until late in the seventeenth century, all inquisitors and most civil magistrates accepted without question the validity of what may be called the physical tests of witchcraft. Did the body of the accused exhibit unusual marks? Could you find in it any spots insensitive to the prick of a needle? Were there, above all, any of those "little teats," or supernumerary nipples, at which some familiar — toad or cat — might suck and fatten? If so, your suspect was undoubtedly a witch; for tradition affirmed that these were the brands and seals with which the devil marked his own. (Since nine per cent of all males and a little under five per cent of all females are born with supernumerary nipples, there was never any shortage of predestined victims. Nature punctually did her part; the judges, with their unexamined postulates and first principles, did the rest.)

Of the other popular superstitions which had crystallized into axioms there are three which, because of the enormous miseries entailed by their general acceptance, deserve at least a brief mention. These are the beliefs that, by invoking the devil's aid, witches can cause tempests, diseases and sexual impotence. In the *Malleus Kramer* and *Sprenger* treat these notions as self-evident truths, established not merely by common sense but also by the authority of the greatest Doctors. "St. Thomas, in his commentary on Job, says as follows: It must be confessed that, with God's permission, the devils can disturb the air, raise up winds and make the fire fall from heaven. For, although in the matter of taking various shapes, corporeal nature is not at the command of any

Angel, either good or bad, but only at that of God the Creator, yet, in the matter of local motion, corporeal nature has to obey the spiritual nature. . . . But winds and rain and other similar disturbances of the air can be caused by the mere movement of vapours released from the earth or the water; therefore the natural power of devils is sufficient to cause such things. So says St. Thomas.”

As for diseases, “there is no infirmity, not even leprosy or epilepsy, which cannot be caused by witches, with God’s permission. And this is proved by the fact that no sort of infirmity is excluded by the Doctors.”

The authority of the Doctors is confirmed by our authors’ personal observations. “For we have often found that certain people have been visited with epilepsy or the falling sickness by means of eggs which have been buried with dead bodies, especially the dead bodies of witches . . . particularly when these eggs have been given to a person either in food or drink.”

In regard to impotence, our authors draw a sharp distinction between the natural variety and the supernatural. Natural impotence is the incapacity to have sexual relations with any member of the opposite sex. Supernatural impotence, caused by magic spells and devils, is incapacity in relation to one person only (especially a wife or husband), potency being unimpaired in regard to all other members of the opposite sex. It should be noted, say the authors, that God permits more bewitchments to be performed in relation to the generative powers than in any other department of human life, the reason being that, since the Fall, there exists in everything that pertains to sex “a greater corruption than in the case of other human actions.”

Devastating storms are not uncommon, selective impotence affects most men at some time or another, and disease is never absent. In a world where law, theology and popular superstition were all agreed in holding witches responsible for these everyday occurrences, the occasions for spying and the opportunities for delation and persecution were innumerable. At the height of the sixteenth-century witch hunts, social life in certain parts of Germany must have been very like social life under the Nazis, or in a country newly subjected to Communist domination.

Under torture, or moved by a sense of duty or some hysterical compulsion, a man would denounce his wife, a woman her best friends, a child its parents, a servant his master. And these were not the only evils to be met with in a devil-haunted society. On many individuals the incessant suggestions of bewitchment, the daily warnings against the devil had a disastrous effect. Some of the more timorous were driven out of their minds, some actually killed by the ever-present fear. On the ambitious and the resentful this harping on supernatural dangers had quite another effect. In order to win the prizes they so frantically coveted, men like Bothwell, women like Mme. de Montespan were ready to exploit the resources of black magic to their criminal limit. And if one felt oneself oppressed and frustrated, if one bore a grudge against society at large and one’s neighbors in particular, what more natural than that one should appeal to those who, according to St. Thomas and the rest, were capable of doing such enormous mischiefs? By paying so much attention to the devil and by treating

witchcraft as the most heinous of crimes, the theologians and the inquisitors actually spread the beliefs and fostered the practices which they were trying so hard to repress. By the beginning of the eighteenth century witchcraft had ceased to be a serious social problem. It died out, among other reasons, because almost nobody now bothered to repress it. For the less it was persecuted, the less it was propagandized. Attention had shifted from the supernatural to the natural. From about 1700 to the present day all persecutions in the West have been secular and, one might say, humanistic. For us, Radical Evil has ceased to be something metaphysical and has become political or economic. And that Radical Evil now incarnates itself, not in sorcerers and magicians (for we like to think of ourselves as positivists), but in the representatives of some hated class or nation. The springs of action and the rationalizations have undergone a certain change; but the hatreds motivated and the ferocities justified are all too familiar.

The Church, as we have seen, taught that witchcraft was a terrible and ubiquitous reality, and with appropriate ruthlessness the Law acted upon that teaching. To what extent was Public Opinion in accord with the official view of the matter? The sentiments of the unlettered and inarticulate majority can only be inferred from their recorded actions and from the comments of the educated.

In its chapter devoted to the bewitchment of animals, the *Malleus* throws a curious sidelight on that medieval village life, for which the sentimentalists, whose dislike of the present blinds them to the no less enormous horrors of the past, still nostalgically yearn. "There is not," we read, "even the smallest farm where women do not injure each other's cows by drying up their milk (through the use of spells), and very often killing them." Four generations later we find, in the writings of two English divines, George Gifford and Samuel Harsnett, essentially similar accounts of rustic life in a devil-haunted society. "Some woman," writes Gifford, "doth fall out bitterly with her neighbour; there followeth some great hurt. . . . There is a suspicion conceived. Within few years after she is in some jar with another. He is also plagued. This is noted of all. Great fame is spread of the matter. Mother W. is a witch. . . . Well, Mother W. doth begin to be very odious and terrible unto many, her neighbours dare say nothing but yet in their hearts they wish she were hanged. Shortly after another falls sick and doth pine. The neighbours come to visit him. 'Well, neighbour,' saith one, 'do you not suspect some naughty dealing? Did you never anger Mother W.?' 'Truly, neighbour,' saith he, 'I have not liked the woman a long time. I cannot tell how I should displease her, except it were this other day, my wife prayed her, and so did I, that she would keep her hens out of my garden. . . . I think verily she hath bewitched me.' Everybody saith now that Mother W. is a witch indeed. . . . It is out of all doubt, for there were which saw a weasel run from her houseward into his yard even a little before he fell sick. The sick man dieth and taketh it upon his death that he is bewitched. Then is Mother W. apprehended and sent to prison; she is arraigned and condemned and, being at the gallows, taketh it upon her death that she is not guilty." And here is what Harsnett writes in his Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures. "Why then, ho, beware, look

about you, my neighbours! If any of you have a sheep sick of the giddies, or an hog of the mumps, or an horse of the staggers, or a knavish boy of the school, or an idle girl of the wheel, or a young drab of the sullens, and hath not fat enough for her porridge, nor her father and mother butter enough for their bread . . . and then withal old Mother Nobs hath called her by chance ‘idle young hussy,’ or bid the devil scratch her, then no doubt but Mother Nobs is the witch.” These pictures of rustic communities solidly based on superstition, fear and mutual malice are curiously depressing — all the more so because they are so modern, so topical and up-to-date. They remind us all too forcibly of certain pages in *La Vingt-Cinquième Heure* and 1984 — pages in which the Rumanian describes the nightmare events of the present and the immediate past, the Englishman foretells the yet more diabolic future.

The foregoing accounts by educated men of inarticulate Public Opinion are sufficiently illuminating. But deeds speak even louder than words, and a society that periodically lynches its witches proclaims, most emphatically, its faith in magic and its fear of the devil. Here is an example drawn from French history and almost contemporary with the events related in this book. In the summer of 1644, after a very violent and destructive hailstorm, the inhabitants of several villages near Beaune banded together in order to take vengeance on the incarnate fiends who had thus wantonly ruined their crops. Under the leadership of a seventeen-year-old boy, who claimed to have an infallible nose for witches, they ducked a number of women and then beat them to death. Other suspects were burned with red-hot shovels, pushed into brick kilns or thrown headlong from high places. To put an end to this panic reign of terror, the Parlement of Dijon had to send two special commissioners at the head of a strong force of police.

We see then that inarticulate Public Opinion was in full agreement with the theologians and the lawyers. Among the educated, however, there was no such unanimity of approval. Kramer and Sprenger write with indignation of those — and at the end of the fifteenth century they were already numerous — who doubted the reality of witchcraft. They point out that all the theologians and canonists are at one in condemning the error of “those who say that there is no witchcraft in the world, but only in the imagination of men who, through their ignorance of hidden causes, which no man yet understands, ascribe certain natural effects to witchcraft, as though they were effected not by hidden causes, but by devils working either by themselves or in conjunction with witches. And though all the other Doctors condemn this error as a pure falsehood, St. Thomas impugns it more vigorously and stigmatizes it as actual heresy, saying that this error proceeds from the root of infidelity.”

This theoretical conclusion raises a practical problem. The question arises whether people who maintain that witches do not exist are to be regarded as notorious heretics, or whether they are to be regarded as gravely suspect of holding heretical opinions. It seems that the first opinion is the correct one. But though all persons “convicted of such evil doctrine” have deserved excommunication, with all the penalties thereto attached, “we must take into consideration the very great number of persons who, owing to their ignorance, will surely be found guilty of this error. And since the error

is very common, the rigor of strict justice may be tempered with mercy.” On the other hand, “let no man think he may escape by pleading ignorance. For those who have gone astray through ignorance of this kind may be found to have sinned very gravely.”

In a word, the official attitude of the Church was such that, though disbelief in witchcraft was undoubtedly a heresy, the disbeliever was in no immediate danger of punishment. Nevertheless, he remained gravely suspect and, if he persisted in his false doctrine after being apprised of the Catholic truth, might get into serious trouble. Hence the caution displayed by Montaigne in the eleventh chapter of his Third Book. “The witches of my neighborhood are in danger of their lives when anyone brings to bear fresh witness to the reality of their visions. To reconcile the examples which Holy Writ gives us of such things — examples most certain and irrefutable — and to bring them into comparison with those that happen in modern times, since we can see neither the causes of them nor the means by which they took place, needs a greater ingenuity than ours.” It may be that God alone can tell what is a miracle and what is not. God must be believed; but do we have to believe a mere man, “one of ourselves, who is amazed at his own telling — and he must necessarily be amazed, if he is not out of his wits.” And Montaigne concludes with one of those golden sentences which deserve to be inscribed over the altar of every church, above the bench of every magistrate, on the walls of every lecture hall, every senate and parliament, every government office and council chamber. “After all,” (write the words in neon, write in letters as tall as a man!) “after all, it is rating one’s conjectures at a very high price to roast a man alive on the strength of them.”

Half a century later Selden showed himself less cautious, but also less humane. “The law against witches does not prove that there be any; but it punishes the malice of those people that use such means to take away men’s lives. If one should profess that by turning his hat thrice, and crying ‘Buzz,’ he could take away a man’s life, though in truth he could do no such thing, yet this were a just law made by the State that whosoever should turn his hat thrice and cry ‘Buzz,’ with an intention to take away a man’s life, shall be put to death.” Selden was enough of a skeptic to disapprove the elevation of conjectures to the rank of dogmas; but at the same time he was lawyer enough to think that roasting a man alive for thinking he was a witch might be right and proper. Montaigne had also been bred to the law; but his mind had obstinately refused to take the legalistic stain. When he thought of witches, he found himself considering, not their punishable malice, but their perhaps not incurable malady. “In all conscience,” he writes, “I should rather have prescribed them hellebore [a drug supposed to be effective in purging melancholy and therefore in curing madness] than hemlock.”

The first systematic assaults against the practice of witch-hunting and the theory of diabolic intervention came from the German physician, Johann Weier, in 1563, and from Reginald Scot, the Kentish squire, who published his *Discovery of Witchcraft* in 1584. The nonconformist Gifford and the Anglican Harsnett shared Scot’s skepticism

in regard to contemporary instances of witchcraft, but could not go so far as he did in questioning the Biblical references to possession, magic and pacts with the devil.

Over against the skeptics we find a notable array of believers. First in eminence as in time stands the great Jean Bodin who tells us that he wrote his *Démonomanie des Sorciers*, among other reasons, “to serve as an answer to those who endeavor, by their books, as far as possible to excuse sorcerers; insomuch as it seems as if they were influenced by the Devil himself to publish these fine books.” Such skeptics, Bodin thinks, deserve to be sent to the stake along with the witches whom their doubts serve to protect and justify.

In his *Demonologie* James I took up the same position. The rationalistic Weier, he says, is an apologist for sorcerers, and by his book he “bewrays himself to have been one of that profession.”

Of James I’s eminent contemporaries, Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Bacon seem to have been on the side of the believers. Later in the century we find the case for witchcraft being argued in England by philosophers like Henry More and Cudworth, by learned physicians and scholars such as Sir Thomas Browne and Glanvil, and by lawyers of the caliber of Sir Matthew Hale and Sir George Mackenzie.

In seventeenth-century France all the theologians accepted the reality of witchcraft; but not all of the clergy were practicing witch-hunters. To many the whole business seemed extremely indecorous and a menace to good order and public tranquility. They deplored the zeal of their more fanatical colleagues and did their best to restrain it. A similar situation existed among the lawyers. Some of them were only too happy to burn a woman “pour avoir, en pissant dans un trou, composé une nuée de grêle qui ravagea le territoire de son village” (this particular burning took place at Dôle, in 1610); but there were others, the moderates, who believed, no doubt, in the theory of witches, but were unwilling, in practice, to proceed against them.

But under an absolute monarchy the decisive opinion is that of the King. Louis XIII was much concerned with the devil, but his son was not. In 1672 Louis XIV gave orders that all the persons recently condemned for witchcraft by the Parlement of Rouen should have their sentences commuted to banishment. The Parlement protested; but their arguments, the theological no less than the legal, left the Monarch unmoved. It was his good pleasure that these witches should not be burned, and that was sufficient, that was that.

When considering the events which took place at Loudun we must clearly distinguish between the alleged possession of the nuns and the alleged cause of that possession — the magic arts employed by Grandier. In what follows I shall deal in the main with the question of Grandier’s guilt, leaving the problem of possession to be considered in a later chapter.

Father Tranquille, a member of one of the earlier teams of exorcists, published in 1634 a *True Relation of the Just Proceedings Observed in the Matter of the Possession of the Ursulines of Loudun and in the Trial of Urbain Grandier*. The title is deceptive; for the pamphlet is not a true relation of anything, but merely a polemic, a rhetorical

defense of the exorcists and the judges against what was quite evidently a general skepticism and an almost universal disapprobation. In 1634, it is clear, most educated people were doubtful of the reality of the nuns' possession, were convinced of Grandier's innocence and were shocked and disgusted by the iniquitous conduct of his trial. Father Tranquille rushed into print in the hope that a little pulpit eloquence would bring his readers to a more proper frame of mind. His efforts were not successful. True, the King and Queen were firm believers; but their courtiers, almost to a man, were not. Of the persons of quality who came to see the exorcisms, very few believed in the genuineness of the possession — and, of course, if the possession were not real, then Grandier could not be guilty. Most of the visiting physicians came away with the conviction that the phenomena they had seen were all too natural. Ménage, Théophraste Renaudot, Ismaël Boulliau — all the men of letters, who wrote about Grandier after his death, stoutly maintained his innocence.

On the side of the believers were the great masses of illiterate Catholics. (The illiterate Protestants, it goes without saying, were in this case unanimously skeptical.) That all the exorcists believed in Grandier's guilt and the genuineness of the possession seems certain. They believed even when, like Mignon, they had helped to fake the evidence which sent Grandier to the stake. (The history of spiritualism makes it very clear that fraud, especially pious fraud, is perfectly compatible with faith.) Of the opinions of the mass of the clergy we know next to nothing. As professional exorcists, the members of the religious orders were presumably on the side of Mignon, Barré and the rest. But what of the secular priests? Did they care to believe, and to preach, that one of their number had sold his soul to the devil and put a spell on seventeen Ursulines?

We know at least that among the higher clergy opinion was sharply divided. The Archbishop of Bordeaux was convinced that Grandier was innocent and that the nuns were suffering from a combination of Canon Mignon and *furor uterinus*. The Bishop of Poitiers, on the other hand, was convinced that the nuns were really possessed and that Grandier was a sorcerer. And what of the supreme ecclesiastical authority, what of the Cardinal-Duke? In one context, as we shall see, Richelieu was completely skeptical; in another he exhibited the faith of a charcoal burner. The thing was obviously a hoax; and yet, in a Pickwickian sense, and sometimes even in a non-Pickwickian sense, it was all perfectly true.

Magic, whether white or black, was the art and science of compassing natural ends by supernatural (though not divine) means. All witches made use of magic and the powers of more or less evil spirits; but some of them were also adherents of what in Italy was called *la vecchia religione*.

"In order to clear the ground," writes Miss Margaret Murray in the introduction of her valuable study, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, "I make a sharp distinction between Operative Witchcraft and Ritual Witchcraft. Under Operative Witchcraft I class all charms and spells, whether used by a professed witch or a professed Christian, whether intended for good or for evil, for killing or for curing. Such charms and spells

are common to every nation and country, and are practised by the priests and people of every religion. They are part of the common heritage of the human race. . . . Ritual Witchcraft — or, as I propose to call it, the Dianic cult — embraces the religious beliefs and ritual of the people known in late medieval times as ‘Witches.’ The evidence proves that, underlying the Christian religion was a cult practised by many classes of the community, chiefly, however, by the more ignorant or those in the less thickly inhabited parts of the country. It can be traced back to pre-Christian times and appears to be the ancient religion of Western Europe.”

In that year of grace, sixteen hundred and thirty-two, more than a thousand years had gone by since Western Europe was “converted to Christianity”; and yet the ancient fertility religion, considerably corrupted by the fact of being chronically “agin the government,” was still alive, still boasted its confessors and heroic martyrs, still had an ecclesiastical organization — identical, according to Cotton Mather, to that of his own Congregational Church. The fact of the old faith’s survival seems somewhat less astonishing, when we remember that, after four centuries of missionary effort, the Indians of Guatemala are not perceptibly more Catholic today than they were in the first generation after the coming of Alvarado. In another seven or eight hundred years the religious situation in Central America may have come, perhaps, to resemble that which prevailed in seventeenth-century Europe, where a majority of Christians bitterly persecuted a minority attached to the older faith.

(In some districts the members of the Dianic cult and their fellow travelers may actually have constituted a majority of the population. Remy, Boguet and de Lancre have left accounts respectively of Lorraine, the Jura and the Basque country, as they found them at the turn of the seventeenth century. From their books it is clear that in these outlying regions, most people were, to some extent at least, of the old religion. Hedging their bets, they worshiped God by day and the devil at night. Among the Basques many priests used to celebrate both kinds of Mass, the black as well as the white. Lancre burned three of these eccentric clergymen, lost five who escaped from the condemned cell, and vehemently suspected a host of others.)

The central ceremony of Ritual Witchcraft was the so-called “Sabbath” — a word of unknown origin, having no relation to its Hebrew homonym. Sabbaths were celebrated four times a year — on Candlemass Day, February 2nd, on Rood Mass Day, May 1st, on Lammas Day, August 1st, and on the eve of All Hallows, October 31st. These were great festivals, often attended by hundreds of devotees, who came from considerable distances. Between Sabbaths there were weekly “Esbats” for small congregations in the villages where the ancient religion was still practiced. At all high Sabbaths the devil himself was invariably present, in the person of some man who had inherited, or otherwise acquired, the honor of being the incarnation of the two-faced god of the Dianic cult. The worshipers paid homage to the god by kissing his reverse face — a mask worn, beneath an animal’s tail, on the devil’s backside. There was then, for some at least of the female devotees, a ritual copulation with the god, who was equipped for this purpose with an artificial phallus of horn or metal. This ceremony was followed by

a picnic (for the Sabbaths were celebrated out of doors, near sacred trees or stones), by dancing and finally by a promiscuous sexual orgy that had, no doubt, originally been a magical operation for increasing the fertility of the animals on which primitive hunters and herdsmen depend for their livelihood. The prevailing atmosphere at the Sabbaths was one of good fellowship and mindless, animal joy. When captured and brought to trial, many of those who had taken part in the Sabbath resolutely refused, even under torture, even at the stake, to abjure the religion which had brought them so much happiness.

In the eyes of the Church and of the civil magistrates membership in the devil's party was an aggravation of the crime of witchcraft. A witch who had attended the Sabbath was worse than a witch who had strictly confined herself to private practice. To attend the Sabbath was to profess openly that one preferred the Dianic cult to Christianity. Moreover, the witches' organization was a secret society which might be used by ambitious leaders for political purposes. That Bothwell had thus made use of the Scottish covens seems almost certain. Still more certain is the fact that Elizabeth and her Privy Council were convinced, rightly or wrongly, that foreign and native Catholics were employing witches and magicians to take the Queen's life. In France, according to Bodin, the sorcerers constituted a kind of Mafia, with members in every class of society and branches in every town and village.

That his crime might seem more abominable, Grandier was accused at his trial not merely of operative witchcraft, but also of participation in the rites of the Sabbath, of membership in the diabolic church.

The spectacle thus evoked of a pupil of the Jesuits solemnly renouncing his baptism, of a priest hurrying from the altar to do homage to the devil, of a grave and learned ecclesiastic dancing jigs with conjurors and tumbling in the hay with an assortment of witches, goats and incubi, was one well calculated to appall the pious, to tickle the groundlings and to bring joy to the Protestants.

Chapter Six

DE CERISAY'S PRELIMINARY investigations had left him convinced that there was no genuine possession — only a sickness, improved by some little fraud on the part of the nuns, by a great deal of malice on the part of Canon Mignon and by the superstition, fanaticism and professional self-interest of the other ecclesiastics involved in the affair. There could be no cure, it was obvious, until the exorcisms had been stopped. But when he tried to put an end to these suggestions, which were systematically driving the nuns out of their wits, Mignon and Barré triumphantly produced a written order from the Bishop, charging them to go on exorcising the Ursulines until further notice. Unwilling to risk a scandal, de Cerisay gave his permission for the exorcisms to continue, but insisted on being present during the performance. On one of these occasions, it is recorded, there was a terrifying noise in the chimney and a cat

suddenly appeared in the fireplace. The animal was pursued, caught, sprinkled with holy water, signed with the cross and adjured in Latin to depart. After which it was discovered that this devil in disguise was the nuns' pet Tom, who had been out on the tiles and was taking a short cut home. The laughter was loud and Rabelaisian.

Next day Mignon and Barré had the impudence to shut the convent door in de Cerisay's face. With his fellow magistrates he was kept waiting outside in the autumnal weather, while, contrary to his orders, the two priests exorcised their victims without official witnesses. Returning to his chambers, the indignant judge dictated a letter to the exorcists. Their actions, he declared, were such as to create "a vehement suspicion of trickery and suggestion." Moreover, "the Superior of the convent having publicly accused and defamed Grandier, by saying that he had a compact with the devils, nothing thereafter should have been done in secret; on the contrary, everything must now be done in the face of justice and in our presence." Alarmed by so much firmness, the exorcists apologized and reported that the nuns had calmed down and that consequently further exorcisms would, for the time being, be unnecessary.

Meanwhile Grandier had ridden to Poitiers to appeal to the Bishop. But when he called, M. de la Rochepozay was indisposed and could only send a message by his chaplain to the effect that "M. Grandier should sue before the royal judges and that he, the Bishop, would be most happy if he could obtain justice in this affair."

The parson returned to Loudun and at once applied to the Bailli for a restraining order against Mignon and his accomplices. De Cerisay promptly issued an injunction forbidding anyone, of whatever rank or quality, to harm or traduce the said Curé of Saint-Pierre. At the same time he expressly ordered Mignon to do no more exorcising. The Canon retorted that he was answerable only to his ecclesiastical superiors and that he did not recognize the Bailli's authority in a matter which, since it involved the devil, was wholly spiritual.

In the interval Barré had returned to his parishioners at Chinon. There were no more public exorcisms. But every day Canon Mignon spent long hours with his penitents, reading them chapters from Father Michaelis's best-selling report of the Gauffridy case, assuring them that Grandier was as great a magician as his Provençal colleague and that they too had been bewitched. By this time the behavior of the good sisters had become so eccentric that the parents of their pupils took fright; soon the boarders were all withdrawn and such few day pupils as still ventured into the convent brought back the most disquieting reports. Halfway through their arithmetic lesson, Sister Claire of St. John had started to laugh uncontrollably, as though someone were tickling her. In the refectory Sister Martha had had a fight with Sister Louise of Jesus. What screaming! And the bad language!

Late in November, Barré was called back from Chinon and, under his influence, everybody's symptoms at once became much worse. The convent was now a madhouse. Mannoury, the surgeon, and Adam, the apothecary, took alarm and summoned the leading physicians of the town in consultation. They came and, after examining the nuns, made a written report to the Bailli. Their conclusions were as follows: "the nuns

are certainly transported, but we do not consider that this has happened through the workings of demons and spirits. . . . Their alleged possession seems to us more illusory than real." To all but the exorcists and Grandier's enemies, this report seemed conclusive. Grandier made another appeal to de Cerisay and de Cerisay renewed his efforts to put a stop to the exorcisms. Once again Mignon and Barré defied him, and once again he shrank from the scandal that would follow the use of physical force against priests. Instead, he wrote a letter to the Bishop, appealing to his lordship to put a stop to an affair which was "the sorriest piece of knavery invented for many ages past." Grandier, he went on, had never seen the nuns or had anything to do with them; "and if he had devils at his beck and call, he would have used them to avenge the violences and insults to which he has been subjected."

To this letter M. de la Rochepozay vouchsafed no reply. Grandier had offended him by appealing from his decision. Therefore anything that might be done to harm the parson was entirely right, proper and just.

De Cerisay now wrote a second letter, this time to the head of the Officiality. More fully than to the Bishop he entered into the details of the grotesque and horrible farce which was being played at Loudun. "M. Mignon is already saying that M. Barré is a saint, and they are reciprocally canonizing one another without waiting for the judgment of their superiors." Barré corrects the devil when he goes astray in the labyrinth of grammar, and challenges unbelievers "to do as he does and put a finger in the demoniac's mouth. Father Rousseau, a Cordelier, was caught and bitten so hard that he was constrained to pull the nun's nose with his other hand, to make her let go, crying, 'Au diable, au diable!' much louder than our kitchen maids cry, 'Au chat, au chat!' when puss has run off with something. After which the question was propounded why the fiend had bitten a consecrated finger, and it was concluded that the Bishop must have been stingy with the holy oils, and that the unction did not get as far as the finger." Several fledgling priests tried their hands at exorcism, among them a brother of Philippe Trincant. But this young man made so many mistakes in Latin — *hoste* as the vocative of *hostis*, and *da gloria Deo* — that the educated public could not keep a straight face and he had to be withdrawn. Moreover, adds de Cerisay, "even at the height of her convulsions, the nun on whom he was working would not permit M. Trincant to put his fingers in her mouth (for he is somewhat dirty) and insistently asked for another priest." In spite of all which "the good father Guardian of the Capuchins is astonished at the hardness of heart of the people of Loudun and amazed by their reluctance to believe. At Tours, he assures us, he would have got them to swallow such a miracle as easily as butter. He and certain others have declared that those who do not believe are atheists and already damned."

This letter also remained unanswered, and the horrible farce was allowed to go on, day after day, until the middle of December, when M. de Sourdis came most opportunely to stay at his abbey, Saint-Jouin-des-Marnes. Unofficially by Grandier and officially by de Cerisay the Archbishop was informed of what was happening and asked to intervene. M. de Sourdis immediately sent his personal physician to look into

the matter. Knowing that the doctor was a man who would tolerate no nonsense and that his master, the Metropolitan, was frankly skeptical, the nuns took fright and during the whole time of the investigation behaved themselves like so many lambs. There was no sign of possession. The doctor made his report to this effect and in the last days of December, 1632, the Archbishop published an ordinance. Henceforward Mignon was not to exorcise at all, and Barré might do so only in conjunction with two exorcists appointed by the Metropolitan, a Jesuit from Poitiers and an Oratorian from Tours. No one else might take part in the exorcisms.

The prohibition was almost unnecessary; for during the months that followed there were no devils to exorcise. No longer stimulated by priestly suggestions, the frenzies of the nuns gave place to a dismal, morning-after condition, in which mental confusion was mingled with shame, remorse and the conviction of enormous sin. For what if the Archbishop were right? What if there never had been any devils? Then all these monstrous things they had done and said could be imputed to them as crimes. Possessed, they were guiltless. Unpossessed, they would have to answer, at the Last Judgment, for blasphemy and unchastity, for lies and malice. At their feet hell yawned appallingly. And meanwhile, to make matters worse, there was no money and everybody had turned against them. Everybody — the parents of their pupils, the pious ladies of the town, the crowds of sightseers, and even their own relatives. Yes, even their own relatives; for now that they had ceased to be possessed, now that, in the judgment of the Archbishop, they were either impostors or the victims of melancholy and enforced continence, they had become disgraces to their families, and as such were repudiated, disavowed, their allowances cut off. Meat and butter disappeared from the refectory table, servants from the kitchen. The nuns were forced to do their own housework; and when the housework was done, they had to earn their bread by taking in plain sewing, by spinning wool for rapacious cloth merchants who took advantage of their needs and their misfortunes by paying them even less than the current rate for sweated labor. Hungry, oppressed by incessant toil, haunted by metaphysical terrors and a sense of guilt, the poor women looked back nostalgically to the happy days of their possession. Winter gave place to spring, and spring to a no less wretched summer. Then, in the autumn of 1633, hope revived. The King had changed his mind about the castle keep, and M. de Laubardemont was once again a guest at the Swan and Cross. Mesmin de Silly and the other cardinalists were exultant. D'Armagnac had lost the game; the castle was doomed. Nothing now remained but to get rid of the insufferable parson. At his very first interview with the King's Commissioner, Mesmin broached the subject of the possession. Laubardemont listened attentively. As a man who, in his time, had judged and burned several dozens of witches, he could legitimately claim to be an expert in matters supernatural.

Next day he called at the convent in the Rue Paquin. Canon Mignon confirmed Mesmin's story; so did the Mother Superior; so did the Cardinal's kinswoman, Sister Claire de Sazilly, and so did Laubardemont's two sisters-in-law, the demoiselles de Dampierre. The bodies of all the good sisters had been infested by evil spirits; the

spirits had been introduced by magic, and the magician was Urbain Grandier. These truths had been vouched for by the devils themselves, and were therefore beyond doubt. And yet His Grace, the Archbishop, had said there was no real possession, and thereby disgraced them in the eyes of the world. It was a monstrous injustice, and they begged M. de Laubardemont to use his influence with His Eminence and His Majesty to have something done about it. Laubardemont was sympathetic, but made no promises. Personally, he liked nothing better than a good witch trial. But how did the Cardinal feel about such matters? It was hard indeed to say. Sometimes he seemed to take them very seriously indeed. But the next time you saw him, the chances were that he would be talking about the supernatural in the derisive tones of a disciple of Charron or Montaigne. By those who serve him, a great man must be treated as a mixture between a god, a naughty child and a wild beast. The god must be worshiped, the child amused and bamboozled and the wild beast placated and, when aroused, avoided. The courtier who, by an unwelcome suggestion, annoys this insane trinity of superhuman pretension, subhuman ferocity and infantile silliness, is merely asking for trouble. The nuns might weep and implore; but until he had discovered which way the wind was blowing, Laubardemont had no intention of doing anything to help them.

A few days later Loudun was honored by the visit of a very distinguished personage, Henri de Condé. This prince of the blood royal was a notorious sodomite, who combined the most sordid avarice with an exemplary piety. In politics he had once been an anti-Cardinalist, but now that Richelieu's position seemed impregnable, he had become the most fawning of His Eminence's sycophants. Informed of the possession, the prince at once expressed a desire to see for himself. Canon Mignon and the nuns were only too happy to oblige. Accompanied by Laubardemont and a numerous suite, Condé drove in state to the convent, was received by Mignon and ushered into the chapel, where a solemn Mass was celebrated. At first the nuns observed the most perfect decorum; but at the moment of communion, the Prioress, Sœur Claire and Sœur Agnès went into convulsions and rolled on the floor, howling obscenities and blasphemies. The rest of the community followed suit and for an hour or two the church looked like a mixture between a bear-garden and a brothel. Greatly edified, the prince declared that doubt was no longer possible and urged Laubardemont to write at once to the Cardinal, informing His Eminence of what was going on. "But the Commissioner," as we learn from a contemporary narrative, "gave no inkling as to what he thought about this strange spectacle. However, after returning to the inn, he felt himself deeply moved by compassion for the deplorable condition of the nuns. To cloak his real feelings, he invited Grandier's friends to dinner and, along with them, Grandier himself." It must have been a delightful party.

To spur the overcautious Laubardemont into action, the parson's enemies now came forward with a new and graver accusation. Grandier was not merely a sorcerer, who had denied his faith, rebelled against God and bewitched a whole convent of nuns; he was also the author of a violent and obscene attack on the Cardinal, published six years earlier, in 1627, under the title, *Lettre de la Cordonnière de Loudun*. Almost certainly

Grandier did not write this pamphlet; but since he was the friend and correspondent of the lady-cobbler after whom the lampoon was named, since he had once very likely been her lover, it was not altogether unreasonable to suppose that he might have written it.

Catherine Hammon was a bright and pretty little proletarian who, in 1616, while Marie de Médicis was staying at Loudun, attracted the Queen's attention, was taken into her service and soon became, officially, the royal shoemaker and, unofficially, a royal confidante and factotum. Grandier had known her (all too intimately, it was said) during the period of the Queen's exile at Blois, when the girl came home for a time to Loudun. Later on, when she returned to her post, Catherine, who knew how to write, kept the parson informed of what was going on at court. Her letters were so amusing that Grandier used to read their spicier passages aloud to his friends. Among those friends was M. Trincant, the Public Prosecutor and father of the delicious Philippe. It was this same M. Trincant, no longer his friend, but the most implacable of his enemies, who now accused Catherine Hammon's correspondent of being the author of the *Cordonnière*. This time Laubardemont made no effort to conceal his feelings. What the Cardinal really thought about witches and devils might be uncertain; but what he thought about critics of his administration, his family and himself had never been in any doubt. To disagree with Richelieu's political opinion was to invite dismissal from the public service, financial ruin and exile; to insult him was to run the risk of death on the gallows or even (since an edict of 1626 had declared that libelous pamphleteering was a crime of *lèse-majesté*) at the stake or on the wheel. For only printing the *Cordonnière*, a wretched tradesman had been sent to the galleys. If he were ever caught, what would be done to the author? Confident, this time, that his zeal would find favor in the sight of His Eminence, Laubardemont took copious notes of all that M. Trincant said. And meanwhile Mesmin had not been idle. Grandier, as we have seen, was an avowed enemy of the monks and friars, and with very few exceptions the monks and friars of Loudun were the avowed enemies of Grandier. The Carmelites had the most substantial reasons for hating Grandier; but the Carmelites were in no position to give effect to their hatred. The Capuchins had suffered less at Grandier's hands, but their power to hurt him was incomparably greater. For the Capuchins were colleagues of Father Joseph, and were in regular correspondence with that Eminence Grise who was the confidant, chief advisor and right-hand man of the Cardinal. It was to the Gray Friars, therefore, and not to the White that Mesmin confided the new accusations against Grandier. The response was all that he could have desired. A letter to Father Joseph was immediately drafted, and Laubardemont, who was on the point of returning to Paris, was asked to deliver it in person. Laubardemont accepted the commission and, the same day, invited Grandier and his friends to a farewell dinner, at which he drank the parson's health, assured him of undying friendship and promised to do everything in his power to assist him in his struggle against a cabal of unscrupulous enemies. So much kindness, and offered so generously, so spontaneously! Grandier was moved almost to tears.

Next day Laubardemont rode to Chinon, where he spent the evening with the most sincerely fanatical believer in the parson's guilt. M. Barré received the royal Commissioner with all due deference and, at his request, handed over the minutes of all the exorcisms, in the course of which the nuns had accused Grandier of bewitching them. After breakfast, on the following morning, Laubardemont was entertained by the antics of some local demoniacs; then bidding farewell to the exorcist, he took the road to Paris.

Immediately after his arrival, he had an interview with Father Joseph, then, a few days later, a more decisive interview with the two Eminences, the scarlet and the gray, in consultation. Laubardemont read M. Barré's minutes of the exorcisms, and Father Joseph read the letter in which his Capuchin colleagues had accused the parson of being the long-sought author of the Cordonnière. Richelieu decided that the matter was grave enough to be considered at the next meeting of the Council of State. On the day appointed (November 30, 1633), the King, the Cardinal, Father Joseph, the Secretary of State, the Chancellor and Laubardemont assembled at Ruel. The possession of the Ursulines of Loudun was the first item on the agenda. Briefly but luridly Laubardemont told his story, and Louis XIII, who was a firm and terrified believer in devils, unhesitatingly decided that something would have to be done about it. A document was then and there drawn up, signed by the King, countersigned by the Secretary of State, and sealed, in yellow wax, with the Great Seal. By the terms of this document Laubardemont was commissioned to go to Loudun, investigate the facts of the possession, examine the accusations leveled by the devils against Grandier and, if they appeared to be well-founded, bring the magician to trial.

In the sixteen twenties and thirties, witch trials were still of common occurrence; but of all the dozens of persons accused, during these years, of trafficking with the devil, Grandier was the only one in whose case Richelieu took a keen and sustained interest. Father Tranquille, the Capuchin exorcist who, in 1634, wrote a pamphlet on behalf of Laubardemont and the devils, declares that "it is to the zeal of the Eminentissimous Cardinal that we owe the first undertaking of this affair" — a fact to which "the letters he wrote to M. de Laubardemont sufficiently bear witness." As for the Commissioner, "he never instituted any procedure for proving the possession without first fully informing His Majesty and my lord Cardinal." Tranquille's testimony is confirmed by that of other contemporaries, who write of the almost daily exchange of letters between Richelieu and his agent at Loudun.

What were the reasons for this extraordinary concern over a case, apparently, of such small importance? Like His Eminence's contemporaries, we must be content with guesses. That the desire for personal vengeance was an important motive seems certain. In 1618, when Richelieu was only Bishop of Luçon and Abbot of Coussay, this whippersnapper of a parson had been rude to him. And now there was good reason to believe that the same Grandier was responsible for the outrageous libels and insults contained in the Cordonnière. True, the accusation was one which it would be all but impossible to substantiate in a court of law. But for merely having been suspected of

such a crime, the man deserved to be got rid of. And this was not all. The guilty parson was the incumbent of a guilty parish. Loudun was still a stronghold of Protestantism. Too prudent to compromise themselves at the time of the uprising which ended in 1628 with the capture of La Rochelle, the Huguenots of Poitou had done nothing to deserve open and systematic persecution. The Edict of Nantes still stood and, intolerable as they were, the Calvinists had to be tolerated. But now suppose that it could be proved, out of the mouths of the good sisters, that these gentlemen of the so-called Reformed Religion had been in secret league with an enemy even worse than the English — with the devil himself? In that case there would be ample justification for doing what he had long been planning to do: namely, to deprive Loudun of all its rights and privileges, and to transfer them to his own brand-new city of Richelieu. And even this was not all. The devils might be useful in yet other ways. If people could be made to believe that Loudun was but the beachhead of a regular invasion from hell, then it might be possible to revive the Inquisition in France. And how convenient that would be! How greatly it would facilitate the Cardinal's self-appointed task of centralizing all power in the absolute monarchy! As we know from our own experience of such secular devils as the Jews, the Communists, the Bourgeois Imperialists, the best way to establish and justify a police state is to keep harping on the dangers of a Fifth Column. Richelieu made only one mistake: he overestimated his compatriots' belief in the supernatural. Seeing that he was in the middle of the Thirty Years' War, he would probably have done better with a Fifth Column of Spaniards and Austrians than with mere spirits, however infernal.

Laubardemont lost no time. By December 6th he was back again at Loudun. From a house in the suburbs he sent secretly for the Public Prosecutor and the Chief of Police, Guillaume Aubin. They came. Laubardemont showed them his commission and a royal warrant for Grandier's arrest.

Aubin had always liked the parson. That night he sent Grandier a message, informing him of Laubardemont's return and urging immediate flight. Grandier thanked him; but, fondly imagining that innocence had nothing to fear, ignored his friend's advice. Next morning, on his way to church, he was arrested. Mesmin and Trincant, Mignon and Menuau, the apothecary and the surgeon — in spite of the earliness of the hour, they were all on hand to see the fun. It was to the sound of jeering laughter that Grandier was led away to the coach, which was to carry him to his appointed prison in the castle of Angers.

The parsonage was now searched, and all Grandier's books and papers were impounded. Disappointingly enough, his library contained not a single work on the Black Art; but it did contain (and this was very nearly as damning) a copy of the *Lettre de la Cordonnière*, together with the manuscript of that Treatise on Sacerdotal Celibacy, which Grandier had written in order to salve the conscience of Mlle. de Brou.

In convivial moments Laubardemont had been heard to remark that if he could get hold of only three lines of a man's handwriting, he could find a reason for hanging him. In the Treatise and the pamphlet against the Cardinal, he already had the amplest

justification not merely for a hanging, but for the rack, the wheel, the stake. And the search had revealed other treasures. For example, there were all the letters written to the parson by Jean d'Armagnac — letters which, if he ever made a nuisance of himself, could certainly be used to send the royal favorite into exile or to the scaffold. And here were the absolutions granted by the Archbishop of Bordeaux. At the moment M. de Sourdis was doing very well at the Admiralty; but if at any time he should do less well, these proofs that he had once absolved a notorious magician might come in very handy. Meanwhile, of course, they must be kept out of Grandier's hands; for if he could show no proof that he had been absolved by the Metropolitan, then his condemnation by the Bishop of Poitiers still held good. And if it still held good, Grandier was the priest who had performed the veneric act in church. And if he were capable of that, then, obviously, he was capable of bewitching seventeen nuns.

The weeks that followed were a long orgy of licensed spite, of perjury consecrated by the Church, of hatred and envy, not merely unrepressed, but officially rewarded. The Bishop of Poitiers issued a monitory, denouncing Grandier and inviting the faithful to inform against him. The injunction was eagerly obeyed. Whole volumes of malicious gossip were transcribed by Laubardemont and his clerks. The case of 1630 was reopened, and all the witnesses who had confessed to perjury now swore that all the lies they had recanted were gospel truth. At these preliminary hearings Grandier was neither present in person, nor represented by counsel. Laubardemont did not permit the case for the defense to be stated, and when Grandier's mother protested against the iniquitous and even illegal methods which were being employed, he merely tore up her petitions. In January, 1634, the old lady gave notice that she was appealing, in her son's name, to the Parlement of Paris. Laubardemont, meanwhile, was at Angers, cross-questioning the prisoner. His efforts were fruitless. Grandier, who had been informed of the appeal and who felt confident that his case would soon be tried before another and less manifestly prejudiced judge, refused to answer the Commissioner's questions. After a week of alternate browbeating and cajolery, Laubardemont gave up in disgust and hurried back to Paris and the Cardinal. Set in motion by old Mme. Grandier, the ponderous machinery of the law was slowly but surely grinding its way toward an appeal. But an appeal was the last thing that either Laubardemont or his master desired. The judges of the high court were passionately concerned with legality, and jealous, on principle, of the executive branch of the government. If they were permitted to review the case, Laubardemont's reputation as a lawyer would be ruined and His Eminence would have to give up a scheme to which, for reasons best known to himself, he was greatly attached. In March, Richelieu took the matter to the Council of State. The devils, he explained to the King, were counterattacking, and only by the most energetic action could they be checked and turned back. As usual, Louis XIII permitted himself to be convinced. The Secretary of State drew up the necessary documents. Under the royal hand and seal it was now decreed that "without regard to the appeal at present lodged with the Parlement, which His Majesty hereby annuls, my lord Laubardemont shall continue the action initiated against Grandier. . . : to

which end the King renews his commission for as long as may be necessary, debars the Parlement of Paris and all other judges from taking cognizance of the case, and forbids the parties from suing before them, under penalty of a fine of five hundred livres."

Thus placed above the law and armed with unlimited powers, the Cardinal's agent returned to Loudun early in April and began at once to set the stage for the next act of his gruesome comedy. The city, he found, had no prison strong enough, or uncomfortable enough, to house a magician. The attic of a house belonging to Canon Mignon was placed at the Commissioner's disposal. To make it devil-proof, Laubardemont had the windows bricked up, the door fitted with a new lock and heavy bolts and the chimney (that witches' postern) closed with a stout iron grating. Under military escort, Grandier was brought back to Loudun and locked up in this dark and airless cell. No bed was allowed him and he had to sleep, like an animal, on a truss of straw. His jailers were a certain Bontemps (who had borne false witness against him in 1630) and Bontemps's shrewish wife. Throughout the long trial, they treated him with unwavering malignity.

Having secured his prisoner, Laubardemont now turned all his attention to the principal, indeed the only, witnesses for the prosecution — Sœur Jeanne and the sixteen other demoniacs. Disobeying the orders of their Archbishop, Canon Mignon and his colleagues had been working hard to undo the salutary effects of six months of enforced quiet. After a few public exorcisms the good sisters were all as frantic as they had ever been. Laubardemont gave them no respite. Day after day, morning and evening, the wretched women were taken in batches to the various churches of the city and put through their tricks. These tricks were always the same. Like modern mediums, who go on doing exactly what the Fox Sisters did a hundred years ago, these earlier demoniacs and their exorcists were incapable of inventing anything new. Time after time there were the all too familiar convulsions, the same old obscenities, the conventional blasphemies, the boastful claims, constantly repeated, but never substantiated, to supernormal powers. But the show was good enough, and dirty enough, to attract the public. By word of mouth, in pamphlets and broadsheets, from hundreds of pulpits, news of the possession spread far and wide. From every province of France and even from abroad, sightseers came flocking to the exorcisms. With the eclipse of the Carmelites' miracle-working Notre-Dame de Recouvrance, Loudun had lost almost the whole of its tourist trade. Now, thanks to the devils, all and more than all was restored. The inns and the lodging houses were filled to capacity, and the good Carmelites, who had a monopoly of the lay demoniacs (for the hysterical infection had spread beyond the convent walls) were now as prosperous as in the best of the good old days of the pilgrimages. Meanwhile the Ursulines were growing positively rich. From the royal treasury they now received a regular subsidy, which was augmented by the alms of the faithful and the handsome gratuities left by those tourists of high rank, for whom some specially miraculous performance had been staged.

During the spring and summer of 1634 the main purpose of the exorcisms was not the deliverance of the nuns, but the indictment of Grandier. The aim was to prove,

out of the mouth of Satan himself, that the parson was a magician and had bewitched the nuns. But Satan is, by definition, the Father of Lies, and his evidence is therefore worthless. To this argument Laubardemont, his exorcists and the Bishop of Poitiers replied by affirming that, when duly constrained by a priest of the Roman Church, devils are bound to tell the truth. In other words, anything to which a hysterical nun was ready, at the instigation of her exorcist, to affirm on oath, was for all practical purposes a divine revelation. For inquisitors, this doctrine was a real convenience. But it had one grave defect: it was manifestly unorthodox. In the year 1610 a committee of learned theologians had discussed the admissibility of diabolic evidence and issued the following authoritative decision. "We, the undersigned Doctors of the Faculty of Paris, touching certain questions which have been proposed to us, are of the opinion that one must never admit the accusation of demons, still less must one exploit exorcisms for the purpose of discovering a man's faults or for determining if he is a magician; and we are further of the opinion that, even if the said exorcisms should have been applied in the presence of the Holy Sacrament, with the devil forced to swear an oath (which is a ceremony of which we do not at all approve), one must not for all that give any credit to his words, the devil being always a liar and the Father of Lies." Furthermore, the devil is man's sworn enemy, and is therefore ready to endure all the torments of exorcism for the sake of doing harm to a single soul. If the devil's evidence were admitted, the most virtuous people would be in the greatest danger; for it is precisely against these that Satan rages most violently "Wherefore St. Thomas (Book 22, Question 9, Article 22) maintains with the authority of St. Chrysostom, *Daemoni, Etiam Vera Dicenti, Non Est Credendum*. [The devil must not be believed, even when he tells the truth]." We must follow the example of Christ, who imposed silence on the demons even when they spoke truth, by calling him the Son of God. "Whence it appears that, in the absence of other proofs, one must never proceed against those who are accused by devils. And we note that this is well observed in France, where judges do not recognize these depositions." Twenty-four years later, Laubardemont and his colleagues recognized nothing else. For the humanity and good sense of the orthodox view, the exorcists had substituted, and the Cardinal's agents had eagerly accepted, a heresy that was both monstrously silly and dangerous in the extreme. Ismaël Boulliau, the astronomer-priest who had served under Grandier as one of the vicars of Saint-Pierre du Marché, qualified the new doctrine as "impious, erroneous, execrable and abominable — a doctrine which turns Christians into idolaters, undermines the very foundations of the Christian religion, opens the door to calumny and will make it possible for the devil to immolate human victims in the name, not of Moloch, but of a fiendish and infernal dogma." That the fiendish and infernal dogma was fully approved by Richelieu is certain. The fact is recorded by Laubardemont himself and by the author of the *Démonomanie de Loudun*, Pillet de la Mesnardière, the Cardinal's personal physician.

Licensed, sometimes even suggested, and always respectfully listened to, the diabolic depositions came pouring in just as fast as Laubardemont needed them. Thus he found

it desirable that Grandier should be not merely a magician, but also a high priest in the Old Religion. The word went round, and immediately one of the lay demoniacs obliged by confessing (through the mouth of a devil who had been duly constrained by one of the Carmelite exorcists) that she had prostituted herself to the parson, and that the parson had expressed his appreciation by offering to take her to the Sabbath and make her a princess at the devil's court. Grandier affirmed that he had never so much as laid eyes on the girl. But Satan had spoken and to doubt his word would be sacrilege.

Some witches, as is well known, have supernumerary nipples; others acquire, at the touch of the devil's finger, one or more small areas of insensibility, where the prick of a needle causes no pain and draws no blood. Grandier had no extra teats; ergo he must carry, somewhere on his person, those pain-free spots, by which the Evil One marks his own. Where precisely were those spots? As early as April 26th the Prioress had given the answer. There were five marks in all — one on the shoulder, at the place where criminals are branded, two more on the buttocks, very near the fundament, and one on either testicle. (*A Quoi Rêvent les Jeunes Filles?*) To confirm the truth of this statement, Mannoury, the surgeon, was ordered to do a little vivisection. In the presence of two apothecaries and several doctors, Grandier was stripped, shaved all over, blind-folded and then systematically pricked to the bone with a long, sharp probe. Ten years before, in Trincant's drawing room, the parson had made fun of this ignorant and pompous ass. Now the ass was getting his own back, and with a vengeance. The pain was excruciating and, through the bricked-up windows, the prisoner's screams could be heard by an ever-growing crowd of the curious in the street below. In the official summary of the counts on which Grandier was condemned, we learn that, owing to the great difficulty of locating such small areas of insensibility, only two out of the five marks described by the Prioress were actually discovered. But, for Laubardemont's purposes, two were amply sufficient. Mannoury's methods, it may be added, were admirably simple and effective. After a score of agonizing jabs, he would reverse the probe and press the blunt end against the parson's flesh. Miraculously, there was no pain. The devil had marked the spot. Had he been permitted to go on long enough, there is no doubt that Mannoury would have discovered all the marks. Unfortunately, one of the apothecaries (an untrustworthy stranger from Tours) was less complaisant than the village doctors whom Laubardemont had assembled to control the experiment. Catching Mannoury in the act of cheating, the man protested. In vain. His minority report was merely ignored. Meanwhile, Mannoury and the others had proved themselves to be most gratifyingly co-operative. Laubardemont was able to announce that Science had now corroborated the revelations of hell.

For the most part, of course, Science did not have to corroborate; *ex hypothesi*, the revelations of hell were true. When Grandier was confronted by his accusers, they rushed at him like a pack of Maenads, screaming through the mouths of all their devils that it was he who had bewitched them, he who, every night for four whole months, had prowled through the convent making passes at them and whispering obscene cajoleries

in their ears. Conscientiously Laubardemont and his clerks made notes of everything that was said. The minutes were duly signed, countersigned and filed in duplicate at the record office. Factually, theologically and now legally, it was all true.

To make the parson's guilt still truer the exorcists produced a number of "pacts," which had appeared mysteriously in the cells, or (better still) had been vomited up, undigested, in the midst of a paroxysm. It was by means of these pacts that the good sisters had been, and were still being, bewitched. Here, for example, was a piece of paper, stained with three drops of blood and containing eight orange pips; here, a bundle of five straws; here, a little package of cinders, worms, hairs and nail parings. But it was Jeanne des Anges who, as usual, outdid all the rest. On June 17th, while possessed by Leviathan, she threw up a pact containing (according to her devils) a piece of the heart of a child, sacrificed in 1631 at a witches' Sabbath near Orléans, the ashes of a consecrated wafer and some of Grandier's blood and semen.

There were moments when the new doctrine was a source of embarrassment. One morning, for example, a devil (duly constrained and in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament) remarked that M. de Laubardemont was a cuckold. The clerk conscientiously recorded the statement and Laubardemont, who had not been present at the exorcism, signed the minute without reading it, and appended the usual postscript to the effect that, to the best of his knowledge, everything contained in the *procès-verbal* was true. When the matter came to light, there was much Rabelaisian laughter. It was annoying, of course, but of no serious consequence. Compromising documents could always be destroyed, stupid clerks dismissed and impertinent devils recalled to their duty by a good scolding or even a smacking. All in all, the advantages of the new doctrine far outweighed its drawbacks.

One of these advantages, as Laubardemont was quick to realize, consisted in this: that it was now possible (through the mouth of a devil who had been duly constrained in the presence of the Sacrament) to flatter the Cardinal in an entirely new and supernatural manner. In the minutes of an exorcism of May 20, 1634, written entirely in Laubardemont's hand, we read the following: "Question: 'What do you say about the great Cardinal, the protector of France?' The devil answered, swearing by the name of God, 'He is the scourge of all my good friends.' Question: 'Who are your good friends?' Answer: 'The heretics.' Question: 'What are the other heroic aspects of his person?' Answer: 'His work for the relief of the people, the gift of government, which he has received from God, his desire to preserve peace in Christendom, the single-minded love he bears to the King's person.' " It was a handsome tribute and, coming as it did, direct from hell, it could be accepted as the simple truth. The nuns were far gone in hysteria, but never so far gone as to forget which side their bread was buttered. Throughout the possession, as Dr. Legué has pointed out, God, Christ and the Virgin were constantly blasphemed, but never Louis XIII and never, above all, His Eminence. The good sisters knew well enough that, against Heaven, they could let off steam with impunity. But if they were rude to the Cardinal. . . . Well, see what was happening to M. Grandier.

Chapter Seven

AT ANY GIVEN time and place certain thoughts are completely unthinkable. But this radical unthinkableness of certain thoughts is not paralleled by any radical unfeelableness of certain emotions, or any radical undoableness of the actions inspired by such emotions. Anything can at all times be felt and acted upon, albeit sometimes with great difficulty and in the teeth of general disapproval. But though individuals can always feel and do whatever their temperament and constitution permit them to feel and do, they cannot think about their experiences except within the frame of reference which, at that particular time and place, has come to seem self-evident. Interpretation is in terms of the prevailing thought-pattern, and this thought-pattern conditions to some extent the expression of urges and emotions, but can never completely inhibit them. For example, a firm belief in eternal damnation can coexist in the believer's mind with the knowledge that he or she is committing mortal sin. In this context let me quote the eminently judicious remarks which Bayle has hidden away in a note on Thomas Sanchez, that learned Jesuit who, in 1592, published a folio on Marriage, which his contemporaries and immediate successors regarded as by far the filthiest book ever written. "We do not know the domestic privacy of the ancient Pagans, as we know those of the countries where auricular confession is practiced; and therefore we cannot tell whether marriage was so brutishly dishonored among the Pagans as it is among the Christians; but at least it is probable that the Infidels did not surpass, in this respect, many persons who believe all the doctrines of the Gospel. They therefore believe what the Scripture teaches us of Heaven and Hell, they believe in purgatory and the other doctrines of the Romish communion; and yet in the midst of this persuasion, you see them plunged into abominable impurities, which are not fit to be named, and which draw down severe reproaches upon the head of such authors as dare to mention them. I observe this against those who persuade themselves that the corruption of manners proceeds from men's doubting or being ignorant that there is another life after this." In 1592 sexual behavior was evidently very similar to what it is today. The change has been only in the thoughts about that behavior. In early modern times the thoughts of a Havelock Ellis or a Krafft-Ebing would have been unthinkable. But the emotions and actions described by these modern sexologists were just as feelable and doable in an intellectual context of hell-fire as they are in the secularist societies of our own time.

In the paragraphs which follow I shall describe very briefly the frame of reference within which the men of the early seventeenth century did their thinking about human nature. This frame of reference was so ancient and so intimately associated with traditional Christian doctrine that it was universally regarded as a structure of self-evident truths. Today, though still most lamentably ignorant, we know enough to feel quite certain that, in many respects, the older thought-pattern was inadequate to the given facts of experience.

How, we may ask, did this manifest inadequacy of theory affect the behavior of men and women in the ordinary affairs of daily life? The answer would seem to be that, in some instances, the effect was imperceptible, in other cases, great and momentous.

A man can be an excellent practical psychologist and yet be completely ignorant of the current psychological theories. What is even more remarkable is that a man can be well versed in psychological theories which are demonstrably inadequate, and yet remain, thanks to his native insight, an excellent practical psychologist.

On the other hand, a wrong theory of human nature (such as the theory which explains hysteria in terms of diabolic possession) may evoke the worst passions and justify the most fiendish of cruelties. Theory is simultaneously not very important and very important indeed.

What was the theory of human nature, in terms of which Grandier's contemporaries interpreted ordinary behavior and such strange happenings as those which took place at Loudun? The answers to this question will be given, for the most part, in the words of Robert Burton, whose chapters on the anatomy of the Soul contain a brief and remarkably lucid summary of the philosophy which everyone, before the time of Descartes, took for granted and regarded as practically axiomatic.

"The soul is immortal, created of nothing, and so infused into the child or embryo in his mother's womb, six months after conception; not as the brutes, which are ex traduce (handed on by parent to offspring) and, dying with them, vanish into nothing." The soul is simple in the sense that it cannot be split or disintegrated. In the etymological sense of the word, it is a psychological atom — something which cannot be cut up. But this simple and indivisible soul of man has a three-fold manifestation. It is in some sort a trinity in unity, comprising a vegetal, a sensitive and a rational soul. The vegetal soul is defined as " 'a substantial act of an organical body, by which it is nourished, augmented and begets another like unto itself.' In which definition, three several operations are specified — altrix, auctrix, procreatrix. The first is nutrition, whose object is nourishment, meat, drink and the like; his organ, the liver in sensible creatures, in plants, the root or sap. His object is to turn the nutriment into the substance of the body nourished, which he performs by natural heat. . . . As this nutritive faculty serves to nourish the body, so doth the augmenting faculty (the second operation or power of the vegetal faculty) to the increasing of it in quantity . . . and to make it grow till it comes to his due proportion and perfect shape." The third faculty of the vegetal soul is the procreative — the faculty of reproducing its kind.

Next in order is the sensitive soul, "which is as far beyond the other in dignity as a beast is preferred to a plant, having those vegetal powers included in it. 'Tis defined as an 'Act of an organical body, by which it lives, hath sense, appetite, judgment, breath and motion.' . . . The general organ is the brain, from which principally the sensible operations are derived. The sensible soul is divided into two parts, apprehending or moving. . . . The apprehensive faculty is subdivided into two parts, inward or outward. Outward, as the five senses, of touching, hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting. . . . Inward are three — common sense, phantasy, memory." Common sense judges, compares and

organizes the messages brought to it by the special organs of sense, such as the eye and the ear. Phantasy examines more fully the data of common sense, "and keeps them longer, recalling them to mind again, or making new of his own." Memory takes all that comes to it from phantasy and the common sense and "stores it away in a good register."

In man imagination "is subject and governed by reason, or at least should be; but in brutes it hath no superior, but is ratio brutorum, all the reason they have." The second power of the sensitive soul is the moving faculty, which in turn is "divided into two faculties, the power of appetite, and of moving from place to place."

And finally there is the rational soul, "which is defined by philosophers to be 'the first substantial act of a natural, human, organical body, by which a man lives, perceives and understands, freely doing all things, and with election.' Out of which definition we may gather that this rational soul includes the powers and performs the duties of the two other, which are contained in it, and all three faculties make one soul, which is inorganic of itself, although it be in all parts (of the body), and incorporeal, using their organs and working by them. It is divided into two parts, differing in office only, not in essence: the understanding, which is the rational power apprehending; the will, which is the rational power moving; to which two, all the other rational powers are subject and reduced."

Such was the theory in terms of which our ancestors thought about themselves and tried to explain the facts of human experience and behavior. Because it was very old, and because many of its elements were theological dogmas, or corollaries of dogmas, the theory seemed axiomatically true. But if the theory were true, then certain notions, which today seem obvious to the point of self-evidence, could not be entertained and were for all practical purposes unthinkable. Let us consider a couple of concrete examples.

Here is Miss Beauchamp, a blameless but rather sickly young woman, full of high principles, inhibitions and anxiety. From time to time she plays truant from herself and behaves like a very naughty and exuberantly healthy child of ten. Questioned under hypnosis, this enfant terrible insists that she is not Miss Beauchamp, but someone else called Sally. After some hours or days, Sally disappears and Miss Beauchamp returns to consciousness — but returns only to her own consciousness, not to Sally's; for she remembers nothing of what was done, in her name and through the agency of her body, while the latter was in control. Sally, on the contrary, knows all that goes on in Miss Beauchamp's mind and makes use of that knowledge to embarrass and torment the other tenant of their shared body. Because he could think of these odd facts in terms of a well-substantiated theory of subconscious mental activity, and because he was acquainted with the techniques of hypnosis, Dr. Morton Prince, the psychiatrist in charge of this famous case, was able to solve Miss Beauchamp's problems and to bring her, for the first time in many years, to a state of physical and mental health.

In certain respects the case of Soeur Jeanne was essentially similar to that of Miss Beauchamp. Periodically she took a holiday from her habitual self, and from being a

respectable nun of good family became, for a few hours or days, a savage, blaspheming, utterly shameless virago, who called herself now Asmodeus, now Balaam, now Leviathan. When the Prioress returned to self-consciousness, she had no recollection of what these others had said and done in her absence. Such were the facts. How were they to be explained? Some observers attributed the whole deplorable business to deliberate fraud; others to “melancholy” — a derangement of the humoral equilibrium of the body, resulting in a derangement of the mind. For those who could not, or would not, accept these hypotheses, only one alternative explanation remained — diabolic possession. Given the theory in terms of which they had to think, it was impossible for them to come to any other conclusion. By a definition which was the corollary of a Christian dogma, the “soul” — in other words, the conscious and personal part of the mind — was an atom, simple and indivisible. The modern notion of a split personality was therefore unthinkable. If two or more selves appeared, concurrently or alternately, to occupy the same body, it could not be because of a disintegration of that not too securely tied bundle of psychophysical elements which we call a person; no, it must be because of a temporary expulsion from the body of the indivisible soul and its temporary replacement by one or more of the innumerable superhuman spirits who (it was a matter of revealed truth) inhabited the universe.

Our second example is that of a hypnotized person — any hypnotized person — in whom the operator has produced a state of catalepsy. The nature of hypnosis and the way in which suggestion acts upon the autonomic nervous system are still imperfectly understood; but at least we know that it is very easy to put certain persons into a trance and that, when they are in this state, some part of their subconscious mind will cause their body to obey the suggestions given by the operator, or sometimes by their own supraliminal selves. At Loudun this cataleptic rigidity, which any competent operator can induce in any good subject, was regarded by the faithful as a work of Satan. Necessarily so; for the nature of current psychological theories was such that the phenomenon must be due either to deliberate cheating, or to a supernatural agency. You might search the writings of Aristotle and Augustine, of Galen and the Arabians; in none of them could you find any hint of what we now call the subconscious mind. For our ancestors there was only the soul or conscious self, on the one hand, and on the other God, the saints and a host of good and evil spirits. Our conception of a vast intermediate world of subconscious mental activity, much more extensive and, in certain respects, more effective than the activity of the conscious self, was unthinkable. The current theory of human nature had left no place for it; consequently, so far as our ancestors were concerned, it did not exist. The phenomena which we now explain in terms of this subconscious activity had either to be denied altogether, or else attributed to the action of nonhuman spirits. Thus, catalepsy was either a humbug or a symptom of diabolic infestation. When he attended an exorcism in the autumn of 1635, young Thomas Killigrew was invited by the friar in charge of the proceedings to feel the nun’s stony limbs — to feel, to confess the power of the Evil One and the yet greater power of the Church Militant, and then, God willing, to be converted from heresy, as his good

friend Walter Montague had been in the preceding year. "I must tell you the truth," wrote Killigrew in a letter describing the event, "I only felt firm flesh, strong arms and legs held out stiff." (Note how completely the nuns have ceased to be regarded as human beings with a right to privacy or respect. The good father who performs the exorcisms behaves exactly like the proprietor of a side show at a fair. "Step up, ladies and gentlemen, step up! Seeing is believing, but pinching our fat girl's legs is the naked truth." These spouses of Christ have been turned into cabaret performers and circus freaks.) "But others," Killigrew continues, "affirm that she was all stiff, and heavy as iron; but they had more faith than I, and it seemed that the miracle appeared more visible to them than to me." How significant is that word "miracle"! If the nuns are not shamming, then the corpse-like rigidity of their limbs must be due to supernatural causes. No other explanation is possible.

The coming of Descartes and the general acceptance of what at that time seemed a more "scientific" theory of human nature did not improve matters; indeed, in some respects it caused men's thinking about themselves to become less realistic than it had been under the older dispensation. Devils passed out of the picture; but along with the devils went any kind of serious consideration of the phenomena once attributed to diabolic agency. The exorcists had at least recognized such facts as trance, catalepsy, split personality and extrasensory perception. The psychologists who came after Descartes were inclined either to dismiss the facts as nonexistent, or to account for them, if they did not permit themselves to be dismissed, as the product of a something called "imagination." For men of science, "imagination" was almost synonymous with "illusion." The phenomena attributed to it (such as the cures which Mesmer effected during the magnetic sleep) might safely and properly be ignored. Descartes's mighty effort to think geometrically about human nature had led, no doubt, to the formulation of some admirably "clear ideas." But unhappily these clear ideas could be entertained only by those who chose to ignore a whole class of highly significant facts. Pre-Cartesian philosophers took account of these facts and were compelled by their own psychological theories to attribute them to supernatural causes. Today we are able to accept the facts and to explain them without having recourse to devils. We can think of the mind (as opposed to the "spirit," or "pure ego," or "Atman") as something radically different from the Cartesian and pre-Cartesian soul. The soul of the earlier philosophers was dogmatically defined as simple, indivisible and immortal. For us, it is manifestly a compound, whose identity, in Ribot's words, "is a question of number." This bundle of elements can be disintegrated and, though it probably survives bodily death, it survives in time, as something subject to change and to ultimate dissolution. Immortality belongs not to the psyche but to the spirit, with which, if it so chooses, the psyche may identify itself. According to Descartes, minds have consciousness as their essence; they can interact with the matter in their own body, but not directly with other matter or with other minds. Pre-Cartesian thinkers would probably have agreed with all these propositions except the first. Consciousness, for them, was the essence of the rational soul; but many of the operations of sensitive and vegetal souls

were unconscious. Descartes regarded the body as a self-regulating automaton, and therefore had no need to postulate the existence of these subsidiary souls. Between the conscious "I" and what one may call the Physiological Unconscious, we now infer the existence of wide ranges of subconscious mental activity. Moreover, we have to admit, if we accept the evidence for extrasensory perception and psychokinesis, that on the subconscious level minds can and do act directly upon other minds and upon matter outside their respective bodies. The queer happenings which Descartes and his followers chose to ignore, and which his predecessors accepted as facts, but could only explain in terms of diabolic infestation, are now recognized as being due to the natural operations of a mind, whose range, whose powers and whose weaknesses are all far greater than a study of its conscious aspect would lead us to believe.

We see, then, that if the idea of fraud were excluded, the only purely psychological explanation of what was happening at Loudun was an explanation in terms of sorcery and possession. But there were many who never thought of the matter in purely psychological terms. To them it seemed obvious that such phenomena as were manifested by Sœur Jeanne could be explained in terms of physiology and ought to be treated accordingly. The more Draconian among them prescribed the application to the bare skin of a good birch rod. Tallemant records that the Marquis de Coudray-Montpensier withdrew his two possessed daughters from the hands of the exorcists and "had them well fed and soundly whipped; the devil took his leave immediately." At Loudun itself, during the later stages of the possession, the whip was prescribed with increasing frequency, and Surin records that devils who merely laughed at the rites of the Church were often routed by the discipline.

In many cases old-fashioned whipping was probably just as effective as modern shock treatment, and for the same reasons: namely, that the subconscious mind developed such a fear of the tortures prepared for its body that, rather than undergo them again, it decided to stop behaving as though it were crazy. Up to the opening years of the nineteenth century, shock treatment by whipping was regularly employed in all cases of unequivocal insanity.

In the bonny halls of Bedlam,
Ere I was one-and-twenty,
I had bracelets strong, sweet whips ding-dong,
And prayer and fasting plenty
Now I do sing, "Any food, any feeding,
Feeding, drink or clothing?
Come dame, or maid, be not afraid,
Poor Tom will injure nothing."

Poor Tom was a subject of Queen Elizabeth. But even in the days of George III, two hundred years later, the two houses of Parliament passed a bill authorizing the court physicians to scourge the lunatic king.

For simple neurosis or hysteria, birching was not the invariable treatment. These maladies were caused, according to the medical theories current at the time, by too

much black bile, in the wrong place. "Galen," says Robert Burton, "imputeth all to the cold that is black, and thinks that, the spirits being darkened and the substance of the brain cloudy and dark, all the objects thereof appear terrible, and the mind itself, by these dark, obscure, gross fumes, ascending from black humours, is in continual darkness, fear and sorrow." Averroës scoffs at Galen for his reasons; so does Hercules de Saxonia. But they are "copiously censured and confuted by Aelianus Montaltus, Lodovicus Mercatus, Altomarus, Guianerius, Bright, Laurentius Valesius. Distemperature, they conclude, makes black juice, blackness obscures the spirits, the spirits obscured cause fear and sorrow. Laurentius supposeth these black fumes offend especially the Diaphragma, or midriff, and so, consequently, the mind, which is obscured as the Sun by a cloud. To this opinion of Galen almost all the Greeks and Arabians subscribe, the Latins new and old; as children are affrighted in the dark, so are melancholy men at all times, as having the inward cause with them, and still carrying it about. Which black vapours, whether they proceed from the black blood about the heart, (as Thomas Wright, Jesuit, thinks in his treatise of the passions of the mind) or stomach, spleen, midriff, or all the misaffected parts together, it boots not; they keep the mind in a perpetual dungeon, and oppress it with continual fears, anxieties, sorrows, etc."

The physiological picture is of a kind of smoke or fog arising from unwholesome blood or diseased viscera, and either directly darkening the brain and mind, or else in some way clogging the tubes (for the nerves were regarded as hollow pipes) along which the natural, vital and animal spirits are supposed to flow.

In reading the scientific literature of early modern times one is struck by its strange mingling of the wildest supernaturalism with the crudest, the most naïve kind of materialism. This primitive materialism differs from modern materialism in two important respects. In the first place the "matter" with which the older theory deals is something which does not lend itself (owing to the nature of the descriptive terms employed) to exact measurement. We hear only of heat and cold, dryness and moisture, lightness and heaviness. No attempt is ever made to elucidate the meaning of these qualitative expressions in terms of quantity. In its fine structure the "matter" of our ancestors was nonmeasurable, and consequently nothing much could ever be done about it. And where nothing can be done, very little can be understood.

The second point of difference is no less important than the first. To us, "matter" reveals itself as a something in perpetual activity — a something, indeed, whose essence is nothing other than activity. All matter is forever doing something, and of all forms of matter the colloids composing living bodies are the most frantically busy — but with a frenzy marvelously integrated, so that the activity of one part of the organism regulates and in turn is regulated by the activities of other parts, in a harmonious dance of energies. For the ancients, and for medieval and early modern thinkers, matter was mere stuff, intrinsically inert, even in the living body where its activities were due exclusively to the workings of the vegetal soul in plants, of the vegetal and sensitive soul in the brutes, and, in man, of that trinity in unity, the vegetal, sensitive and rational

soul. Physiological processes were explained not in terms of chemistry, for chemistry as a science was nonexistent; nor in terms of electrical impulses, for nothing was yet known of electricity; nor in terms of cellular activity, for there was no microscope and nobody had ever seen a cell; they were explained (with no trouble at all) in terms of action on inert matter by special faculties of the soul. There was a faculty of growth, for example, a faculty of nutrition, a faculty of secretion — a faculty for any and every process that might be observed. For philosophers it was wonderfully convenient; but when men tried to pass from words to the given facts of nature, they found that the theory of special faculties was of no practical use whatever.

The crudity of the older materialism is clearly expressed in the language of its exponents. Physiological problems are discussed in metaphors drawn from what goes on in the kitchen, the smelter and the privy. There are boilings and simmerings and strainings; there are refinings and extractions; there are putrefactions, miasmatic exhalations from the cesspool and their pestilential condensations upstairs, on the piano nobile. In terms such as these, fruitful thinking about the human organism is very difficult. The good doctors were men with a natural gift, who did not permit their learning to interfere too much with their diagnostic intuitions and their talent for helping nature to perform her miracles of healing. Along with much useless or dangerous nonsense, there is in Burton's huge compilation not a little excellent sense. Most of the nonsense derives from the current scientific theories; most of the sense from the openminded empiricism of shrewd and kindly men who loved their fellows, had a special knack with the sick and trusted in the *vis medicatrix Naturae*.

For details of the strictly medical treatment of melancholy, whether due to natural or supernatural causes, the reader is referred to Burton's absurd and charming book. For our present purposes it is enough to remark that, during the whole time of the possession, Sœur Jeanne and her fellow nuns were under constant medical supervision. In their case, unfortunately, none of the more sensible methods of treatment described by Burton were ever applied. For them there was no question of a change of air, of diet, of occupation. They were merely bled and purged and made to swallow innumerable pills and draughts. So drastic was this medication that some of the independent physicians who examined them were of the opinion that their disease was aggravated (as so many diseases are still aggravated) by overzealous attempts to bring about a cure. The nuns, they discovered, were being given large and frequent doses of antimony. Perhaps that was all that was wrong with them.

(To appreciate the full historical import of this diagnosis, we must bear in mind that, at the time of the possession, what may be called the Battle of Antimony had been raging for three generations and was still going strong. By the heretical anti-Galenists the metal and its compounds were regarded as miracle drugs, specific for practically everything. Under pressure from the orthodox right wing of the medical profession, the Parlement of Paris had issued an edict prohibiting their use in France. But the law had proved to be unenforceable. Half a century after its passage, Grandier's good friend and Loudun's most famous medical son, Théophraste Renaudot, was zealously proclaiming

the virtue of antimony. His younger contemporary, Gui Patin, the author of the famous Letters, was no less violent on the other side. In the light of modern research we can see that Patin was more nearly in the right than Renaudot and the other anti-Galenists. Certain compounds of antimony are specific in the treatment of the tropical disease known as kala-azar. In most other conditions, the use of the metal or its compounds is hardly worth the risks involved. Medically speaking, there was no justification for such indiscriminate use as was made of the drug during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From the economic point of view, however, the justification was ample. M. Adam and his fellow apothecaries sold Perpetual Pills of metallic antimony. These were swallowed, irritated the mucous membrane as they passed through the intestine, thus acting as a purgative, and could be recovered from the chamber pot, washed and used again, indefinitely. After the first capital outlay, there was no further need for spending money on cathartics. Dr. Patin might fulminate and the Parlement forbid; but for the costive French bourgeois, the appeal of antimony was irresistible. Perpetual Pills were treated as heirlooms and after passing through one generation were passed on to the next.)

It is worth remarking parenthetically that Paracelsus, the greatest of the early anti-Galenists, owed his enthusiasm for antimony to a false analogy. "Just as antimony purifies gold and leaves no slag in it, in the same form and shape it purifies the human body." The same kind of false analogy between the arts of the metalworker and the alchemist on the one hand and the arts of the doctor and dietician on the other led to the belief that the value of foods increased with their increasing refinement — that white bread was better than brown, that a much-stewed bouillon was superior to the unconcentrated meats and vegetables of which it was composed. It was assumed that "coarse" foods coarsened the people who ate them. "Cheese, milk and oatcakes," Paracelsus says, "cannot give one a subtle disposition." It was only with the isolation of the vitamins, a generation ago, that the old false analogies with alchemy ceased to play havoc with our theories of diet.

The existence of a well developed medical treatment of "melancholy" was in no way incompatible with the existence of a widespread belief, even among the doctors, in the reality of possession and diabolic infestation. Some people, writes Burton "laugh at all such stories." But on the opposite side are "most lawyers, divines, physicians, philosophers." Ben Jonson, in *The Devil is an Ass*, has left us a vivid description of the seventeenth-century mind, divided between credulity and skepticism, between a reliance on the supernatural (above all in its less creditable aspects) and a bumptious confidence in the new-found powers of applied science. In the play, Fitzdottrel is introduced as a dabbler in the magic arts, who longs to meet with a devil, because devils know the site of hidden treasures. But to this belief in magic and the power of Satan is conjoined a no less powerful belief in the quasi-rational and pseudoscientific schemes of those fraudulent inventors and company promoters whom our fathers called "projectors." When Fitzdottrel tells his wife that his projector has worked out a plan, which will infallibly make him eighteen million pounds and secure him a dukedom, she shakes

her head and tells him not to put too much trust "in these false spirits." "Spirits!" cries Fitzdottrel,

Spirits! O no such thing, wife; wit, mere wit.
This man defies the Devil and all his works.
He does't by engine and devices, he!
He has his winged ploughs that go with sails,
Will plough you forty acres at once! and mills
Will spout you water ten miles off.

However farcically the figure of fun, Fitzdottrel is nonetheless a truly Representative Man. He stands for a whole epoch, whose intellectual life was straddled insecurely between two worlds. That he tried to make the worst of both worlds, instead of the best, is also sadly typical. For the unregenerate, occultism and "projects" are considerably more attractive than pure science and the worship of God in spirit.

In Burton's book, as in the history of the nuns of Loudun, these two worlds coexist and are taken for granted. There is melancholy and there is an approved medical treatment for melancholy. At the same time it is well known that magic and possession are common causes of disease, both of mind and of body. And no wonder! For "not so much as an hair-breadth empty in heaven, earth, or waters, above or under the earth. The air is not so full of flies in summer as it is at all times of invisible devils; this Paracelsus stiffly maintains, and that they have every one their several Chaos." The number of these spirits must be infinite; "for if that be true that some of our Mathematicians say: if a stone could fall from the starry heaven or eighth sphere, and should pass every hour an hundred miles, it would be 65 years, or more, before it would come to ground, by reason of the great distance of heaven from earth, which contains, as some say, 170 million 803 miles . . . how many such spirits may it contain?" In the circumstances, the truly surprising thing was not the fact of an occasional possession, but the fact that most people could go through life without becoming demoniacs.

II

We have seen that the plausibility of the hypothesis of possession was exactly proportionate to the inadequacy of a physiology without cell structure or chemistry, and of a psychology which took practically no account of mental activity on subconscious levels. Once universal, belief in possession is entertained at the present time only by Roman Catholics and Spiritists. The latter explain certain phenomena of the seance room in terms of the temporary possession of the medium's organism by the surviving psyche of some dead human being. The former deny possession by departed souls, but explain certain cases of mental and physical derangement in terms of possession by devils, certain psychophysical accompaniments of mystical or premystical states in terms of possession by some divine agency.

There is nothing, so far as I can see, self-contradictory in the idea of possession. The notion is not one to be ruled out a priori, on the ground that it is a "a relic of ancient superstition." It should be treated rather as a working hypothesis, which may be cautiously entertained in any case where other forms of explanation are found to be inadequate to the facts. In practice modern exorcists seem to be agreed that most cases of suspected possession are in fact due to hysteria and can best be treated by the standard methods of psychiatry. In a few instances, however, they find evidence of something more than hysteria and assert that only exorcism and the casting out of the possessing spirit can effect a cure.

Possession of a medium's organism by the discarnate spirit, or "psychic factor," of defunct human beings has been invoked to explain certain phenomena, such as evidential scripts and utterances, for which it would otherwise be difficult to account. The earlier evidence for such possession may be conveniently studied in F. W. H. Myers's *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, the more recent in Mr. G. N. M. Tyrell's *The Personality of Man*.

Professor Oesterreich, in his richly documented study of the subject has pointed out that, while belief in diabolic possession sharply declined during the nineteenth century, belief in possession by departed spirits became, during the same period, much more common. Thus, neurotics who, at an earlier epoch, would have attributed their malady to devils, were inclined, after the rise of the Fox Sisters, to lay the blame on the discarnate souls of evil men or women. With the recent advances in technology, the notion of possession has taken a new form. Neurotic patients often complain that they are being influenced, against their will, by some kind of radio messages transmitted by their enemies. The Malicious Animal Magnetism which haunted poor Mrs. Eddy's imagination for so many years has now been transformed into Malicious Electronics.

In the sixteen hundreds there was no radio and very little belief in possession by discarnate spirits. Burton cites the opinion that devils are merely the souls of the malevolent dead, but cites it only to remark that it is an "absurd tenet." For him, possession was a fact, and was exclusively by devils. (For Myers, two and a half centuries later, possession was also a fact, but exclusively by the spirits of the dead.)

Do devils exist? And, if so, were they present in the bodies of Sœur Jeanne and her fellow nuns? As with the notion of possession, I can see nothing intrinsically absurd or self-contradictory in the notion that there may be nonhuman spirits, good, bad and indifferent. Nothing compels us to believe that the only intelligences in the universe are those connected with the bodies of human beings and the lower animals. If the evidence for clairvoyance, telepathy and prevision is accepted (and it is becoming increasingly difficult to reject it), then we must allow that there are mental processes which are largely independent of space, time and matter. And if this is so, there seems to be no reason for denying a priori that there may be nonhuman intelligences, either completely discarnate, or else associated with cosmic energy in some way of which we are still ignorant. (We are still ignorant, incidentally, of the way in which human minds are associated with that highly organized vortex of cosmic energy known as a body.

That some association exists is evident; but how energy gets transformed into mental processes, and how mental processes affect energy, we still have no idea.)

In the Christian religion devils have, until very recent times, played an exceedingly important part — and this from the very beginning. For, as Fr. A. Lefèvre S. J. has remarked, “the devil has but a small place in the Old Testament; his empire is not yet revealed. The New Testament discloses him as chief of the leagued forces of evil.” In the current translations of the Lord’s Prayer we ask to be delivered from evil. But is it certain that *apo tou ponerou* is neuter rather than masculine? Does not the very structure of the prayer imply that the word refers to a person? “Lead us not into temptation, but (on the contrary) deliver us from the Evil One, the Tempter.”

In theory and by theological definition Christianity is not Manichaeism. For Christians, evil is not a substance, not a real and elementary principle. It is merely a privation of good, a diminution of being in creatures who derive their essential being from God. Satan is not Ahriman under another name, is not an eternal principle of Darkness over against the divine principle of Light. Satan is merely the most considerable among a vast number of individual angels who, at a given moment of time, chose to separate themselves from God. It is only by courtesy that we call him the Evil One. There are many evil ones, of whom Satan is the Chief Executive. Devils are persons, and each one has his character, his temperament, his humors, crotchets and idiosyncrasies. There are power-loving devils, lustful devils, covetous devils, proud and conceited devils. Moreover, some devils are much more important than others; for they retain, even in hell, the positions they occupied in the heavenly hierarchy, before their fall. Those who in heaven were merely angels or archangels are lower-class devils of small account. Those who were once Dominions or Principalities or Powers, now constitute the haute bourgeoisie of hell. The quondam Cherubim and Seraphim are an aristocracy, whose power is very great and whose physical presence (according to the information supplied to Father Surin by Asmodeus) can make itself felt within a circle thirty leagues in diameter. At least one seventeenth-century theologian, Father Ludovico Sinistrari, maintained that human beings could be possessed, or at least obsessed, not merely by devils, but also, and more frequently, by nonmalignant spiritual entities — the fauns, nymphs and satyrs of the ancients, the hobgoblins of the European peasantry, the poltergeists of modern psychical researchers. According to Sinistrari, most incubi and succubi were merely natural phenomena, no worse and no better than buttercups, say, or grasshoppers. At Loudun, unfortunately, this kindly theory was never broached. The insanely libidinous imaginings of the nuns were all attributed to Satan and his messengers.

Theologians, I repeat, have carefully guarded against Manichaean dualism; but, at all times, all too many Christians have behaved as though the devil were a First Principle, on the same footing as God. They have paid more attention to evil and the problem of its eradications than to good and the methods by which individual goodness may be deepened, and the sum of goodness increased. The effects which follow too constant and intense a concentration upon evil are always disastrous. Those

who crusade, not for God in themselves, but against the devil in others, never succeed in making the world better, but leave it either as it was, or sometimes even perceptibly worse than it was, before the crusade began. By thinking primarily of evil we tend, however excellent our intentions, to create occasions for evil to manifest itself.

Though frequently Manichæan in practice, Christianity was never Manichæan in its dogmas. In this respect it differs from our modern idolatries of communism and nationalism, which are Manichæan not only in action, but also in creed and theory. Today it is everywhere self-evident that we are on the side of Light, they on the side of Darkness. And being on the side of Darkness, they deserve to be punished and must be liquidated (since our divinity justifies everything) by the most fiendish means at our disposal. By idolatrously worshiping ourselves as Ormuzd, and by regarding the other fellow as Ahriman, the Principle of Evil, we of the twentieth century are doing our best to guarantee the triumph of diabolism in our time. And on a very small stage, this precisely was what the exorcists were doing at Loudun. By idolatrously identifying God with the political interests of their sect, by concentrating their thoughts and their efforts on the powers of evil, they were doing their best to guarantee the triumph (local, fortunately, and temporary) of that Satan, against whom they were supposed to be fighting.

For our present purposes it is unnecessary either to affirm or deny the existence of nonhuman intelligences capable of possessing the bodies of men and women. The only question we have to ask ourselves is this: granted the existence of such intelligences, is there any reason to believe that they were responsible for what happened to the Ursulines of Loudun? Modern Catholic historians are unanimously agreed that Grandier was innocent of the crime for which he was tried and condemned; but some of them — they are cited by the Abbé Bremond in his *Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France* — are still convinced that the nuns were the victims of a genuine possession. How such an opinion can be held by anyone who has read the relevant documents, and who has even the slightest knowledge of abnormal psychology, I confess myself unable to understand. There is nothing in the behavior of the nuns which cannot be paralleled in the many cases of hysteria recorded, and successfully treated, by modern psychiatrists. And there is no evidence that any of the nuns ever manifested any of the paranormal powers which, according to the doctrines of the Roman Church, are the hallmarks of a genuine diabolic invasion.

How is true possession to be distinguished from fraud or the symptoms of disease? The Church prescribes four tests — the language test, the test of preternatural physical strength, the test of levitation and the test of clairvoyance and prevision. If a person can on occasion understand, or better still, speak a language, of which, in his normal state, he is completely ignorant; if he can manifest the physical miracle of levitation or perform unaccountable feats of strength, and if he can correctly predict the future or describe events taking place at a distance — then that person may be presumed to be possessed by devils. (Alternatively, he may be presumed to be the recipient of extraordinary graces; for in many instances divine and infernal miracles are, most unhappily,

identical. The levitation of saintly ecstasies is distinguishable from the levitation of ecstatic demoniacs only in virtue of the moral antecedents and consequences of the event. These moral antecedents and consequences are often hard to assess, and it has sometimes happened that even the holiest persons have been suspected of producing their ESP phenomena and their PK effects by diabolic means.)

Such are the official and time-hallowed criteria of diabolic possession. For us, these ESP and PK phenomena prove only that the old notion of a completely watertight soul is untenable. Below and beyond the conscious self lie vast ranges of subconscious activity, some worse than the ego and some better. Some stupider and some, in certain respects, far more intelligent. At its fringes this subconscious self overlaps and merges with not-self, with the psychic medium in which all selves bathe and through which they can directly communicate with one another and with cosmic Mind. And somewhere on these subconscious levels individual minds make contact with energy, and make contact with it not merely in their own body, but also (if the anecdotic and statistical evidence may be trusted) outside their own body. The older psychology, as we have seen, was compelled by its own dogmatic definitions to ignore subconscious mental activity; in order to account for the observed facts, it had to postulate the devil.

For the moment, let us place ourselves in the intellectual position of the exorcists and their contemporaries. Accepting as valid the Church's criteria of possession, let us examine the evidence on which the nuns were pronounced to be demoniacs and the parson, a sorcerer. We will begin with the test which, because it was the easiest of application, was in practice the most frequently applied — the test of language.

For all the Christians of an earlier day, "speaking with tongues" was an extraordinary grace, a gratuitous gift of the Holy Spirit. But it was also (such is the strangely equivocal nature of the universe) a sure symptom of possession by devils. In the great majority of cases, glossolalia is not a clear and unmistakable speaking of some hitherto unknown tongue. It is a more or less articulate, more or less systematic gibberish, exhibiting certain resemblances to some form of traditional speech and consequently interpretable, by listeners of good will, as a rather obscure utterance in some language with which they happen to be familiar. In the cases where persons in a state of trance have shown an unequivocal knowledge of some language of which they were consciously ignorant, investigation has generally revealed the fact that they had spoken the language during childhood and subsequently forgotten it, or that they had heard it spoken and, without understanding the meaning of the words had unconsciously familiarized themselves with their sound. For the rest there is, in the words of F. W. H. Myers, "little evidence of the acquisition — telepathy apart — of any actual mass of fresh knowledge, such as a new language, or a stage of mathematical knowledge unreached before." In the light of what we know, through systematic psychical research, of trance mediumship and automatic writing, it seems questionable whether any alleged demoniac ever passed the test of language in a completely unambiguous and decided manner. What is certain is that the recorded cases of complete failure are very numerous, while the recorded successes are mostly partial and rather unconvincing. Some of the eccle-

siastical investigators of possession applied the language test in very ingenious and effective ways. In 1598, for example, Marthe Brossier made a great name for herself by exhibiting the symptoms of possession. One of these symptoms — a thoroughly traditional and orthodox symptom — consisted in going into convulsions every time a prayer or an exorcism was read over her. (Devils hate God and the Church; consequently they tend to fly into a rage every time they hear the hallowed words of the Bible or the prayer book.) To test Marthe's paranormal knowledge of Latin, the Bishop of Orléans opened his Petronius and solemnly intoned the somewhat unedifying story of the Matron of Ephesus. The effect was magical. Before the first sonorous sentence had been completed, Marthe was rolling on the floor, cursing the Bishop for what he was making her suffer by his reading of the Sacred Word. It is worth remarking that, far from putting an end to Marthe's career as a demoniac, this incident actually helped her to go forward to fresh triumphs. Fleeing from the Bishop, she put herself under the protection of the Capuchins, who proclaimed that she had been unjustly persecuted and made use of her to draw enormous crowds to their exorcisms.

The Petronius test was never, so far as I know, applied to the Ursulines of Loudun. The nearest approach to such a test was made by a visiting nobleman who handed the exorcist a box in which, so he whispered, there were some exceedingly holy relics. The box was applied to the head of one of the nuns, who immediately exhibited all the symptoms of intense pain and threw a fit. Much delighted, the good friar returned the box to its owner, who thereupon opened it and revealed that, except for a few cinders, it was completely empty. "Ah, my lord," cried the exorcist, "what sort of a trick have you played upon us." "Reverend Father," answered the nobleman, "what sort of a trick have you been playing upon us?"

At Loudun, simple language tests were frequently tried, but always without success. Here is the account of an incident which de Nion, who was a firm believer in the reality of the nuns' possession, regarded as convincingly miraculous. Speaking in Greek, the Bishop of Nîmes orders Sister Claire to bring him her beads and say an Ave Maria. Sister Claire responds by bringing first a pin and then some aniseed. Being urged to obey, she says, "I see you want something else," and finally brings the beads and offers to say an Ave.

In most cases the miracle was even less astounding. All the nuns who knew no Latin were possessed by devils who also knew no Latin. To account for this strange fact, one of the Franciscan exorcists explained in a sermon that there are uneducated devils as well as educated ones. The only educated devils at Loudun were those who had invaded the Prioress. But even Jeanne's devils were not conspicuously learned. Here is part of the *procès-verbal* of the exorcism performed before M. de Cerisay on November 24, 1632. "M. Barré holds up the Host and asks the devil, 'Quem adoras?' Answer: 'Jesus Christus.' Whereupon M. Daniel Drouyn, Assessor of the Provost's Office, said in a rather loud voice, 'This devil is not congruous.' The exorcist then changed his question to, 'Quis est iste quem adoras?' She answered, 'Jesu Christe.' Upon which several persons remarked, 'What bad Latin!' But the exorcist retorted that she had

said, 'Adoro te, Jesu Christe.' Afterward a little nun came in, roaring with laughter and repeating, 'Grandier, Grandier!' Then the lay sister, Caire, entered the room neighing like a horse."

Poor Jeanne! She had never learnt enough Latin to understand all this nonsense about nominatives and accusatives and vocatives. Jesus Christus, Jesu Christe — she had given them everything she could remember; and still they said it was bad Latin!

M. de Cerisay, meanwhile, had declared that he would willingly believe in the possibility of possession, "if the said Superior would answer categorically two or three of his interrogations." But when the questions were asked, there was no reply. Completely floored, Sœur Jeanne had to take refuge in a convulsion and a little howling.

On the day following this very unconvincing demonstration, Barré went to de Cerisay and protested that his actions were pure, and without passion or evil intentions. "Placing the ciborium on his head, he prayed that it might confound him, if he had made use of any malpractices, suggestions or persuasions in regard to the nuns in all this affair. When he had finished the Prior of the Carmelites stepped forward and made similar protestations and imprecations; he also held the holy ciborium on his head and prayed that the maledictions of Dathan and Abiram might fall upon him, if he had sinned or been at fault in this affair." Barré and the Prior were probably fanatical enough to be sincerely blind to the nature of their actions, and it was, no doubt, with a clear conscience that they swore these enormous oaths. Canon Mignon, we note, thought it wiser to put nothing on his head and to call down no thunderbolts.

Among the distinguished British tourists, who visited Loudun during the years of the possession, was young John Maitland, afterward Duke of Lauderdale. Maitland's father had told him of a Scottish peasant woman, through whose mouth a demon had corrected the bad Latin of a Presbyterian minister, and the young man had consequently grown up with an a priori belief in possession. In the hope of confirming this belief by direct observation of demoniacs, Maitland undertook two continental journeys, one to Antwerp, the other to Loudun. In both cases, alas, he was disappointed. At Antwerp, "I saw only some great Holland wenches hear exorcism patiently and belch most abominably." At Loudun, matters were a little livelier, but no more evidential. "When I had seen exorcising enough of three or four of them in the chapel, and could hear nothing but wanton wenches singing bawdy songs in French, I began to suspect a fourbe." He complained to a Jesuit, who commended his "holy curiosity" in coming to Loudun, and told him to go that evening to the parish church, where he would be amply satisfied. "In the parish church I saw a great many people gazing and a wench pretty well taught to play tricks, yet nothing so much as I have seen twenty tumblers or rope dancers do. Back I came to the nuns' chapel, where I saw the Jesuits still hard at work, at several altars, and one poor Capuchin, who was an object of pity, for he was possessed by a melancholy fancy that devils were running about his head, and was constantly applying relics. I saw the Mother Superior exorcised, and saw the hand, on which they would have made me believe the names Jesus, Maria, Joseph, were written by miracle, (but it was apparent to me that it was done with aquafortis); then my

patience was quite spent, and I went to a Jesuit and told him my mind fully. He still maintained a real possession, and I desired, for a trial, to speak a strange language. He asked, 'What language?' I told him, 'I would not tell; but neither he nor all these devils should understand me.' [Presumably it was the Gaelic of his native Scotland that Maitland had in mind.] He asked me if I would be converted upon the trial (for he had discovered I was no papist). I told him, 'That was not the question, nor could all the devils in hell pervert me; but the question was, if that was a real possession, and if any could understand me, I would confess it under my hand.' His answer was, 'These devils have not traveled,' and this I replied to with loud laughter."

According to the Franciscan, these devils were uneducated; according to the Jesuit, they had never traveled. Such explanations of their inability to understand foreign languages seemed a little lame, and for the benefit of those who were unwilling to accept them, the nuns and their exorcists added a couple of new and, so they hoped, more cogent explanations. If the devils could not speak Greek or Hebrew, it was because the pact they had made with Grandier included a special clause to the effect that in no circumstances would they speak Greek or Hebrew. And if that was not enough, then there was the final, the clinching explanation, that it was not God's will that these particular devils should speak with tongues. *Deus non vult* — or as Sister Jane was apt to say, in her pidgin Latin, *Deus non volo*. On the conscious level, the blunder was doubtless attributable to mere ignorance. But in an obscure way our ignorances are often voluntary. On the subliminal level, that *Deus non volo*, that "I, God, do not wish," may very well have expressed the sentiments of Jeanne's profounder ego.

The tests for clairvoyance seem to have been as uniformly unsuccessful as the language tests. De Cerisay, for example, arranged with Grandier that the latter should spend the day at the house of one of his colleagues; then went to the convent and, in the course of the exorcism, asked the Superior to say where, at that moment, the parson was. Without hesitation, Sœur Jeanne answered that he was in the great hall of the castle with M. d'Armagnac.

On another occasion one of Jeanne's devils affirmed that he had had to take a brief trip to Paris in order to escort the soul of a newly departed procureur du Parlement, called M. Proust, to the infernal regions. Inquiry revealed that there had never been a procureur called Proust and that no procureur had died on the day specified.

During Grandier's trial another of the Prioress's devils swore on the sacraments that Grandier's books of magic were stored in the house of Madeleine de Brou. The house was searched. There were no books of magic — but at least Madeleine had been well frightened, humiliated and insulted, which was all that really interested the Mother Superior.

In his accounts of the possession Surin admits that the nuns often failed to pass the ESP tests devised by examining magistrates, or arranged for the edification and amusement of distinguished tourists. In consequence of these failures many members of his own order refused to believe that the nuns were suffering from anything more supernatural than melancholy and furor uterinus. Surin points out that these skeptics

among his colleagues had never visited Loudun for more than a few days at a time. But like the spirit of God, the spirit of evil bloweth where and when it listeth. To be certain of seeing it blow, one had to be on the spot, day and night, for months at a stretch. Speaking as one of the resident exorcists, Surin affirms that Sœur Jeanne repeatedly read his thoughts before he uttered them. That a highly sensitive hysteric, such as Sœur Jeanne, could have lived nearly three years in the closest intimacy with a highly sensitive spiritual director, such as Father Surin, and not have developed some degree of telepathic rapport with him would be indeed surprising. Dr. Ehrenwald and others have pointed out that this kind of rapport between doctor and patient is sometimes established in the course of psychoanalytic treatment. The relationship between demoniac and exorcist is probably even more intimate than that between psychiatrist and neurotic. And in this particular case, let us remember, the exorcist was obsessed by the same devils as had invaded his penitent.

Surin, then, was fully convinced that the Prioress could, on occasion, successfully read the thoughts of those around her. But by dogmatic definition anyone who could read another's thoughts was possessed by a devil — or alternatively was the recipient of an extraordinary grace. The notion that ESP might be a natural faculty, latent in all minds and manifest in a few, never seems, for a single instant, to have entered his head, or, for that matter, the head of any of his contemporaries or predecessors. Either the phenomena of telepathy and clairvoyance did not exist, or they were the work of spirits, whom one might presume, unless the thought-reader were manifestly a saint, to be devils. Surin deviated from strict orthodoxy in only one point: he believed that devils could read minds directly, whereas the most authoritative theologians were of the opinion that they could do so only indirectly, by inference from the bodily changes accompanying thought.

In the *Malleus Maleficarum*, it is asserted, on the best possible authority, that devils cannot possess the will and the understanding, but only the body and such mental faculties as are most closely allied to the body. In many cases devils do not even possess the whole of the demoniac's body, but only a small part of it — a single organ, one or two muscle groups, or bones. Pillet de la Mesnardière, one of Richelieu's personal physicians, has left us a list of the names and local habitations of all the devils who took part in the possessions of Loudun. Leviathan, he tells us, occupied the center of the Prioress's forehead; Beherit was lodged in her stomach; Balaam under the second rib on the right side; Isacaaron under the last rib on the left. Eazaz and Caron lived respectively under the heart and in the center of the forehead of Sister Louise of Jesus. Sister Agnes de la Motte-Baracé had Asmodeus under the heart and Beherit in the orifice of the stomach. Sister Claire de Sazilly harbored seven devils in her body — Zabulon in the forehead, Nephthali in the right arm; Sans Fin, alias Grandier of the Dominations, under the second rib on the right; Elymi, to one side of the stomach; the Enemy of the Virgin, in the neck; Verrine in the left temple and Concupiscence, of the Order of Cherubim, in the left rib. Sister Seraphica had a bewitchment of the stomach, consisting of a drop of water guarded by Baruch or, in his absence, by Carreau.

Sister Anne d'Escoubleau had a magic barberry leaf in her stomach under the care of Elymi, who simultaneously watched over the purple damson in the stomach of her sister. Among the lay demoniacs Elizabeth Blanchard had a devil under each armpit, with another called Coal of Impurity in her left buttock. Yet others were lodged under the navel, below the heart and under the left pap. Four demons occupied the body of Françoise Filatreau — Ginnillion in the forebrain; Jabel, a wanderer through every part of the organism; Buffetison below the navel; and Dog's Tail, of the Order of Archangels, in the stomach.

From their many mansions within the victim's body the devils sallied forth, one at a time, to work upon the humors, the spirits, the senses and the phantasy. In this way they could influence the mind, even though they were unable to possess it. The will is free, and only God can look into the understanding. From this it followed that a possessed person could not directly read another's mind. If devils sometimes seemed to have ESP, it was because they were observant and clever, and could therefore infer a man's secret thoughts from his overt behavior.

At Loudun, ESP phenomena may have occurred (Surin at least was convinced of the fact). But if they did occur, they occurred spontaneously, and never in the test situations devised by the investigating lawyers and physicians. But the Church taught that devils could be compelled by the exorcist to do his bidding. If, when duly constrained, the demoniacs failed to demonstrate ESP under test conditions, then it followed, according to the rules of the theological and legal games, that they were not possessed. Unfortunately for Grandier and, indeed, for everyone else concerned, the games in this case were not played according to the rules.

From the mental criteria of possession we now pass to the physical. In regard to levitation, Sister Jane's devils had indicated at an early stage of the proceedings that, in their pact with Grandier, there was an article which specifically barred all supernatural floatings. And anyhow those who longed to see such marvels were displaying too much curiosity, *nimia curiositas*, a thing which Deus very definitely *non volo*. And yet though she herself had never professed to be levitated, some of her supporters confidently asserted, with M. de Nion, that on several occasions "the Mother Superior was carried off her feet and suspended in the air at a height of twenty-four inches." De Nion was an honest man, who probably believed what he said. Which only shows how extremely cautious one must always be in the matter of believing believers.

Some of the other nuns were less prudent than their Superior. Early in May, 1634, the devil Eazaz promised that he would raise Sister Louise of Jesus three feet into the air. Not to be outdone, Cerberus offered to do the same for Sister Catherine of the Presentation. Alas, neither of the young ladies succeeded in getting off the ground. A little later, Beherit, who was lodged in the pit of Sister Agnes de la Motte-Baracé's stomach, swore that he would cause Laubardemont's skull cap to leave his head and fly up to the roof of the chapel. A crowd assembled to see the miracle. It did not take place. After that, all requests for levitation were met with a polite refusal.

Tests for preternatural strength were carried out by Dr. Mark Duncan, the Scottish physician who was the Principal of the Protestant College at Saumur. Grasping the wrists of one of the demoniacs, he found it easy to prevent her from striking him or from breaking out of his control. After this humiliating display of diabolical weakness, the exorcists confined themselves to inviting unbelievers to stick their fingers in the good sisters' mouths, and see if the devil would bite them. When Duncan and the others declined the invitation, it was held by all right-thinking people to be an acknowledgment of the reality of the possession.

From all this it must be evident that if, as the Roman Church maintained, ESP phenomena and PK effects are the hallmark of diabolic possession (or, alternatively, are extraordinary graces), then the Ursulines of Loudun were merely hysterics who had fallen into the hands, not of the fiend, not of the living God, but of a crew of exorcists, all superstitious, all hungry for publicity, and some deliberately dishonest and consciously malevolent.

In the absence of any evidence for ESP or PK, the exorcists and their supporters were compelled to fall back on even less convincing arguments. The nuns, they asserted, must be possessed by devils; for how, otherwise, could one account for the shamelessness of their actions, the smut and irreligion of their conversation? "In what school of rakes and atheists," asks Father Tranquille, "have they learned to spew forth such blasphemies and obscenities?" And with a touch almost of boastfulness, de Nion assures us that the good sisters "made use of expressions so filthy as to shame the most debauched of men, while their acts, both in exposing themselves and in inviting lewd behavior from those present, would have astounded the inhabitants of the lowest brothel in the country." As for their oaths and blasphemies — these were "so unheard of that they could not have suggested themselves to a merely human mind."

How touchingly ingenuous this is! Alas, there is no horror which cannot suggest itself to human minds. "We know what we are," says Ophelia, "but we know not what we may be." Practically all of us are capable of practically anything. And this is true even of persons who have been brought up in the practice of the most austere morality. What is called "induction" is not confined to the lower levels of the brain and nervous system. It also takes place in the cortex, and is the physical basis of that ambivalence of sentiment which is so striking a feature of man's psychological life. Every positive begets its corresponding negative. The sight of something red is followed by a green afterimage. The opposing muscle groups involved in any action automatically bring one another into play. And on a higher level we find such things as a hatred that accompanies love, a derision begotten by respect and awe. In a word, the inductive process is ubiquitously active. Sister Jane and her fellow nuns had had religion and chastity drummed into them from childhood. By induction, these lessons had called into existence, within the brain and its associated mind, a psychophysical center, from which there emanated contradictory lessons in irreligion and obscenity. (Every collection of spiritual letters abounds in references to those frightful temptations against the faith and against chastity, to which the seekers after perfection are peculiarly subject.

Good directors point out that such temptations are normal and almost inevitable features of the spiritual life and must not be permitted to cause undue distress.) At ordinary times these negative thoughts and feelings were repressed or, if they rose into consciousness, were by an effort of will denied any outlet in speech or action. Weakened by psychosomatic disease, made frantic by her indulgence in forbidden and unrealizable phantasies, the Prioress lost all power to control these undesirable results of the inductive process. Hysterical behavior is infectious, and her example was followed by the other nuns. Soon the whole convent was throwing fits, blaspheming and talking smut. For the sake of a publicity which was thought to be good for their respective Orders and the Church at large, or with the deliberate intention of using the nuns as instruments for the destruction of Grandier, the exorcists did everything in their power to foster and increase the scandal. The nuns were forced to perform their antics in public, were encouraged to blaspheme for distinguished visitors and to tickle the groundlings with displays of extravagant immodesty. We have already seen that, at the beginning of her malady, the Prioress did not believe herself to be possessed. It was only after her confessor and the other exorcists had repeatedly assured her that she was full of devils that Sister Jane came at last to be convinced that she was a demoniac and that her business, henceforth, was to behave as such. And the same was true of some at least of the other nuns. From a pamphlet published in 1634 we learn that Sister Agnes had frequently remarked, during exorcism, that she was not possessed, but that the friars had said she was and had constrained her to undergo exorcism. And “on the preceding twenty-sixth of June, the exorcist having by mistake let fall some burning sulphur on Sister Claire’s lip, the poor girl burst into tears, saying that, ‘Since she had been told she was possessed, she was ready to believe it, but that she did not on that account deserve to be treated in this way.’ ” The work begun spontaneously by hysteria was completed by the suggestions of Mignon, Barré, Tranquille and the rest. All this was clearly understood at the time. “Granted that there is no cheat in the matter,” wrote the author of the anonymous pamphlet cited above, “does it follow that the nuns are possessed? May it not be that, in their folly and mistaken imagination, they believe themselves to be possessed, when in fact they are not?” This, continues our author, can happen to nuns in three ways. First, as a result of fasts, watchings and meditations on hell and Satan. Second, in consequence of some remark made by their confessor — something which makes them think they are being tempted by devils. “And thirdly, the confessor, seeing them act strangely, may imagine in his ignorance that they are possessed or bewitched, and may afterward persuade them of the fact by the influence he exercises over their minds.” In the present case the mistaken belief in possession was due to the third of these causes. Like the mercurial and antimonial poisonings of earlier days, like the sulfa poisoning and serum-fevers of the present, the Loudun epidemic was an “iatrogenic disease,” produced and fostered by the very physicians who were supposed to be restoring the patients to health. The guilt of the exorcists seems the more enormous when we remember that their proceedings were in direct violation of the rules laid down by the Church. According to these rules,

exorcisms were to be performed in private, the demons were not to be allowed to express their opinions, they were never to be believed, they were consistently to be treated with contempt. At Loudun, the nuns were exhibited to enormous crowds, their demons were encouraged to hold forth on every subject from sex to transubstantiation, their statements were accepted as gospel truth and they were treated as distinguished visitors from the next world, whose utterances had the authority almost of the Bible. If they blasphemed and talked bawdy — well, that was just their pretty way. And anyhow bawdry and blasphemy were box office. The faithful fairly lapped them up and came back, in their thousands, for more.

Supernatural blasphemy, more than human bawdry — and if these were not sufficient proofs of diabolic possession, what about the nuns' contortions? what about their exploits in the acrobatic field? Levitation had quickly been ruled out; but if the good sisters never rose into the air, they at least performed the most amazing feats on the floor. Sometimes, says de Nion, "they passed the left foot over the shoulder to the cheek. They also passed their feet over the head, until the big toes touched the nose. Others again were able to stretch their legs so far to the left and right that they sat on the ground, without any space being visible between their bodies and the floor. One, the Mother Superior, stretched her legs to such an extraordinary extent that, from toe to toe, the distance was seven feet, though she herself was but four feet high." Reading such accounts of the nuns' performances, one is forced to the conclusion that, as well as naturaliter Christiana, the feminine soul is naturaliter Drum-Majoretta. So far as the Eternal Feminine is concerned, a taste for acrobacy and exhibitionism would seem to be built in, only awaiting a favorable opportunity to manifest itself in handsprings and back somersaults. In the case of cloistered contemplatives, such opportunities are not of frequent occurrence. It took seven devils and Canon Mignon to create the circumstances in which, at long last, it became possible for Sister Jane to do the splits.

That the nuns found a deep satisfaction in their gymnastics is proved by de Nion's statement that, though for months at a stretch they were "tortured by the devils twice a day," their health in no way suffered. On the contrary, "those who were somewhat delicate seemed healthier than before the possession." The latent drum majorettes, the cabaret dancers in posse had been permitted to come to the surface and, for the first time, these poor girls without a vocation for prayer were truly happy.

Alas, their happiness was not unmitigated. They had their lucid intervals. They were aware, from time to time, of what was being done to them, of what they themselves were doing to the wretched man, with whom they had all frantically imagined themselves to be in love. We have seen that, as early as June 26th, Sister Claire had been complaining of the manner in which the exorcists were treating her. On July 3rd, in the chapel of the castle, she suddenly burst into tears and, between her sobs, declared that everything she had said about Grandier, during the preceding weeks, was a tissue of lies and calumnies, and that she had acted throughout under orders from Father Lactance, Canon Mignon and the Carmelites. Four days later, in a yet wilder passion of remorse

and rebellion, she tried to run away, but was caught as she left the church and brought back, struggling and weeping, to the good fathers. Emboldened by her example, Sister Agnes (that beau petit diable, whom Killigrew was to see, more than a year later, still groveling at the feet of her Capuchin) appealed to the spectators, who had come to see her show those now familiar legs of hers, begging with tears in her eyes to be delivered from her horrible captivity among the exorcists. But the exorcists always had the last word. Sister Agnes's entreaties, Sister Claire's attempt at flight, her retractations and qualms of conscience — these, it was only too obvious, were the work of Grandier's lord and protector, the devil. If a nun withdrew what she had said against the parson, that was proof positive that Satan was speaking through her mouth and that what she had originally affirmed was the indubitable truth.

It was in the case of the Prioress that this argument was used with the greatest effect. One of the judges wrote a brief summary of the counts on which Grandier was condemned. In the sixth paragraph of this document we read what follows. "Of all the accidents by which the good sisters were tormented, none seems stranger than that which befell the Mother Superior. The day after she gave her evidence, while M. de Laubardemont was taking the deposition of another nun, the Prioress appeared in the convent yard, dressed only in her chemise, and stood there for the space of two hours, in the pouring rain, bareheaded, a rope round her neck, a candle in her hand. When the parlor door was opened, she rushed forward, fell on her knees before M. de Laubardemont and declared that she had come to make amends for the offense she had committed in accusing the innocent Grandier. After which, having retired, she fastened the rope to a tree in the garden and would have hanged herself if the other sisters had not come running to the rescue."

Another man might have supposed that the Prioress had told a pack of lies and was suffering the well-deserved agonies of remorse. Not so M. de Laubardemont. To him it was manifest that this show of contrition had been put on by Balaam or Leviathan, constrained thereto by the spells of the magician. So far from exculpating the parson, Sœur Jeanne's confession and attempted suicide made it more certain than ever that he was guilty.

It was no good. From the prison they had built for themselves — the prison of obscene phantasies now objectified as facts, of deliberate lies now treated as revealed truths — the nuns would never be able to escape. The Cardinal had now gone so far that he could not afford to let them repent. And could they themselves have afforded to persist in that repentance? By retracting what they had said about Grandier they would condemn themselves, not merely in this world but also in the next. On second thought, they all decided to believe their exorcists. The good fathers assured them that what felt so horribly like remorse was only a diabolic illusion; that what looked in retrospect like the most monstrous of lies was actually a truth, and a truth so wholesome, so Catholic, that the Church was ready to guarantee both its orthodoxy and its correspondence with the facts. They listened, they suffered themselves to be persuaded. And when it became impossible to go on pretending to believe this abom-

inable nonsense, they took refuge in delirium. Horizontally, on the level of everyday reality, there was no escape from their prison. And as for upward self-transcendence — there was no question, in the midst of all this fiendish preoccupation with fiends, of lifting up the soul to God. But downward the road was still wide open. And downward they went, again and again — sometimes voluntarily, in a desperate effort to escape from the knowledge of their guilt and humiliation; sometimes, when their madness and the suggestions of the exorcists were too much for them, against their will and in spite of themselves. Down into convulsions; down into swinish squalor or maniacal rage. Down, far down, below the level of personality, into that subhuman world, in which it seemed natural for an aristocrat to play tricks for the amusement of the mob, for a nun to blaspheme and strike indecent postures and shout unmentionable words. And then down, still further, down into stupor, down into catalepsy, down into the ultimate bliss of total unconsciousness, of absolute and complete oblivion.

Chapter Eight

“DULY CONSTRAINED, THE devil is bound to tell the truth.” Granted this major premise, there was literally nothing which could not be made to follow. Thus, M. de Laubardemont disliked the Huguenots. Seventeen devil-infested Ursulines stood ready to swear on the Blessed Sacrament that the Huguenots were Satan’s friends and faithful servants. This being the case, the Commissioner felt himself fully justified in disregarding the Edict of Nantes. The Calvinists of Loudun were first deprived of their cemetery. Let them bury the carcasses of their dead somewhere else. Then came the turn of the Protestant College. The school’s commodious buildings were confiscated and handed over to the Ursulines. In their rented convent there had been no room for the crowds of pious sightseers who thronged the city. Now at last the good sisters could be exorcised with all the publicity they deserved and without having to traipse out in all weathers to Sainte-Croix or the Eglise du Château.

Hardly less detestable than the Huguenots were those bad Catholics who obstinately refused to believe in Grandier’s guilt, in the reality of the possession and in the absolute orthodoxy of the Capuchins’ new doctrine. Lactance and Tranquille fulminated against them from the pulpit. These people, they bawled, were no better than heretics; their doubt was a mortal sin and they were already as good as damned. Mesmin and Trincant, meanwhile, went about accusing the skeptics of disloyalty to the King and (yet worse) conspiracy against His Eminence. And through the mouths of Mignon’s nuns and the Carmelites’ lay hysterics, a score of devils announced that they were all magicians who had trafficked with Satan. From some of M. Barré’s demoniacs at Chinon came word that even the irreproachable Bailli, M. de Cerisay, was a dabbler in the Black Art. Another demoniac denounced two priests, Fathers Buron and Frogier, for attempted rape. On the accusation of the Prioress, Madeleine de Brou was charged with witchcraft, arrested and imprisoned. Thanks to their wealth and high connections,

her relatives managed to get her released on bail. But after Grandier's trial was over, Madeleine was rearrested. An appeal to Messieurs des Grands-Jours (the judges of the peripatetic Court of Appeal, which traveled through the kingdom, looking into scandals and miscarriages of justice) brought an injunction against Laubardemont. The Commissioner retorted with an injunction against the appellant. Fortunately for Madeleine, the Cardinal did not think her important enough to justify a quarrel with the judiciary. Laubardemont was instructed to drop the case, and the Prioress had to forego the pleasures of revenge. As for poor Madeleine, she did what her lover had dissuaded her from doing after her mother's death — took the veil and disappeared forever into a convent.

Other accusations, meanwhile, were flying as thick as dust on the wind. Now it was the local debutantes who were singled out for attack. In her playful way, Sister Agnes would declare that nowhere in the world was there so much unchastity as at Loudun. Sister Claire would name names and specify sins. Sister Louise and Sister Jane would add that all the girls were budding witches, and the proceedings would end with the usual indecent postures, filthy language and shrieks of maniacal laughter.

On other occasions respectable gentlemen were accused of having attended the Sabbath and kissed the devil's rump. And their wives had fornicated with incubi, their sisters had bewitched the neighbor's chickens, their maiden aunts had caused a virtuous young man to be impotent on his wedding night. And all the time, through the tiny airholes in his bricked-up windows, Grandier was magically distributing his sperm — to the witches as a reward, to the wives and daughters of the Cardinalists in the spiteful hope of bringing them to undeserved shame.

All these malignant ravings were recorded, verbatim, by Laubardemont and his clerks. Those who were accused by the devils — those, in other words, who were obnoxious to the Commissioner and the exorcists — were summoned to Laubardemont's office, were questioned, browbeaten, menaced with legal proceedings that might cost them their lives.

One day in July, on a tip from Beherit, Laubardemont had the doors of Sainte-Croix closed on a considerable assemblage of young ladies. The girls were then frisked by Capuchins. But the pacts with Satan which they were all supposed to be carrying about their persons were not revealed by even the most thorough search. Although Beherit had been duly constrained, for some odd reason he had failed to tell the truth.

Week in, week out, Capuchins, Recollets and Carmelites yelled and gesticulated from every pulpit; but the skeptics were not convinced, the protests against the iniquitous handling of the case against Grandier grew louder and more frequent. Anonymous rhymers made epigrams on the Commissioner. Setting old tunes to new words, men sang about him derisively in the streets and over their wine in the taverns. Under cover of darkness, pasquinades against the good fathers were nailed to the church doors. Interrogated, Dog's Tail and Leviathan named a Protestant and some schoolboys as the culprits. They were arrested; but nothing could be proved against them, and they had to be set free again. Sentries were now posted outside the churches. The only result

was that the libels were pinned to other doors. On the second of July the exasperated Commissioner issued a proclamation. Henceforth it was expressly forbidden to do or even say anything "against the nuns or other persons of the said Loudun, afflicted by evil spirits, or against their exorcists, or against those who assist the exorcists." Anyone who disobeyed was liable to a fine of ten thousand livres or, if it should seem necessary, to yet graver pains, both financial and bodily. After this the critics became more cautious; the devils and the exorcists could give vent to their calumnies without risk of contradiction. In the words of the anonymous author of some contemporary *Remarques et Considérations pour la Justification du Curé de Loudun*, "God, who can only speak truth, is now dethroned and the Evil One put in His place, who utters nought but cheats and vanity; and this vanity must be believed as truth. Is not this to resuscitate paganism? People say, moreover, that it is most convenient that the devil should name so many magicians and sorcerers; for by this means they will be tried, their goods will be confiscated and a share will be given, if he likes, to Pierre Menuau, who, however, may be content, as may also his cousin, Canon Mignon, with the death of the parson and the ruin of the town's most respectable families."

At the beginning of August Father Tranquille published a short treatise, setting forth and justifying the new doctrine: "Duly constrained, the devil is bound to tell the truth." The book had the approval of the Bishop of Poitiers and was hailed by Laubardemont as the last word in orthodox theology. Doubt was no longer permissible. Grandier was a magician and so, in a smaller way, was that insolently upright M. de Cerisay. Excepting those whose parents were good Cardinalists, all the girls of Loudun were whores and witches. And half the town's population was already damned for lack of faith in the devils.

Two days after the publication of Tranquille's book, the Bailli summoned a meeting of notables. Loudun's predicament was discussed and it was decided that de Cerisay and his Lieutenant, Louis Chauvet, should go to Paris and petition the King for protection against the high-handed actions of his Commissioner. The only dissentient voices were those of Moussaut, the Public Prosecutor, Menuau, and Hervé, the Lieutenant Criminel. Asked by de Cerisay whether he accepted the new doctrine and approved of what was being done to his fellow citizens in the names of Balaam, Dog's Tail and company, Hervé replied that "the King, the Cardinal and the Bishop of Poitiers believed in the possession, and that, so far as he was concerned, was enough." For our twentieth-century ears, this appeal to the infallibility of political bosses has a remarkably modern ring.

Next day de Cerisay and Chauvet set out for Paris. They were the bearers of a petition in which the just complaints and apprehensions of the people of Loudun were clearly set forth. Laubardemont's proceedings were severely blamed and the Capuchins' new doctrine was shown to be "against the express prohibition of God's law" and contrary to the authority of the Fathers of the Church, of St. Thomas and of the whole faculty of the Sorbonne, which had formally condemned a similar doctrine in 1625. In view of all this the petitioners begged His Majesty to order the Sorbonne to examine

Tranquille's book and further requested that all those defamed by the demons and their exorcists might be permitted to appeal to the Parlement of Paris, "which is the natural judge of such matters."

At court the two magistrates sought out Jean d'Armagnac, who immediately went to the King and asked him to receive them. The answer was a blunt refusal. De Cerisay and Chauvet left their petition with the King's private secretary (who was the Cardinal's creature and an avowed enemy of Loudun), then took the homeward road.

In their absence Laubardemont had issued another proclamation. It was now forbidden, under pain of a fine of twenty thousand livres, to hold any public meeting whatsoever. After this the devil's enemies gave no further trouble.

The preliminary investigations were now completed; it was time at last for the trial. Laubardemont had hoped to recruit some at least of the judges from among the principal magistrates of Loudun. He was disappointed. De Cerisay, de Bourgneuf, Charles Chauvet and Louis Chauvet — all refused to be parties to a judicial murder. The Commissioner tried cajolery; then, when that failed, hinted darkly at the consequences of His Eminence's displeasure. In vain. The four lawyers stood firm. Laubardemont was forced to look further afield — to Chinon and Châtellerault, to Poitiers and Tours and Orléans, to La Flèche and Saint-Maixent and Beaufort. In the end he had a panel of thirteen complaisant magistrates and, after some trouble with an overscrupulous lawyer called Pierre Fournier, who refused to play the game according to the Cardinal's rules, a thoroughly reliable Public Prosecutor.

By the middle of the second week of August everything was ready. After hearing Mass and taking Communion, the judges assembled in the Carmelite convent and began listening to the evidence accumulated by Laubardemont during the preceding months. The Bishop of Poitiers had formally guaranteed the genuineness of the possession. This meant that real devils had spoken through the mouths of the Ursulines, and these real devils had sworn again and again that Grandier was a sorcerer. But, "duly constrained, the devil is bound to tell the truth." Therefore . . . Q.E.D.

Grandier's condemnation was so certain, and the certainty was so notorious, that tourists were already pouring into Loudun for the execution. During those hot August days thirty thousand persons — more than twice the normal population of the city — were competing for beds and meals and stake-side seats.

Most of us find it very hard to believe that we could ever have enjoyed the spectacle of a public execution. But before we start to congratulate ourselves on our finer feelings, let us remember, first, that we have never been permitted to see an execution and, second, that when executions were public, a hanging seemed as attractive as a Punch and Judy show, while a burning was the equivalent of a Bayreuth Festival or an Oberammergau Passion Play — a great event for which it was worth while to make a long and expensive pilgrimage. When public executions were abolished, it was not because the majority desired their abolition; it was because a small minority of exceptionally sensitive reformers possessed sufficient influence to have them banned. In one of its aspects, civilization may be defined as a systematic withholding from individuals

of certain occasions for barbarous behavior. In recent years we have discovered that when, after a period of withholding, those occasions are once more offered, men and women, seemingly no worse than we are, have shown themselves ready and even eager to take them.

The King and the Cardinal, Laubardemont and the judges, the townspeople and the tourists — all of them knew what was going to happen. The only person for whom the condemnation was not a foregone conclusion was the prisoner. Even as late as the end of the first week in August, Grandier still believed that he was just an ordinary defendant in a trial, whose irregularities were accidental and would be set straight as soon as attention had been called to them. His *Factum* (the written statement of his case) and the letter which he smuggled out of prison for delivery to the King, were evidently written by a man who was still convinced that his judges could be moved by statements of fact and logical arguments, that they took an interest in Catholic doctrine and might be expected to bow to the authority of accredited theologians. Pathetic illusion! Laubardemont and his tame magistrates were the agents of a man who was not concerned with fact, or logic, or law, or theology, but only with personal vengeance and a political experiment, carefully designed to show how far, in this third decade of the seventeenth century, the methods of totalitarian dictatorship could safely be pushed.

When the devils' depositions had all been heard, the prisoner was called to the bar. In the *Factum*, which was read aloud by defending counsel, Grandier answered his infernal accusers, stressed the illegality of the proceedings and Laubardemont's bias, denounced the exorcists for their systematic prompting of the demoniacs, and proved that the Capuchins' new doctrine was a dangerous heresy. The Judges sat there, shifting in their chairs with unconcealed impatience, whispering among themselves, laughing, picking their noses, doodling with squeaky quills on the paper before them. Grandier looked at them, and suddenly it was manifest to him that there was no hope.

He was taken back to his cell. In the windowless attic the heat was horribly oppressive. Lying sleepless on his pile of straw, he could hear the drunken singing of some Breton sight-seers, who had come for the big show and were trying to while away the dreary time of waiting. Only a few more days now. . . . And all this horror was undeserved. He had done nothing, he was absolutely innocent. Yes, absolutely innocent. But their malice had pursued him, patiently, persistently; and now this huge machine of organized injustice was closing in on him. He could fight, but they were invincibly strong; he could use his wits and his eloquence, but they did not even listen. Now there was nothing but to beg for mercy, and they would only laugh. He was trapped — snared like one of those rabbits he had caught as a boy in the fields at home. Screaming in the noose, and the noose grew tighter as the animal struggled, but never quite tight enough to stop the screaming. To stop the screaming you had to knock it over the head with a stick. And suddenly he found himself overcome by a horrible mingling of anger and frustration and self-pity and an agonizing fear. To the screaming rabbit he had brought the release of a single, merciful blow. But they — what did they have in

store for him? The words he had written at the end of his letter to the King came back to him, "I remember that, while I was a student at Bordeaux, fifteen or sixteen years ago, a monk was burned for sorcery; but the clergy and his fellow monks did their best to save him, even though he had made confession of his crime. But in my own case I may say, not without resentment, that monks and nuns and my own colleagues, canons like myself, have conspired to destroy me, though I have not been convicted of anything remotely resembling sorcery." He closed his eyes and, in imagination, saw the monk's distorted face through the roaring curtain of flame. "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. . . ." And then the screaming became inarticulate, became the screaming of the snared rabbit, and there was nobody to take mercy, nobody to put an end to the agony.

The terror became so unbearable that, involuntarily, he cried aloud. The sound of his own voice startled him. He sat up and looked around him. The darkness was impenetrable. And suddenly he was overcome with shame. Crying in the night, like a woman, like a frightened child! He frowned to himself, he clenched his fists. Nobody should ever call him a coward. Let them do their worst! He was ready for it. They should find his courage greater than their malice, stronger than any torment their cruelty could devise.

The parson lay down again — but not to sleep. He had the will to heroism; but his body was in a panic. The heart throbbed uncontrollably. Shuddering with the mindless fears of the nervous system, his muscles were made yet tenser by his conscious effort to overcome that purely physical terror. He tried to pray; but "God" was a word without meaning, "Christ" and "Mary" were empty names. He could think only of the approaching ignominy, of death in unspeakable pain, of the monstrous injustice of which he was the victim. It was all completely unthinkable; and yet it was a fact, it was actually happening. If only he had taken the Archbishop's advice and left the parish eighteen months ago! And why had he refused to listen to Guillaume Aubin? What madness had made him stay and let himself be arrested? The fancy of what might have been made the present reality seemed even more unbearable. Even more unbearable. . . . And yet he resolved to bear it. Manfully. They hoped to see him cringe and cower. But never would he give them that satisfaction, never. Gritting his teeth, he pitted his will against their spite. But the blood was still banging in his ears, and as he turned uneasily on the straw, he realized that his body was bathed in a profuse sweat.

The horror of the night was immeasurably long; and yet here, in an instant, was the dawn, and he was nearer by a day to that other, that infinitely worse and final horror.

At five o'clock the cell door was opened and the jailer announced a visitor. It was Father Ambrose, of the Order of Augustinian Canons, who had come in pure charity to ask if he could be of any help or comfort to the prisoner. Grandier hastily dressed, then knelt and began the general confession of a whole lifetime of faults and shortcomings. They were all old sins, for which he had done penance and received absolution — old sins, and yet brand new; for now, for the first time, he recognized them for what they were: barriers against grace, doors deliberately slammed in the face of God. In words

and forms he had been a Christian, he had been a priest; in thoughts and acts and feelings he had never worshiped anything but himself. "My kingdom come, My will be done" — the kingdom of lust and greed and vanity, the will to cut a figure, the will to trample underfoot, to triumph and exult. For the first time in his life he knew the meaning of contrition — not doctrinally, not by scholastic definition, but from within, as an anguish of regret and self-condemnation. When the confession was over, he was bitterly weeping, not for what he was to suffer, but for what he had done.

Father Ambrose pronounced the formula of absolution, then gave him communion, and spoke a little about the will of God. Nothing was to be asked for, he said, and nothing refused. Except for sin, all that might happen to one was not merely to be accepted with resignation; it was to be willed, moment by moment, as God's will for that particular moment. Suffering was to be willed, affliction was to be willed, the humiliations resulting from personal weakness and ineptitude were to be willed. And in the act of being willed they would be understood. And in the act of being understood they would be transfigured, would be seen, not with the eyes of the natural man, but as God saw them.

The parson listened. It was all in the Bishop of Geneva, it was all in St. Ignatius. Not only had he heard it all before; he had even said it — a thousand times and much more eloquently, much more forcefully than poor dear Father Ambrose could ever hope to say it. But the old man was in earnest, the old man obviously knew what he was talking about. Mumbled in a toothless mouth, without elegance, even without grammar — the words were like lamps, suddenly illuminating a mind that had been darkened by too much brooding over past hurts, too much relishing of future pleasures or imaginary triumphs.

"God is here," mumbled the tired old voice, "and Christ is now. Here in your prison, now in the midst of your humiliations and your sufferings."

The door was opened again, and it was Bontemps, the jailer. He had reported Father Ambrose's visit to the Commissioner, and M. de Laubardemont had sent peremptory orders that His Reverence was to leave immediately and not return. If the prisoner wanted to see a priest, he could ask for Father Tranquille or Father Lactance.

The old friar was hustled out of the room; but his words remained, and the meaning of them was becoming clearer and clearer. "God is here and Christ is now" — and, so far as the soul was concerned, could be nowhere else and at no other instant. All this pitting of the will against his enemies, all this defiance of unjust fate, these resolves to be heroic and indomitable — how futile, considering that God was always present, how utterly pointless!

At seven the parson was taken to the Carmelite convent, for another sight of the judges assembled to condemn him. But God was among them; even when Laubardemont tried to trip him up in his answers, Christ was there. On some of the magistrates the calm dignity of Grandier's manner made a profound impression. But Father Tranquille explained it very simply: it was all the devil's doing. What looked like calm

was merely the brazen insolence of hell; and this dignity was nothing but the outward expression of unrepentant pride.

The judges saw the defendant only three times in all. Then, very early on the morning of the eighteenth, after the usual pious preliminaries, they rendered their decision. It was unanimous. Grandier was to be subjected to "the question" both ordinary and extraordinary; he was then to kneel at the doors of St. Peter's and St. Ursula's and there, with a rope round his neck and a two-pound taper in his hand, ask pardon of God, the King and Justice; next, he was to be taken to the Place Sainte-Croix, tied to a stake and burned alive; after which his ashes were to be scattered to the four winds. The sentence, writes Father Tranquille, was truly celestial; for Laubardemont and his thirteen judges were "as much in heaven by reason of their piety and their fervent devotions as on earth through the exercise of their functions."

No sooner had sentence been pronounced than Laubardemont sent orders to the surgeons Mannoury and Fourneau to proceed immediately to the prison. Mannoury was the first to arrive; but was so much disconcerted by what Grandier said to him about his earlier exploits with the needle that he retired in a panic, leaving to his colleague the task of preparing the victim for execution. The judges' orders were that Grandier should be shaved all over — head, face and body. Fourneau, who was convinced of the parson's innocence, respectfully apologized for what he had to do, then set to work.

The parson was stripped. The razor passed over his skin. In a few minutes his body was as hairless as a eunuch's. Next, the rich black curls were sheared to a bristly stubble; the scalp was lathered and shaved clean. Then it was the turn of the Mephistophelean mustaches and the little beard.

"And now the eyebrows," said a voice from the doorway.

Startled, they turned their heads. It was Laubardemont. Reluctantly, Fourneau did as he was told. That face, which so many women had found so irresistibly handsome, was now the mask, grotesquely bald, of the clown in a harlequinade.

"Good," said the Commissioner, "good! And now the fingernails."

Fourneau was puzzled.

"The fingernails," Laubardemont repeated. "You will now pull out the fingernails."

This time the surgeon refused to obey. Laubardemont began by being genuinely astonished. What was wrong? After all, the man was a convicted sorcerer. But the convicted sorcerer, the other retorted, was still a man. The Commissioner grew angry; but in spite of all his threats, the surgeon stood firm. There was no time to send for another operator, and Laubardemont had to be content with the partial disfigurement of his victim by shaving.

Dressed only in a long nightshirt and a pair of worn out slippers, Grandier was taken downstairs, bundled into a closed carriage and driven to the courthouse. Townspeople and tourists thronged the approaches; but only a favored few — high officials, men of rank with their wives and daughters, half a dozen faithful Cardinalists from among the bourgeoisie — were permitted to enter. Silks rustled; there was a rich glow of velvet, a glittering of jewels, a smell of civet and ambergris. In full canonicals Father

Lactance and Father Tranquille entered the judgment hall. With consecrated whisks they scattered holy water over everything within range, intoning as they did so the formulas of exorcism. Then a door was opened and, in his nightgown and slippers, but with a skull cap and biretta on his shaven head, Grandier appeared on the threshold. After he too had been thoroughly sprinkled, the guards led him up the whole length of the hall and made him kneel before the judges' bench. His hands were tied behind his back, and it was therefore impossible for him to bare his head. The clerk of the court stepped forward, snatched off his hat and cap and flung them down contemptuously on the floor. At the sight of that pale, hairless clown, several of the ladies giggled hysterically. An usher called for silence. The clerk put on his spectacles, cleared his throat and started to read the sentence — first, half a page of legal jargon; then a long description of the *amende honorable* which the prisoner was to make; then the condemnation to death at the stake; then a digression about the commemorative plaque to be set up in the Ursulines' chapel at a cost of one hundred and fifty livres, chargeable to the prisoner's confiscated estate; and finally, as a kind of afterthought, a casual mention of the tortures, ordinary and extraordinary, which were to precede the burning. "Pronounced at the said Loudun, August 18, 1634, and executed," the clerk concluded emphatically, "the same day."

There was a long silence. Then Grandier addressed his judges.

"My lords," he said slowly and distinctly, "I call God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost to witness, together with the Virgin, my sole advocate, that I have never been a sorcerer, have never committed sacrilege and have never known any other magic than that of Holy Scripture, the which I have always preached. I adore my Savior and pray that I may partake in the merit of the blood of His Passion."

He raised his eyes to heaven; then, after a moment, lowered them again to look at the Commissioner and his thirteen stipendiaries. In a tone almost of intimacy, as though they were his friends, he told them that he was afraid for his salvation — afraid lest the hideous torments prepared for his body might drive his poor soul to despair and, through that gravest of sins, to eternal damnation. Surely their lordships did not intend to kill a soul? And, that being so, surely they would be pleased, in their mercy, to mitigate, if only a little, the rigor of his punishment?

He paused for a few seconds and looked questioningly from face to stony face. From the women's benches came the sound of another of those half-suppressed giggles. Once again the parson knew that there was no hope — no hope except in this God who was here and would not desert him, this Christ who was now, who would go on being now at every moment of his martyrdom.

Opening his mouth again, he began to talk about the martyrs. These holy witnesses had died for the love of God and the honor of Jesus Christ — had died on the wheel, in the flames, under the sword, riddled with arrows, torn and devoured by wild beasts. Never would he venture to compare himself with such as these; but at least he might hope that an infinitely merciful God would permit him to atone by his sufferings for all the sins of a vain and disordered life.

The parson's words were so touching, and the fate which awaited him so monstrously cruel, that all but his most inveterate enemies were moved to pity. Some of the women who had giggled at the antics of the clown now found themselves in tears. The ushers called for silence. In vain. The sobbing was uncontrollable. Laubardemont was greatly disturbed. Nothing was going according to plan. Better than anyone else he must have known that Grandier was not guilty of the crimes for which he was to be tortured and burned alive. And yet, in some sublimely Pickwickian sense, the parson was a sorcerer. On the basis of a thousand pages of worthless evidence, thirteen hireling judges had said so. Therefore, though certainly false, it must somehow be true. Now, by all the rules of the game, Grandier should be spending his last hours in despair and rebellion, cursing the devil who had ensnared him and the God who was sending him to hell. Instead of which, the scoundrel was talking like a good Catholic and giving the most touching, the most heart-rending example of Christian resignation. The thing was insufferable. And what would His Eminence say, when he heard that the only result of this carefully stage-managed ceremony had been to convince the spectators that the parson was innocent? There was only one thing to do, and Laubardemont, who was a man of decision, promptly did it.

"Clear the court," he ordered.

The ushers and the archers of the guard hastened to obey. Angrily protesting, the gentry and their ladies were herded out into the corridors and the waiting rooms. The doors were closed behind them. Save for Grandier, his guards and judges, the two friars and a handful of city officials, the great hall was empty.

Laubardemont now addressed the prisoner. Let him confess his guilt and reveal the names of his accomplices. Then and only then the judges might consider his appeal for mitigation of their sentence.

The parson answered that he could not name accomplices he had never had, nor confess to crimes of which he was completely innocent. . . .

But Laubardemont wanted a confession; indeed, he urgently needed one — needed it in order to confound the skeptics and silence the critics of his proceedings. From severe, his manner became, all of a sudden, positively genial. He gave orders that Grandier's hands should be untied, then pulled a paper out of his pocket, dipped a pen in the inkpot and offered it to the prisoner. If he signed, it would be unnecessary to resort to torture.

According to all the rules, a convicted criminal should have jumped at this chance to buy himself a little mercy. Gauffridi, for example, the priestly magician of Marseilles, had ended by putting his name to anything and everything. But once again Grandier refused to play the game.

"I must beg your lordship to excuse me," he said.

"Just a little signature," Laubardemont wheedled. And when the other protested that his conscience would not permit him to affirm a lie, the Commissioner implored him to reconsider his decision — for his own sake, to spare his poor body unnecessary

pain, to save his imperiled soul, to cheat the devil and reconcile himself to the God he had so grievously offended.

According to Father Tranquille, Laubardemont actually wept while he was making this final appeal for a confession. We need not doubt the friar's word. Richelieu's hangman possessed a genuine gift of tears. The eye-witness account of the last hours of Cinq-Mars and de Thou paints a picture of Laubardemont blubbering like a crocodile over the young men he had just condemned to death. In the present case tears were as unavailing as threats had been. Grandier persisted in his refusal to sign a false confession. To Lactance and Tranquille, the fact was further, final proof of guilt. It was Lucifer who had closed the prisoner's mouth and hardened his heart against repentance.

Laubardemont turned off his tears. In a tone of cold fury he told the parson that this was the last proffer of mercy. Would he sign? Grandier shook his head. Laubardemont beckoned to the captain of the guards and ordered him to take the prisoner upstairs to the torture chamber. Grandier made no outcry. All he asked was that Father Ambrose might be sent for, to be with him during his ordeal. But Father Ambrose was not available. After his unauthorized visit to the prison, he had been ordered to leave the city. Grandier then asked for the assistance of Father Grillau, the Warden of the Cordeliers. But the Cordeliers were in bad odor for their refusal to accept the Capuchins' new doctrine, or to have anything to do with the possession. And anyhow Grillau was known to have been on friendly terms with the parson and his family. Laubardemont refused to let him be sent for. If the prisoner wished for spiritual consolation, he might address himself to Lactance and Tranquille — the most relentless of his enemies.

"I see what it is," said Grandier bitterly. "Not content with torturing my body, you wish to destroy my soul by plunging it into despair. One day you will have to answer for this to my Redeemer."

Since Laubardemont's time, evil has made some progress. Under Communist dictators, those who come to trial before a People's Court invariably confess the crimes of which they have been accused — confess them even when they are imaginary. In the past, confession was by no means invariable. Even under torture, even at the stake, Grandier protested his innocence. And Grandier's case was by no means unique. Many persons, women no less than men, went through similar experiences with the same indomitable constancy. Our ancestors invented the rack and the iron maiden, the boot and the water torture; but in the subtler arts of breaking the will and reducing the human being to subhumanity, they still had much to learn. In a sense, it may be, they did not even wish to learn these things. They had been brought up in a religion which taught that the will is free, the soul immortal; and they acted upon these beliefs even in relation to their enemies. Yes, even the traitor, even the convicted devil-worshiper had a soul which might yet be saved; and the most ferocious judges never refused him the consolations of a religion which went on offering salvation to the very end. Before and during execution, a priest was always at hand, doing his best to reconcile the departing criminal with his Creator. By a kind of blessed inconsistency, our fathers respected the

personality even of those whom they were tormenting with red-hot pincers or breaking on the wheel.

For the totalitarian of our more enlightened century, there is no soul and no Creator; there is merely a lump of physiological raw material molded by conditioned reflexes and social pressures into what, by courtesy, is still called a human being. This product of the man-made environment is without intrinsic significance and possesses no rights to self-determination. It exists for Society and must conform to the Collective Will. In practice, of course, Society is nothing but the national State, and as a matter of brute fact, the Collective Will is merely the dictator's will-to-power, sometimes mitigated, sometimes distorted to the verge of lunacy, by some pseudoscientific theory of what, in the gorgeous future, will be good for an actuarial abstraction labeled "Humanity." Individuals are defined as the products and the instruments of Society. From this it follows that the political bosses, who claim to represent Society, are justified in committing any conceivable atrocity against such persons as they may choose to call Society's enemies. Physical extermination by shooting (or, more profitably, by overwork in a slave labor camp) is not enough. It is a matter of observable fact that men and women are not the mere creatures of Society. But official theory proclaims that they are. Therefore it becomes necessary to depersonalize the "enemies of Society" in order to transform the official lie into truth. For those who know the trick, this reduction of the human to the subhuman, of the free individual to the obedient automaton, is a relatively simple matter. The personality of man is far less monolithic than the theologians were compelled by their dogmas to assume. The soul is not the same as the Spirit, but is merely associated with it. In itself, and until it consciously chooses to make way for the Spirit, it is no more than a rather loosely tied bundle of not very stable psychological elements. This composite entity can quite easily be disintegrated by anyone ruthless enough to wish to try and skillful enough to do the job in the right way.

In the seventeenth century this particular kind of ruthlessness was hardly thinkable, and the relevant skills were therefore never developed. Laubardemont was unable to extract the confession he so urgently needed; and though he would not allow the parson to choose his confessor, he conceded in principle that even a convicted sorcerer had a right to spiritual consolation.

The services of Tranquille and Lactance were offered and, very naturally, refused. Grandier was then given a quarter of an hour in which to reconcile his soul with God and prepare for his martyrdom.

The parson knelt and began to pray out loud.

"Great God and Sovereign Judge, help of the helpless and oppressed, succor me, give me the strength to bear the pains to which I have been condemned. Receive my soul into the beatitude of your saints, remit my sins, forgive this vilest and most despicable of your servants.

"Searcher of hearts, you know I am in no wise guilty of the crimes imputed to me, and that the fire which I must undergo is but the punishment of my concupiscence.

Redeemer of mankind, forgive my enemies and my accusers; but cause them to see their sins, that they may repent. Holy Virgin, protector of the penitent, graciously receive my unhappy mother into your heavenly company; console her for the loss of a son who fears no other pains but those which she must endure on that earth, from which he is so soon to depart.”

He was silent. Not my will, but Thine. God here, among the instruments of torture; Christ now, in the hour of extremest anguish.

La Grange, the captain of the guards, was recording in his notebook what he remembered of the parson’s prayer. Laubardemont approached and asked the young officer what he was writing. Informed, he grew angry and wanted to confiscate the notebook. But La Grange defended his property, and the Commissioner had to be content with ordering him on no account to show what he had written to anyone else. Grandier was an unrepentant magician, and unrepentant magicians are not supposed to pray.

In Father Tranquille’s account of the trial and execution, and in the other narratives written from the official standpoint, the parson is made to behave in the most naïvely diabolistic manner. Instead of praying, he sings an improper song. Presented with the Crucifix, he turns away in abhorrence. The name of the Blessed Virgin never passes his lips; and though he sometimes pronounces the word “God,” it is obvious to every right-thinking person that what he really means is “Lucifer.”

Unfortunately for their thesis, these pious propagandists were not the only ones to leave a record of the proceedings. Laubardemont might enjoin secrecy; but he had no way of compelling La Grange to obey his orders. And there were other unbiased observers of the events — some of them, such as Ismaël Boulliau, the astronomer, known to us by name, others whose surviving manuscripts remain anonymous.

The clock struck, and the prisoner’s brief respite was at an end. He was bound, stretched out on the floor, with his legs, from the knees to the feet, enclosed between four oaken boards, of which the outer pair were fixed, while the two inner ones were movable. By driving wedges into the space separating the two movable boards, it was possible to crush the victim’s legs against the fixed framework of the machine. The difference between ordinary and extraordinary torture was measured by the number of progressively thicker wedges hammered home. Because it was invariably (though not immediately) fatal, the question extraordinary was administered only to condemned criminals, who were to be executed without delay.

While the prisoner was being prepared for the question, Fathers Lactance and Tranquille exorcised the ropes, the boards, the wedges and the mallets. This was very necessary; for if they were not driven out of these objects, the devils might, by their infernal arts, prevent the torture from being as excruciating as it ought to be. When the friars had finished their sprinkling and their muttering, the executioner stepped forward, raised his ponderous mallet and, like a man splitting a knotty piece of timber, brought it down with all his force. There was an uncontrollable shriek of pain. Father Lactance bent over the victim and asked in Latin if he would confess. But Grandier only shook his head.

The first wedge was driven home between the knees. Then another was inserted at the level of the feet and when that had been hammered to the head, the thin end of a third and heavier wedge was tapped into position immediately below the first. There was the thud of the mallet, the shriek of pain — then silence. The victim's lips were moving. Was it a confession? The friar cupped his ear; but all he could hear was the word "God," repeated several times, and then, "Do not abandon me, do not allow this pain to cause me to forget you." He turned to the executioner and told him to get on with his work.

At the second stroke on the fourth wedge there was a loud cracking sound. Several bones of the feet and ankles had broken. For a moment, the parson fainted away.

"Cogne, cogne!" Father Lactance yelled to the executioner. "Hit, hit!"

The prisoner opened his eyes again.

"Father," he whispered, "where is the charity of St. Francis?"

The disciple of St. Francis vouchsafed no answer.

"Cogne!" he said again. And when the blow had fallen, he turned back to the prisoner. "Dicas, dicas!"

But there was nothing to tell. A fifth wedge was inserted.

"Dicas!" The mallet hung suspended. "Dicas!"

The victim looked at the executioner, looked at the friar, then closed his eyes.

"Torture me as you like," he said in Latin. "In a little while it will be all one, forever."

"Cogne!"

The blow fell, and there was a noise of splintering bone.

Breathless and sweating in the summer heat, the executioner handed the mallet to his assistant. And now it was Tranquille's turn to talk to the prisoner. In a tone of sweet reasonableness, he set forth the manifest advantages of a confession — advantages not merely in the next world, but here and now.

The parson listened and, when he had finished, asked him a question.

"Father," he said, "do you believe on your conscience that a man ought, merely to be delivered from pain, to confess a crime he has not committed?"

Brushing aside these obviously Satanic sophisms, Tranquille continued his urgings.

The parson whispered that he was very ready to own up to all his real offenses.

"I have been a man, I have loved women. . . ."

But that was not what Laubardemont and the Franciscans wished to hear.

"You have been a magician, you have had commerce with devils."

And when the parson protested yet once more that he was innocent, a sixth wedge was hammered home, then a seventh, then an eighth. From ordinary, the question had reached the traditional limits of the extraordinary. The bones of the knees, the shins, the ankles, the feet — all were shattered. Their splinters projected through the mangled flesh and, along with the blood, there was an ooze of marrow. But still the friars could extort no admission of guilt — only that screaming and, in the intervals, the whispered name of God.

The eighth wedge was the last of the regular set. Laubardemont called for more — for a cruelty beyond the merely extraordinary. The executioner went out to the storeroom and came back with two new wedges. When he learned that they were no thicker than the last of the original set, Laubardemont flew into a rage and threatened the man with a whipping. But meanwhile, as the friars pointed out, wedge number seven at the knee could be replaced by a duplicate of wedge number eight at the ankle. One of the new wedges was inserted between the boards and this time it was Father Lactance who swung the mallet.

“Dicas!” he shouted after every blow. “Dicas, dicas!”

Not to be outdone, Father Tranquille took the mallet from his colleague, adjusted the tenth wedge and, in three mighty strokes, banged it home.

Grandier had fainted again, and it almost looked as if he might be dead before they could get him to the stake. Besides, there were no more wedges. Reluctantly — for this stubborn frustrater of all his best-laid plans deserved to be tortured forever — Laubardemont called a halt. This first phase of Grandier’s martyrdom had lasted three quarters of an hour. The machine was taken apart, and the executioners lifted their victim onto a stool. He looked down at his horribly mangled legs, then at the Commissioner and his thirteen accomplices.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “attendite et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus. Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow.”

On Laubardemont’s orders he was carried to another room and laid on a bench. It was a stifling day in August; but the parson was shivering with the cold of extreme surgical shock. La Grange covered him with a rug and filled a glass of wine for him to drink.

Meanwhile Lactance and Tranquille were trying to make the best of what had been a deplorably bad job. To all who questioned them they answered that indeed it was true — the magician had refused to confess, even under torture. And the reason was only too obvious. Grandier had called upon God to give him strength, and his God, who was Lucifer, had made him insensible to pain. They might have gone on all day, wedge after wedge; it would have availed them nothing.

To prove to himself that this was true, another of the exorcists, Father Archangel, resolved to make a little experiment. This experiment was described, a few days later, in a public discourse, which was recorded as follows by one of the auditors. “The said Father Archangel remarked that the devil had granted him (Grandier) insensibility inasmuch as, being stretched out on a bench, with his knees, which had been crushed by the Gehenna, covered with a green rug, this rug being raised by the said Father somewhat roughly, and the said Father even poking his legs and knees, he did not complain of the pain which the said Father might be causing him.” From this it followed, first, that Grandier had felt no pain, second, that Satan had made him insensible, third, that (to quote the Capuchin’s very words) “when he spoke favorably of God, he meant the devil, and when he said that he detested the devil, he meant that he detested God,”

and, fourthly and finally, that every precaution must be taken to make sure that, at the stake, he should feel the full effect of the flames.

When Father Archangel had gone, it was the turn, yet once more, of the Commissioner. For more than two hours Laubardemont sat beside his victim, employing all the arts of persuasion to extort the signature which would excuse his own illegal proceedings, would whitewash the Cardinal, would justify the future use of inquisitorial methods in every case where hysterical nuns could be induced by their confessors to accuse the enemies of the regime. That signature was indispensable; but try as he might — and M. de Gastynes, who was present at the interview, declared that he had “never heard anything so abominable” as those specious arguments, those cajoleries, those hypocritical sighs and sobs — the Commissioner was unable to get what he wanted. To everything he could say, Grandier replied that it was morally impossible for him to put his name to a statement which he knew, and God knew (and doubtless the Commissioner knew) to be absolutely false. In the end Laubardemont had to admit defeat. He called La Grange and told him to send for the executioners.

They came. Grandier was dressed in a shirt impregnated with sulphur; then a rope was tied round his neck and he was carried down to the courtyard, where a cart, drawn by six mules, was standing ready. He was hoisted up and set on a bench. The driver shouted to his beasts; and preceded by a company of archers and followed by Laubardemont and the thirteen tame magistrates, the cart rumbled slowly into the street. A halt was made, and the sentence was once more read aloud. Then the mules moved on. At the door of St. Peter’s — the door through which, for so many years the parson had come and gone with his air of confident and majestic dignity — the procession came to a standstill. The two-pound taper was placed in Grandier’s hand and he was lifted down from the cart to beg pardon, as the sentence had prescribed, for his crimes. But there were no knees to kneel on, and when they lowered him to the ground, he fell forward on his face. The executioners had to lift him up again. At this moment, Father Grillau, the Warden of the Cordeliers, issued from the church and, pushing past the archers of the guard, bent over the prisoner and embraced him.

Deeply moved, Grandier asked for his prayers and the prayers of all his community — the only one in Loudun which had steadily refused to co-operate with the parson’s enemies.

Grillau promised to pray for the condemned man, urged him to put his trust in God and the Redeemer, then gave him a message from his mother. She was praying for him at the feet of Our Lady, and she sent her blessing.

Both men were weeping. A murmur of sympathy ran through the crowd. Laubardemont heard it and was furious. Would nothing ever go as he had planned it? By all the rules, the rabble should be trying to lynch this trafficker with the devil. Instead of which, they were lamenting his cruel fate. He hurried forward and peremptorily ordered the guards to send the Cordelier away. In the scuffle which followed, one of the attendant Capuchins took the opportunity to hit Grandier over his shaven head with a cudgel.

When order had been restored, the parson said what he had to say — but added, after asking pardon of God, the King and Justice, that, though a great sinner, he was completely innocent of the crime for which he was now to suffer.

While the executioners were carrying him back to the cart, a friar harangued the tourists and townspeople, assuring them that they would be committing a very grave sin if they ventured to pray for this unrepentant magician.

The procession moved on. At the door of the Ursuline convent the ceremony of asking pardon of God, King and Justice was repeated. But when the Clerk ordered him to ask pardon of the Prioress and all the good sisters, the prisoner answered that he had never done them any harm, and could only pray to God that He would forgive them. Then seeing Moussaut, the husband of Philippe Trincant and one of the most implacable of his enemies, he asked him to forget the past and added with a curious little touch of that courtly politeness for which he had been famous, “*je meurs votre serviteur — I die your most obedient servant.*” Moussaut turned away his face and refused to answer.

Not all of Grandier’s enemies were so un-Christian. René Bernier, one of the priests who had testified against him when he was accused of improper behavior, pushed his way through the crowd in order to ask the parson’s forgiveness and to offer to say a Mass on his behalf. The parson took his hand and gratefully kissed it.

In the Place Sainte-Croix more than six thousand persons were jammed into a space which would have been uncomfortably narrow for half their number. Every window had been rented, and there were spectators even on the roofs and among the gargoyles of the church. A grandstand had been set up for the judges and Laubardemont’s particular friends; but the rabble had occupied every seat and had to be dislodged by the guards at the point of the pike and halberd. It was only after a pitched battle that these very important personages could be seated.

Even the most important personage of all had the greatest difficulty in reaching the place appointed for him. It took the prisoner half an hour to cover the last hundred yards to the stake, and his guards were compelled to fight for every inch of the way.

Not far from the north wall of the church a stout post, fifteen feet high, had been driven into the ground. About its base were piled layers of faggots, logs and straw, and since the victim was no longer capable of standing on those shattered feet of his, a small iron seat had been fastened to the post a couple of feet above the firewood. For all the importance of the event, all its enormous notoriety, the expenses of the execution were remarkably modest. A certain Deliard was paid nineteen livres sixteen sols for “the wood used for the bonfire of Master Urbain Grandier, together with the post to which he was tied.” For “an iron seat weighing twelve pounds, at the rate of three sols four deniers per pound, together with six nails wherewith to attach the said seat to Master Urbain Grandier’s stake,” Jacquet, the locksmith, received forty-two sols. For one day’s hire of five horses, used by the archers kindly lent for the occasion by the Provost of Chinon, and for one day’s hire of six mules, a cart and two men, the widow Morin was paid one hundred and eight sols. Four livres were spent on the

prisoner's two shirts — the plain one in which he was tortured and the sulphured article in which he was burned. The two-pound candle used in the ceremony of the amende honorable cost forty sols, and wine for the executioners, thirteen. Add to these expenses the payment for work done by the doorkeeper of Sainte-Croix and a couple of assistants, and you had a grand total of twenty-nine livres, two sols and six deniers.

Grandier was taken down from the cart, lifted onto the iron seat and securely lashed to the post. His back was turned to the church, his face to the grandstand and the façade of a house in which he had once felt himself as much at home as in his own parsonage. It was the house where he had made all those jokes at the expense of Adam and Mannoury, where he had entertained the company with readings from Catherine Hammon's letters, where he had taught a young girl Latin and seduced her, where he had transformed his best friend into the most relentless of his enemies. Louis Trincant was sitting now at the window of his drawing room, and with him were Canon Mignon and Thibault. At the sight of the hairless clown who had once been Urbain Grandier, they laughed triumphantly. The parson looked up and met their eyes. Thibault waved his hand as though to an old friend, and M. Trincant, who was sipping white wine and water, raised his glass and drank to the father of his bastard grandchild.

Partly in shame — for he remembered those Latin lessons and his abandonment of the desperately weeping girl — and partly out of a fear lest the spectacle of their triumph might move him to bitterness and make him forget that God was even here, even now, Grandier dropped his eyes.

A hand touched him on the shoulder. It was La Grange, the captain of the guard, who had come to ask the parson's forgiveness for what he had been obliged to do. Then he made two promises: the prisoner would be allowed to make a speech and, before the fire was lighted, he would be strangled. Grandier thanked him, and La Grange turned away to give his orders to the executioner, who immediately prepared a noose.

Meanwhile the friars were busy with their exorcisms.

"Ecce crucem Domini, fugite partes adversae, vicit leo de tribu Juda, radix David. Exorciso te, creatura ligni, in nomine Dei patris omnipotentis, et in nomine Jesus Christi filii ejus Domini nostri, et in virtute Spiritus sancti. . . ."

They sprinkled the wood, the straw, the glowing coals of the brazier that stood ready beside the pyre; they sprinkled the earth, the air, the victim, the executioners, the spectators. This time, they swore, no devil should prevent the wretch from suffering to the extreme limit of his capacity for pain. Several times the parson tried to address the crowd; but no sooner had he begun than they threw holy water in his face or hit him on the mouth with an iron crucifix. When he flinched from the blow, the friars would shout triumphantly that the renegade was denying his Redeemer. And all the time Father Lactance kept calling on the prisoner to confess.

"Dicas!" he shouted.

The word caught the fancy of the onlookers and for the brief and horrible remainder of his life the Recollet was always known in Loudun as Father Dicas.

"Dicas! Dicas!"

For the thousandth time Grandier answered that he had nothing to confess.

"And now," he added, "give me the kiss of peace and let me die."

At first Lactance refused; but when the crowd protested against such an un-Christian malignity, he climbed onto the pile of faggots and kissed the parson's cheek.

"Judas!" cried a voice, and a score of others took up the refrain.

"Judas, Judas. . . ."

Lactance heard them and, in a passion of uncontrollable rage, jumped down from the pyre, seized a twist of straw and, lighting it in the brazier, waved the flame in the victim's face. Let him confess who he was — the devil's servant! Let him confess, let him renounce his master!

"Father," said Grandier with a calm and gentle dignity that contrasted strangely with the almost hysterical malice of his accusers, "I am about to meet the God who is my witness that I have spoken the truth."

"Confess," the friar fairly screamed. "Confess! . . . You have only a moment to live."

"Only a moment," the parson repeated slowly. "Only a moment — and then I go to that just and fearful judgment to which, Reverend Father, you too must soon be called."

Without waiting to hear anything more, Father Lactance threw his torch onto the straw of the pyre. Hardly visible in the bright afternoon sunshine, a little flame appeared and began to creep, growing larger as it advanced, toward the bundles of dry kindling. Following the Recollet's example, Father Archangel set fire to the straw on the opposite side of the pyre. A thin blue haze of smoke rose into the windless air. Then, with a cheerful crackling, like the noise that accompanies the drinking of mulled wine on a winter evening, by the hearth, one of the faggots caught fire.

The prisoner heard the sound and, turning his head, saw the gay dancing of flames.

"Is this what you promised me?" he called to La Grange in a tone of agonized protest.

And suddenly the divine presence was eclipsed. There was no God, no Christ, nothing but fear.

La Grange shouted indignantly at the friars and tried to extinguish the nearest flames. But there were too many of them to be stamped out; and here was Father Tranquille setting fire to the straw behind the parson's back, here was Father Lactance lighting another torch at the brazier.

"Strangle him," he ordered. And the crowd took up the cry. "Strangle, strangle!"

The executioner ran for his noose, only to discover that one of the Capuchins had surreptitiously knotted the rope so that it could not be used. By the time the knots were undone, it was too late. Between the executioner and the victim he had intended to save from this last agony there was a wall of flame, a billowing curtain of smoke. Meanwhile, with whisk and holy water pot, the friars were ridding the bonfire of its remaining devils.

"Exorciso te, creatura ignis. . . ."

The water hissed among the burning logs and was turned in an instant to steam. From the further side of the wall of flames came a sound of screaming. The exorcism, it was evident, had begun to take effect. The friars paused for a moment to give thanks; then, with faith renewed and energy redoubled, they set to work again.

“*Draco nequissime, serpens antique, immundissime spiritus. . .*”

At this moment a large black fly appeared from nowhere, bumped into Father Lactance’s face and dropped on the opened pages of his book of exorcisms. A fly — and as large as a walnut! And Beelzebub was the Lord of Flies!

“*Imperat tibi Martyrum sanguis,*” he shouted above the roaring of the fire, “*Imperat tibi continentia Confessorum. . .*”

With a prematurely loud buzz the insect took wing and disappeared into the smoke.

“*In nomine Agni, qui ambulavit super aspidem et basiliscum. . .*”

All at once the screams were strangled by a paroxysm of coughing. The wretch was trying to cheat them by dying of suffocation! To frustrate this latest of Satan’s wiles, Lactance hurled a whiskful of holy water into the smoke.

“*Exorciso te, creatura fumi. Effugiat atque discedat a te nequitia omnis ac versutia diabolicae fraudis. . .*”

It worked! The coughing stopped. There was another cry, then silence. And suddenly, to the consternation of the Recollet and his Capuchin colleagues, the blackened thing at the center of the bonfire began to speak.

“*Deus meus,*” it said, “*miserere mei Deus.*” And then, in French, “Forgive them, forgive my enemies.”

The coughing began again. A moment later the cords which bound him to the post gave way and the victim tumbled sideways among the blazing logs.

The fire burned on, the good Fathers continued to sprinkle and intone. Suddenly a flock of pigeons came swooping down from the church and started to wheel around the roaring column of flame and smoke. The crowd shouted, the archers waved their halberds at the birds, Lactance and Tranquille splashed them on the wing with holy water. In vain. The pigeons were not to be driven away. Round and round they flew, diving through the smoke, singeing their feathers in the flames. Both parties claimed a miracle. For the parson’s enemies the birds, quite obviously, were a troop of devils, come to fetch away his soul. For his friends, they were emblems of the Holy Ghost and living proof of his innocence. It never seems to have occurred to anyone that they were just pigeons, obeying the laws of their own, their blessedly other-than-human nature.

When the fire had burned itself out, the executioner scattered four shovelfuls of ashes, one toward each of the cardinal points of the compass. Then the crowd surged forward. Burning their fingers, men and women rummaged in the hot flaky dust, hunting for teeth, for fragments of the skull and pelvis, for any cinder showing the black smear of burned flesh. A few, no doubt, were merely souvenir hunters; but most of them were in search of relics, for a charm to bring luck or compel reluctant love, for a talisman against headaches or constipation or the malice of enemies. And these charred

odds and ends would be no less effective if the parson were guilty of the crimes imputed to him than if he were innocent. The power to work miracles lies, not in the source of a relic, but in its reputation, however acquired. Constant throughout history, a certain percentage of human beings can be restored to health or happiness by practically anything that has been well advertised — from Lourdes to witchcraft, from the Ganges to patent medicines and Mrs. Eddy, from the thaumaturgical arm of St. Francis Xavier to those “pigges bones,” which Chaucer’s Pardoner carried in a glass for all to see and worship. If Grandier were what the Capuchins had said he was, that was excellent: even in ashes, a sorcerer is richly charged with power. And his relics would be charged with no less power if the parson were guiltless; for in that case he would be a martyr, equal to the best of them. In a little while most of the ashes had disappeared. Horribly tired and thirsty, but happy in the thought that their pockets were bulging with relics, tourists and townsfolk drifted away in search of a drink and the chance to take off their shoes.

That evening, after only the briefest of rests and the lightest of refreshments, the good Fathers reassembled at the Ursuline convent. The Prioress was exorcised, duly went into convulsions and in response to Lactance’s questioning, announced that the black fly was none other than Baruch, the parson’s familiar. And why had Baruch hurled himself so rudely on the book of exorcisms? Sœur Jeanne bent herself backward until her head touched her heels, then did the splits and finally answered that he had been trying to throw the book into the fire. It was all so edifying that the friars decided to break off for the night and begin again next morning, in public.

On the following day the sisters were taken to Sainte-Croix. Many of the tourists were still in town, and the church was crowded to the doors. The Prioress was exorcised and, after the usual preliminaries, identified herself as Isacaaron, the only devil presently at home; for all the other tenants of her body had gone back to hell for the wild party which had been organized for the reception of Grandier’s soul.

Judiciously questioned, Sœur Jeanne confirmed what the exorcists had been saying all along — namely, that when Grandier had said “God” he always meant “Satan,” and that when he had renounced the devil, he had actually been renouncing Christ.

Lactance then wanted to know what kind of torments the parson was suffering down there, and was evidently rather disappointed when the Prioress told him that the worst of them was the privation of God.

No doubt, no doubt. But what were the physical tortures?

After a good deal of pressing Sœur Jeanne replied that Grandier “had a special torture for each of the sins he had committed, especially those of the flesh.”

And what about the execution? Had the devil been able to prevent the wretch from suffering?

Alas, replied Isacaaron, Satan had been frustrated by the exorcisms. If the fire had not been blessed, the parson would have felt nothing. But thanks to the labors of Lactance, Tranquille and Archangel he had suffered excruciatingly.

But not so excruciatingly, cried the exorcist, as he was suffering now! And with a kind of gloating horror, Father Lactance brought the conversation back to hell. In which of hell's many mansions was the magician lodged? How had Lucifer received him? What precisely was being done to him at this moment? Sister Jane's Isacaaron did his best to answer. Then, when his imagination began to flag, Sister Agnes was thrown into fits, and Beherit was invited to say his piece.

That evening, at the convent, the friars noticed that Father Lactance looked pale and seemed strangely preoccupied. Was he feeling ill?

Father Lactance shook his head. No, he was not ill. But the prisoner had asked to see Father Grillau, and they had denied him. Could it be that they had committed a sin by making it impossible for him to confess?

His colleagues did their best to reassure him, but without success. Next morning, after a sleepless night, Lactance was in a fever.

"God is punishing me," he kept repeating, "God is punishing me."

He was bled by Mannoury, was purged by M. Adam. The fever subsided for a little, then returned. And now he began to see things, to hear things. Grandier under torture, screaming. Grandier at the stake, asking God to forgive his enemies. And then devils, swarms of devils. They entered his body, they set him raving, they made him kick his legs and bite the pillows, they filled his mouth with the most horrible blasphemies.

On September 18th, exactly one month after Grandier's execution, Father Lactance knocked the crucifix out of the hand of the priest who had administered Extreme Unction, and died. Laubardemont paid for a handsome funeral, and Father Tranquille preached a sermon, in which he extolled the Recollet as a model of holiness and proclaimed that he had been murdered by Satan, who had thus revenged himself for all the affronts and humiliations inflicted on him by this most heroic of God's servants.

The next to go was Mannoury, the surgeon. One night, shortly after the death of Father Lactance, he was sent for to bleed a sick man, who lived near the Porte du Martrai. On the way home, his servant with a lantern walking ahead of him, he saw Urbain Grandier. Naked, as when he had been pricked for the devil's marks, the parson was standing in the Rue du Grand-Pavé, between the counterscarps of the castle and the Cordeliers' garden. Mannoury halted, and his servant saw him staring into the vacant blackness, heard him asking someone, who wasn't there, what he wanted. There was no answer. Then the surgeon began to tremble all over. A moment later, he fell to the ground, screaming for pardon. Within the week he, too, was dead.

After that it was the turn of Louis Chauvet, one of the upright judges who had refused to take part in the hellish tomfoolery of the trial. The Prioress and most of her nuns had accused him of being a magician, and M. Barré was able to confirm their testimony through the mouths of several demoniacs in his own parish, at Chinon. Fear of what might happen to him, if the Cardinal should choose to take these ravings seriously, preyed on Chauvet's mind. He sank into a melancholy, then into madness, then into a decline, which killed him before the winter was out.

Tranquille was of tougher fiber than the others. It was not until 1638 that he finally succumbed to the consequences of a too exclusive preoccupation with evil. By his hatred of Grandier he had helped to raise the devils; by his scandalous insistence on public exorcisms, he had done his best to keep them alive. Now the devils turned against him. God is not mocked; he was reaping what he had deliberately sown.

At first the obsessions were rare and of no great force. But little by little Dog's Tail and Leviathan gained the upper hand. During the last year of his life, Father Tranquille was behaving like the nuns whose hysteria he had so carefully fostered — rolling on the floor, cursing, yelling, sticking out his tongue, hissing, barking, neighing. Nor was this all. The “stinking Owl of Hell,” as his Capuchin biographer picturesquely nicknames the devil, plagued him with hardly resistible temptations against chastity, against humility, against patience, faith and devotion. He called on the Virgin, on St. Joseph, on St. Francis and St. Bonaventure. In vain. The possession went from bad to worse.

On Whitsunday, 1638, Tranquille preached his last sermon; for two or three days more he managed to say Mass; then he took to his bed with a sickness nonetheless mortal for being obviously psychosomatic. “He threw up ordures, which were judged to be diabolic Pacts. . . . Every time he took a little nourishment, the devils made him retch with a violence that would have killed the healthiest person.” And meanwhile he suffered from headaches and pains in the heart, “of a kind of which there is no mention in Galen or Hippocrates.” By the end of the week “he was vomiting filths and stinks so insupportable, that his attendants had to throw them out without delay, so fearfully was the room infected by them.” On the Monday after Whitsun, Extreme Unction was administered. The devils left the dying man and forthwith entered the body of another friar, who was kneeling by the bed. The new demoniac became so frantic, that he had to be held by half a dozen of his colleagues, who had the greatest difficulty in preventing him from kicking the hardly lifeless corpse.

On the day of the funeral, Father Tranquille lay in state. “No sooner was the service over than the people flung themselves upon him. Some applied their rosaries to his body, others cut from his habit little pieces which they preserved as relics. So great was the press that the coffin was smashed, and the body disturbed in countless ways, each man tugging it toward himself so as to get his snippet. And assuredly the good Father would have been left stark naked, had it not been for several persons of honor, who formed a guard to protect him from the indiscreet devotion of the people, who, after cutting up the habit, would probably have mangled the corpse itself.”

The shreds of Father Tranquille's habit, the ashes of the man he had tortured and burned alive. . . . Everything was equivocal. The magician had died a martyr; his fiendish executioner was now a saint — but a saint who was possessed by Beelzebub. Only one thing was certain: a fetish is a fetish. So lend me your knife; after you with the shears!

Chapter Nine

GRANDIER WAS GONE, but Eazaz remained, Coal of Impurity remained, Zabulon went marching along. To many, the fact seemed unaccountable. But where the cause persists, the effects will always follow. It was Canon Mignon and the exorcists who had originally crystallized the nuns' hysteria into the forms of devils, and it was Canon Mignon and the exorcists who now kept the possession alive. Twice every day, Sundays excepted, the demoniacs were put through their tricks. As might have been expected, they were no better — they were even a little worse — than they had been while the magician was alive.

Toward the end of September Laubardemont informed the Cardinal that he had appealed to the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits had a reputation for learning and ability. From these masters of all the sciences the public would surely "accept, with less contradiction, the evidence for the truth of this possession."

Many Jesuits, including Vitelleschi, the General of the Order, were for politely refusing to have anything to do with the possession. But it was too late to raise objections. Laubardemont's invitation was speedily followed by a royal command. Through the King, His Eminence had spoken.

On the fifteenth of December, 1634, four Jesuit Fathers rode into Loudun. Among them was Jean-Joseph Surin. Father Bohyre, the Provincial of Aquitaine, had selected him for the task of exorcism, and had then, on the advice of his council, countermanded the order. Too late. Surin had already left Marennnes. The original appointment was permitted to stand.

Surin was now thirty-four, nel mezzo del cammin, his character formed, the pattern of his thinking already fixed. His fellow Jesuits thought highly of his abilities, recognized his zeal and respected the austerity of his life, the fervor of his pursuit of Christian perfection. But their admiration was tempered by certain misgivings. Father Surin had all the makings of a man of heroic virtue; but there was something about him which caused the more prudent of his colleagues and superiors to shake their heads. They detected in him a certain extravagance, a too-muchness in act and word. He liked to say that "the man who does not have excessive ideas in regard to God will never come near Him." And of course it was true — provided always that the excessive ideas were of the right kind. Some of the young Father's excessive ideas, though orthodox enough, seemed to deviate from the highroad of discretion. For example, he maintained that we ought to be ready to die for the people with whom we live, "while at the same time preserving ourselves from them as though they were our enemies" — a proposition hardly calculated to improve the quality of communal living in the Society's houses and colleges. As well as antisocial, his excessive ideas made him overrighteous to the point of scrupulosity. "We ought," he said, "to bewail our vanities as sacrileges, to punish with the utmost severity our ignorances and inadvertences." And to this inhuman rigorism in the name of perfection he added what seemed to many of his elders and contemporaries an indiscreet and even dangerous interest in those "extraordinary graces," which are

sometimes vouchsafed to the holy, but which are entirely unnecessary to salvation or to sanctification. "From his earliest childhood," his friend, Father Anginot was to write many years later, "he has felt powerfully drawn toward such things, and has esteemed them too highly. It has been necessary to humor him in this and to allow him to travel by a road which was not the common and ordinary way."

At the fishing port of Marennes, where he had spent most of the four years following the close of his "second novitiate" at Rouen, Surin acted as director to two remarkable women — Mme. du Verger, the wife of a prosperous and pious merchant, and Madeleine Boinet, the converted daughter of a Protestant tinker. Both were active contemplatives and both (Mme. du Verger especially) had been favored by "extraordinary graces." Surin's interest in their visions and ecstasies was so great that he copied out long extracts from Mme. du Verger's diary and wrote circumstantial accounts of both women for circulation, in manuscript, among his friends. There was, of course, nothing wrong in all this. But why pay so much attention to a subject so essentially ambiguous, so full of snares and perils? Ordinary graces were the only ones that would bring a soul to heaven; so why bother with the extraordinary — all the more so as one never knew whether such things were from God, from imagination, from deliberate fraud or from the devil? If Father Surin wanted to go to perfection, let him go by that royal road which was good enough for the rank and file of the Society — the road of obedience and active zeal, the road of vocal prayer and discursive meditation.

What made matters worse, so far as his critics were concerned, was the fact that Surin was a sick man, a victim of neurosis or, as it was then called, "melancholy." For at least two years before his coming to Loudun, he had suffered from incapacitating psychosomatic disturbances. The slightest physical effort brought on intense muscular pains. When he tried to read, he was soon forced by excruciating headaches to give up. His mind was darkened and confused, and he lived in the midst of "agonies and pressures so extreme that he did not know what would become of him." Could it be that the singularities of his conduct and his teaching were all the products of a sick mind in an unhealthy body?

Surin records that many of his fellow Jesuits were not convinced, to the very end, that the nuns were genuinely possessed. Even before coming to Loudun, he himself was troubled by no such doubts. He was persuaded that the world is at all times visibly and miraculously interpenetrated by the supernatural. And this conviction was the source, in its turn, of a wholesale credulity. People had merely to say that they had had dealings with saints, or angels, or devils; Surin believed them without question or criticism. Most conspicuously he lacked "the discernment of spirits." Indeed, he was wanting even in judgment and plain common sense. Surin was that not uncommon paradox — a man of great abilities who is, at the same time, a bit of a fool. He could never have echoed the opening words of Monsieur Teste: *La bêtise n'est pas mon fort*. Along with intelligence and sanctity, silliness was his strong point.

Surin's first sight of the demoniacs was at one of the public exorcisms, at which Tranquille, Mignon and the Carmelites were officiating. He had come to Loudun, con-

vinced of the reality of the possession; this spectacle raised his conviction to a higher power of certainty. The devils, he knew, were absolutely genuine, "and God gave him so much compassion for the state of the possessed that he could not restrain his tears." He was wasting his sympathy — or at least misplacing it. "The devil," writes Sœur Jeanne, "often beguiled me by a certain pleasure, which I took in my agitations and the other extraordinary things he did to my body. I took an extreme delight in hearing these things spoken about, and was happy that I gave the impression of being more gravely tormented than the others." Unduly prolonged, every pleasure turns into its opposite; it was only when the exorcists went too far that the good sisters ceased to enjoy their possession. Taken in moderation, the public exorcisms, like any other kind of orgy, were intrinsically agreeable. This was a fact, which persons accustomed to self-examination in the light of a strict morality, could hardly fail to find disturbing. Despite the fact that souls were held to be guiltless of the sinful acts performed while in the paroxysm of possession, Sœur Jeanne suffered from a chronic remorse of conscience. "And no wonder; for I perceived very clearly that in most instances I was the prime cause of my disorders, and that the devil only acted upon the cues I myself had given him." She knew that when she behaved outrageously, it was not because she had freely willed the outrage. Nevertheless, "I feel certain, to my great confusion, that I made it possible for the devil to do such things, and that he would not have had the power to do them if I had not allied myself with him. . . . When I made a strong resistance, all these furies would disappear as suddenly as they had come; but, alas, it happened only too frequently that I did not make a great effort to resist them." Perceiving that they were guilty, not of what they did when they were out of their wits, but of what they had failed to do before their hysteria got the better of them, the nuns suffered excruciatingly from a sense of guilt. From this conviction of sin the debauches of possession and exorcism came as so many happy holidays. Tears were in order, not for these frenzies and indecencies, but for the lucid intervals between them.

To Surin, long before his arrival in Loudun, had been assigned the honor of exorcising the Mother Superior. When Laubardemont told her that he had called in the Jesuits and that she was to have as her director the ablest and holiest young Father in the Province of Aquitaine, Sœur Jeanne had been greatly alarmed. Jesuits were not like these slow-witted Capuchins and Carmelites, whom it had always been so easy to deceive. They were clever, they were well educated; and this Father Surin was holy into the bargain, a man of prayer, a great contemplative. He would see through her at once, would know when she was really possessed and when she was only acting, or at least collaborating with her devils. She pleaded with Laubardemont to be left to her old exorcists — to dear Canon Mignon, to the good Father Tranquille and the worthy Carmelites. But Laubardemont and his master had made up their minds. They needed acceptable evidence for the possession, and only the Jesuits could provide it. With a bad grace, Sœur Jeanne submitted. During the weeks which preceded Surin's arrival, she did her best to find out everything that could be discovered about her new exorcist. She wrote letters to friends in other convents, asking for information; she pumped the

local Jesuits. Her purpose in all this was to “study the humor of the man to whom I had been assigned,” and, having found out all she could, “to behave toward him with as little openness as possible, without giving him any information about the state of my soul. To this resolve I was only too faithful.” When the new exorcist arrived, she knew enough about his life at Marennnes to be able to make sarcastic references to ta Boinette (her devils’ derisive name for Madeleine Boinet). Surin held up his hands in amazement. It was a miracle — infernal no doubt, but manifestly genuine.

Sœur Jeanne had made up her mind to keep her secrets to herself, and she acted upon this resolution by feeling and expressing an intense aversion for her new exorcist and by going into fits (in her own words, “being troubled inwardly and outwardly by the demons”) whenever Surin tried to question her about the condition of her soul. When he approached, she ran away and, if compelled to listen to him, she howled and stuck out her tongue. In all this, Sœur Jeanne remarks, “she greatly exercised his virtue. But he had the charity to attribute her disposition to the devil.”

All the nuns suffered from remorse and a conviction, in spite of their devils, of having gravely sinned; but the Prioress had a more pressing and a more conspicuous reason than any of her sisters for feeling guilty. Shortly after the execution of Grandier, Isacaaron, who was a devil of concupiscence “took advantage of my slackness to give me most horrible temptations against chastity. He performed an operation upon my body, the strangest and most furious that could be imagined; thereafter he persuaded me that I was great with child, in such sort that I firmly believed the fact and exhibited all the signs.” She confided in her sisters, and soon a score of devils had announced the pregnancy. The exorcists reported the matter to the Commissioner and the Commissioner reported to His Eminence. Menstruation, he wrote, had ceased for the past three months; there were constant vomitings, with a derangement of the stomach, secretion of milk and a marked enlargement of the belly. As the weeks passed, the Prioress became more and more painfully agitated. If she bore a child, she herself and, with her, the community of which she was the head and her whole Order, would be disgraced. She was filled with a despair, from which the only relief was a visit from Isacaaron. These visits were of almost nightly occurrence. In the darkness of her cell she would hear noises and feel the bed trembling. Hands drew back the sheet; voices whispered flatteries and indecencies in her ear. Sometimes there was a strange light in the room, and she would see the form of a goat, a lion, a snake, a man. Sometimes she fell into a catalepsy and while she lay there, unable to move, it was as though small animals were crawling under the bedclothes, tickling her body with their paws and probing snouts. Then the wheedling voice would ask her, yet once more, for just a little love, for just the tiniest favor. And when she answered that “her honor was in the hands of God and that He would dispose of it according to his will,” she was tumbled out of bed and beaten so violently that her face was quite disfigured and her body covered with bruises. “It happened very often that he treated me in this way, but God gave me more courage than I would have dared to hope for. And yet I was so wicked that I took pride in these trifling combats, thinking that I must be very pleasing to God and that

therefore had no reason for dreading, as I had done, the reproaches of my conscience. Nevertheless, I found it impossible to stifle my remorse, or to prevent myself from believing that I was not what God wished me to be."

Isacaaron was the chief culprit, and it was against Isacaaron that Surin directed all his energies, all the thunders of the ritual. *Audi ergo et time, Satana, malorum radix, fomes vitiorum.* . . . Nothing availed. "Since I would not reveal my temptations, they increased more and more." And as Isacaaron became stronger, so did Sœur Jeanne's despair, so did her anxieties on account of the steadily advancing pregnancy. Shortly before Christmas she found means to procure certain drugs — mugwort, no doubt, and aristolochium and colocynth, the three simples to which Galenic science and the desperate optimism of girls in trouble attributed abortifacient powers. But what if the child should die, unbaptized? Its soul would be lost eternally. She threw the drugs away.

Another plan now suggested itself. She would go to the kitchen, borrow the cook's largest knife, cut herself open, extract the baby, baptize it and then either recover, or die herself. On New Year's Day, 1635, she made a general confession, "without, however, revealing my plans to the confessor." The following day, armed with her knife and carrying a basin of water for the baptism, she shut herself up in a little room on the top floor of the convent. There was a crucifix in the room. Sœur Jeanne knelt before it, and prayed God to "forgive her death and that of the little creature, in case I should murder myself and it, for I was resolved to smother it as soon as it was baptized." While she was undressing, she was overtaken by *de petites appréhensions d'estre damnée*; but these little apprehensions were not strong enough to divert her from her evil design. After taking off her habit, she cut a large hole in her chemise with a pair of scissors, picked up the knife and began to thrust it between the two ribs nearest to the stomach, "with a strong resolution to proceed to the bitter end." But though they often attempt suicide, hysterics very rarely succeed. "Behold the merciful stroke of Providence which prevented me from doing what I had intended! I was suddenly thrown down with inexpressible violence. The knife was snatched out of my hand and placed before me at the foot of the crucifix." A voice cried, "Desist!" Sœur Jeanne raised her eyes to the crucifix. The Christ detached one of his arms from the cross and held out his hand to her. Divine words were spoken, after which there was a muttering and howling of devils. The Prioress resolved, there and then, to change her way of life and be wholly converted. Meanwhile, however, the pregnancy continued and Isacaaron had by no means given up hope. One night he offered, for a consideration, to bring her a magic plaster which would, if applied to the stomach, put an end to her pregnancy. The Prioress was sorely tempted to accept his terms, but, on second thoughts decided to say no. The exasperated devil gave her a sound beating. Another time Isacaaron wept and complained so mournfully that Sœur Jeanne was touched to the heart and "felt a desire for the same thing to present itself again." It did. There seemed to be no reason why this sort of thing should not go on indefinitely.

Greatly perplexed, Laubardemont sent to Le Mans for the celebrated Dr. du Chêne. He came, made a thorough examination of the Prioress and pronounced her pregnancy to be genuine. Laubardemont's perplexity gave place to alarm. How would the Protestants take the news? Fortunately for everyone concerned, Isacaaron made his appearance at a public exorcism and flatly contradicted the doctor. All the telltale symptoms, from morning sickness to the flow of milk, had been contrived by demons. "He was then constrained to make me throw up all the accumulations of blood, which he had amassed in my body. This happened in the presence of a bishop, several doctors and many other persons." All the signs of pregnancy disappeared forthwith and never returned.

The spectators gave thanks to God; and so, with her lips, did the Prioress. But in the privacy of her mind she had her doubts. "The demons," she records, "did their best to persuade me that what had happened when Our Lord prevented me from cutting myself open, in order to be freed from my so-called pregnancy, was not from God; and therefore that I ought to treat the whole thing as mere illusion, keep quiet about it and not trouble to mention it in confession." Later on these doubts were laid to rest and she was able to convince herself that there had been a miracle.

For Surin the miracle was never in question. So far as he was concerned, everything that happened at Loudun was supernatural. His faith was gluttonous and indiscriminate. He believed in the possession. He believed in Grandier's guilt. He believed that other magicians were at work upon the nuns. He believed that the devil, duly constrained, is bound to tell the truth. He believed that public exorcisms were for the good of the Catholic religion and that innumerable libertines and Huguenots would be converted by hearing the devils testify to the reality of transubstantiation. He believed, finally, in Sister Jane and the products of her imagination. Credulity is a grave intellectual sin, which only the most invincible ignorance can justify. In Surin's case the ignorance was vincible and even voluntary. We have seen that, in spite of the prevailing intellectual climate, many of his Jesuit colleagues displayed none of his indecent eagerness to believe. Doubting the possession, they were free to refuse their assent to all the absurd and hideous nonsense which the new exorcist, with his morbid interest in extraordinary graces and disgraces, had accepted without so much as an attempt at criticism. Silliness, as we have seen, was one of Surin's strong points. But so was holiness, so was heroic zeal. His goal was Christian perfection — that dying to self, which makes it possible for a soul to receive the grace of union with God. And this goal he proposed not only for himself, but for all who could be persuaded to travel with him along the path of purification and docility to the Holy Spirit. Others had listened to him — so why not the Prioress? The idea came to him — and he felt it to be an inspiration — while he was still at Marennnes. He would supplement exorcism with the kind of training in the life of the spirit, which he himself had received from Mother Isabel and Father Lallemand. He would deliver the demoniac's soul by raising it into the Light.

A day or two after his arrival at Loudun he broached the subject to Sœur Jeanne, and was answered by a peal of laughter from Isacaaron, a snarl, from Leviathan, of angry contempt. This woman, they reminded him, was their property, a common lodging house for devils; and he talked to her of spiritual exercises, he urged her to prepare her soul for union with God! Why, it was more than two years since she had even attempted to practice mental prayer. Contemplation, indeed! Christian perfection! The laughter became uproarious.

But Surin was not to be deterred. Day after day, in spite of the blasphemies and the convulsions, he returned to the charge. He had set the Hound of Heaven on her tracks, and he meant to follow his quarry to the death — the death which is eternal Life. The Prioress tried to escape; but he dogged her footsteps, he haunted her with his prayers and homilies. He spoke to her of the spiritual life, he begged God to give her the strength to undertake its arduous preliminaries, he described the beatitude of union. Sœur Jeanne interrupted him with peals of laughter, jokes about his precious Boinette, enormous belches, snatches of song, imitations of pigs at feeding time. But the voice murmured on, indefatigably.

One day, after a peculiarly horrible display of diabolic beastliness, Surin prayed that he might be permitted to suffer on behalf of the Prioress and in her stead. He wanted to feel all that the devils had caused Sœur Jeanne to feel; he was ready himself to be possessed, “provided that it should please the divine Goodness to cure her and lead her into the practice of virtue.” He further asked that he might be allowed to undergo the ultimate humiliation of being regarded as a lunatic. Such prayers, the moralists and theologians assure us, ought never to be offered. Unhappily, prudence was not one of Surin’s virtues. The unwise, the utterly illegitimate petition was uttered. But prayers, if earnest, have a way of getting themselves answered — sometimes, no doubt, by a direct divine intervention; but more often, we may suspect, because the nature of ideas is such that they tend to become objectified, to take a form, material or psychological, in fact or in symbol, in the waking world or in dream. Surin had prayed that he might suffer as Sœur Jeanne had suffered. On January 19th he began to be obsessed.

Perhaps it would have happened even if he had never prayed. The devils had already killed Father Lactance, and Father Tranquille was soon to go the same way. Indeed, according to Surin, there was not one of the exorcists who was not in some degree beset by the demons they had helped to evoke and were doing their best to keep alive. No man can concentrate his attention upon evil, or even upon the idea of evil, and remain unaffected. To be more against the devil than for God is exceedingly dangerous. Every crusader is apt to go mad. He is haunted by the wickedness which he attributes to his enemies; it becomes in some sort a part of him.

Possession is more often secular than supernatural. Men are possessed by their thoughts of a hated person, a hated class, race or nation. At the present time the destinies of the world are in the hands of self-made demoniacs — of men who are possessed by, and who manifest, the evil they have chosen to see in others. They do not believe in devils; but they have tried their hardest to be possessed — have tried and

been triumphantly successful. And since they believe even less in God than in the devil, it seems very unlikely that they will ever be able to cure themselves of their possession. Concentrating his attention upon the idea of a supernatural and metaphysical evil, Surin drove himself to a pitch of madness uncommon among secular demoniacs. But his idea of good was also supernatural and metaphysical, and in the end it saved him.

Early in May, Surin wrote to his friend and fellow Jesuit, Father d'Attichy, giving him a full account of what had happened to him. "Since last writing, I have fallen into a state far removed from anything I could have foreseen, but thoroughly consonant with the leadings of God's Providence in regard to my soul. . . . I am engaged upon a struggle with four of hell's most malignant devils. . . . The least important battlefield is that of exorcism; for my enemies have made themselves known in secret, night and day, in a thousand different ways. . . . For the last three and a half months I have never been without a devil on duty. Things have come to such a pass that (for my sins, as I think) God has permitted . . . the devils to pass out of the possessed person's body and, entering into mine, to assault me, to throw me down, to torment me so that all can see, possessing me for several hours at a stretch like a demoniac.

"I find it almost impossible to explain what happens to me during this time, how this alien spirit is united to mine, without depriving me of consciousness or of inner freedom, and yet constituting a second 'me,' as though I had two souls, of which one is dispossessed of my body and the use of its organs, and keeps its quarters, watching the other, the intruder, doing whatever it likes. These two spirits do battle within the limits of a field, which is the body. The very soul is as though divided, and in one of its parts is the subject of diabolical impressions and, in the other, of such feelings as are proper to it or are inspired by God. At one and the same time I feel a great peace, as being under God's good pleasure, and on the other hand (without knowing how) an overpowering rage and loathing of God, expressing itself in frantic struggles (astonishing to those who watch them) to separate myself from Him. At one and the same time I experience a great joy and delight and, on the other hand, a misery that finds vent in wailings and lamentations, like those of the damned. I feel the state of damnation and apprehend it. I feel as if I had been pierced by the pricks of despair in that alien soul which seems to be mine; and meanwhile the other soul lives in complete confidence, makes light of all such feelings, and curses the being who is their cause. I even feel that the cries uttered by my mouth come from both souls at once; and I find it hard to determine whether they are the product of joy or frenzy. The shudderings which come upon me, when the Blessed Sacrament is applied to any part of my body, are caused simultaneously (so it seems to me) by the horror of its proximity, which I find unbearable, and by a heartfelt reverence. . . .

"When, under the impulsion of one of these two souls, I try to make the sign of the cross on my mouth, the other soul turns my hand aside, or takes the finger between the teeth and savagely bites it. I find that mental prayer is never easier or more tranquil than in the midst of these agitations, while the body is rolling on the ground and the ministers of the Church are speaking to me as though to a devil, loading me with

maledictions. I cannot describe to you the joy I feel in thus finding myself turned into a devil, not by rebellion against God, but by a calamity which plainly symbolizes the state to which sin has reduced me. . . .

“When the other demoniacs see me in this state, it is a joy to see how they exult, to hear how the devils make sport of! ‘Physician, heal thyself! Now’s the time to get up in the pulpit! A pretty sight to see that thing preaching!’ . . . What a favor this is — to know by experience the state from which Jesus Christ has drawn me, to realize the greatness of his redemption, not by hearsay, but by the actual feeling of the state from which we have been redeemed! . . .

“This is where I now stand, this is how I am almost every day. I have become a subject of dispute. Is there true possession? Is it possible for ministers of the Church to fall into such troubles? Some say that all this is God’s chastisement upon me, a punishment for some illusion; others say something else. As for me, I hold my peace and have no wish to change my fate, being firmly convinced that nothing is better than to be reduced to the utmost extremity. . . .”

(In his later writings Surin developed this theme more fully. There are, he insisted, many cases in which God makes use of possession as a part of the purgative process which must precede illumination. “It is one of God’s more ordinary leadings in the ways of grace to permit the devil to possess or obsess souls which He wishes to raise to a high degree of holiness.” Devils cannot possess the will, and cannot force their victims into sin. Diabolic inspirations of blasphemy, impurity and hatred of God leave the soul unstained. Indeed, they actually do good, inasmuch as they cause the soul to feel as much humiliation as it would do, if such horrors were committed voluntarily. These humiliations and the agonies and apprehensions, with which the demons fill the mind, are “the crucible which burns away, down to the quick of the heart, down to the very marrow of the bones, all self-love.” And meanwhile, God Himself is at work on the suffering soul, and His operations are “so strong, so insinuating and ravishing, that one can say of this soul that it is one of the loveliest works of His mercy.”)

Surin concluded his letter to Father d’Attichy with a plea for secrecy and discretion. “Except for my confessor and my superiors, you are the only person to whom I have confided these things.” The confidence was sadly misplaced. Father d’Attichy showed the letter to all and sundry. Numerous copies of it were made and circulated, and within a few months it had got into print, as a broadsheet. Along with the condemned murderers and the six-legged calves, Surin took his place as a news item for the amusement of the groundlings.

From now on, Leviathan and Isacaaron were never far away. But between their assaults on his body, and actually during their obsession of his soul, Surin was able to proceed with his mission — the sanctification of Sœur Jeanne. When she ran away he followed. Cornered, she turned and raged at him. He paid no attention. Kneeling at her feet, he prayed for her; sitting beside her, he whispered the spiritual doctrine of Father Lallemant into her unwilling ears. “Interior perfection, docility to the Holy Spirit, purification of the heart, conversion of the will to God. . . .” Her devils writhed

and gibbered; but he went on — went on even though, within his own mind, he could hear the sneering of Leviathan, the obscene promptings of Isacaaron, the demon of impurity.

Surin had more than the devils to contend with. Even in her hours of sanity — above all, perhaps, in her hours of sanity — the Prioress still disliked him. She disliked him because she feared him, because she was afraid of being exposed by his perspicacity as what, in her lucid intervals, she knew herself to be — half actress, half unrepentant sinner, wholly hysterical. He begged her to be frank with him. The answer was either a howling of fiends, or a declaration by the nun that there was nothing to confide.

The relations between the energumen and her exorcist were complicated by the fact that, during Easter week, Sœur Jeanne was suddenly overcome by “very evil desires and a sentiment of most lawless affection” for the man she so much feared and detested. She could not bring herself to confess her secret, and it was Surin himself who, after three hours of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, first referred to these “infamous temptations.” “If anyone,” writes Sœur Jeanne, “was ever dumbfounded, it was I on this occasion.” The hour was late, and he left her to ruminate her astonishment. In the end, she decided, yet once more, to change not merely her behavior toward Surin, but her whole way of life. It was a resolution of the surface will. Down below, in the subconscious, the demons had other views. She tried to read; her mind became a blank. She tried to think of God, to hold her soul in His presence; at once she developed a splitting headache, together with “strange obfuscations and weaknesses.” For all these symptoms Surin had one sovereign remedy: mental prayer. She agreed to try it. The devils redoubled their fury. At the first mention of interior perfection, they threw her body into convulsions. Surin made her lie on a table and bound her securely with ropes, so that she could not move. Then he kneeled beside her and, whispering in her ear, put into words a model meditation. “I took as my subject the conversion of the heart to God and its desire to consecrate itself completely to Him. I made three separate points, which I explained in an affective manner, making all the acts on behalf of the Mother.” Day after day this ceremony was repeated. Tied down, as though she were to undergo a surgical operation, the Prioress was at God’s mercy. She struggled, she shouted; but through all the noise she could still hear the voice of her implacable well-wisher. Sometimes Leviathan would turn his attention to the exorcist, and suddenly Father Surin would find himself unable to speak. From the Prioress came whoops of fiendish laughter. Then the current was turned on again; the prayers, the whispered teaching continued from the point where they had been interrupted.

When the devils became too violent, Surin would reach for a silver box containing a consecrated wafer and apply it to the Prioress’s heart or forehead. After the first agonized convulsion, “she was moved to great devotion, all the more so as I whispered in her ear all that it pleased God to inspire me with. She became very attentive to what I said, and was plunged in a profound recollectedness. The effect upon her heart was so great . . . that the tears streamed from her eyes.”

It was a conversion — but a conversion in the context of hysteria, a conversion on the stage of an imaginary theater. Eight years before, as a young nun trying to curry favor with her Superior, Sœur Jeanne had briefly flaunted the ambition to become a second St. Teresa. Except for the old lady, nobody had been impressed. Then she was appointed Prioress, she had the run of the parlor; mysticism began to seem less interesting. After that, almost suddenly, had come her obsession with the erotic dream to which she gave the name of Grandier. Her neurosis deepened, Canon Mignon talked of devils, practiced exorcisms, lent her his own copy of Michaelis's book on the Gauffridi case. She read it and forthwith saw herself as the queen of the demoniacs. Her ambition at this time was to outdo them all in everything — in blasphemy, in grunting, in filthy language, in acrobatics. She knew, of course, that "all the disorders of her soul were founded on her own character" and that "she ought to blame herself for these disorders, without invoking extraneous causes." Under the influence of Michaelis and Mignon, these native defects had been crystallized into seven devils. And now the devils had their own autonomous life and were her masters. To get rid of them, she would have to get rid of her bad habits and her ugly tendencies. And to do that; as her new director kept telling her, she would have to pray, to expose herself to the divine Light. Surin's ardor was infectious; she was touched by the man's sincerity, was aware, behind the symptoms of his obsession, that he knew, by profound experience, what he was talking about. After listening to him, she longed to go to God; but she longed to go in the most spectacular way possible, before a large and admiring audience. She had been the queen of the demoniacs; now she desired to be a saint — or, rather, she desired to be known as a saint, to be canonized here and now, to work miracles, to be invoked in prayer. . . .

She threw herself into the new role with all her usual energy. From thirty minutes a day, the quota of mental prayer was raised to three or four hours, and to make herself fit for illumination she undertook a course of the harshest physical austerities. She exchanged her feather bed for uncushioned boards; she made decoctions of wormwood to be poured, in lieu of sauce, over her food; she wore a hair shirt and a belt spiked with nails; she beat herself with a whip at least three times a day, and sometimes, so she assures us, for as much as seven hours in a single twenty-four hour period. Surin, who was a great believer in the discipline, encouraged her to persevere. He had noticed that devils who merely laughed at the rites of the Church were often put to flight in a few minutes by a good whipping. And the whip was as good for natural melancholy as for supernatural possession. St. Teresa had made the same discovery. "I say it again (for I have seen and have had much to do with many persons troubled with this disease of melancholy) that there is no other remedy, but to conquer them by every means in our power. . . . If words be not enough, have recourse to penances, and let them be heavy, if light penances will not do. It seems unjust," the saint adds, "to punish the sick sister, who cannot help herself, as though she were well." But, first of all, let it be remembered that these neurotics do enormous harm to the souls of others. Moreover, "I really believe that the mischief comes very often from a spirit undisciplined, wanting

in humility and badly trained. . . . Under the pretense of this temper (of melancholy) Satan seeks to gain many souls. It is more common in our day than it used to be; the reason is that all self-will and license are now called melancholy." Among persons who took for granted the absolute freedom of the will and the total depravity of nature, this short way with neurotics was apparently very effective. Would it work today? In some cases, perhaps. For the rest, "talking it out" is likely, in the present intellectual climate, to have better results than self-inflicted shock treatment.

What with the exorcisms and the coming and going of the tourists, the convent chapel was becoming too noisy for the whispered colloquies between Sœur Jeanne and her director. In the early summer of 1635 they began to meet more privately in an attic under the tiles. A makeshift grille was set up. Through the bars Surin gave his instructions or expounded mystical theology. And through the bars, the Prioress told him of her temptations, her combats with the demons, her experiences (already marvelous) in the course of mental prayer. Then in silence they would meditate together, and the attic became, in Surin's words, "a house of angels and a paradise of delights," in which both were favored with extraordinary graces. One day, while meditating on the contempt to which Jesus had been exposed during his Passion, Sœur Jeanne went into an ecstasy. When it was over, she reported, through the grating, "that she had come so near to God that she had received, as it were, a kiss from his mouth."

And meanwhile what did the other exorcists think about all this? What were the opinions of the good folk of Loudun? Surin tells us that he "heard people murmuring: What can this Jesuit be doing every day with a possessed nun? I answered inwardly: You do not know the importance of the affair I am engaged on. I seemed to see heaven and hell all on fire for this soul, the one in love, the other in fury, each of them straining to carry her off." But what he saw was not seen by anyone else. All that the others knew was that, instead of subjecting his penitent to the full rigor of the exorcisms, Surin was spending hours in private conversation, trying to teach her (in spite of her devils) to lead the life of Christian perfection. To his colleagues, the attempt seemed merely foolish, all the more so as Surin was himself obsessed and in frequent need of exorcism on his own account. (In May, when Gaston d'Orléans, the King's brother, came to see the devils, he had been publicly possessed by Isacaaron, who passed out of Sœur Jeanne's body into Surin's. While the demoniac sat calm, sane and ironically smiling, her exorcist rolled on the floor. The Prince, of course, was delighted; but for Jean-Joseph it had been another in the long series of humiliations to which an inscrutable Providence was subjecting him.) Nobody questioned the purity of Surin's intentions or actions; but all regarded his conduct as indiscreet, and all deplored the gossip to which, inevitably, it gave rise. By the end of the summer the Provincial was being advised to recall him to Bordeaux.

Meanwhile the Prioress had had her full share of trials. In her new part, as the great contemplative saint, she was giving a performance which ought to have brought the house down. Instead of that, "Our Lord permitted that I should have much to suffer in my conversations with my sisters, through the workings of the devils, who

tormented them; for most of them conceived a great aversion for me, on account of the change in my behavior and way of life, which they recognized in me. The demons persuaded them that it was the devil who had wrought this change, so that I might be in a position to pass judgment on their character and behavior. Whenever I was with them, the demons induced some of them to jeer at me and make fun of all I said and did, a thing which was most painful to me.” During their exorcisms, the nuns used to refer to their Superior as *le diable dévot*, the devout devil. Their opinion was shared by the exorcists. Except for Surin, all the attendant Fathers were skeptical. It was in vain that Sœur Jeanne assured them that the great St. Joseph had obtained for her the gift of mental prayer, in vain that she modestly claimed to have been “raised by the Divine Majesty to the degree of contemplation, by means of which I received great illuminations, and Our Lord communicated himself to my soul in a special and private manner.” Instead of prostrating themselves before this walking fount of divine wisdom, the exorcists merely told her that this was the kind of illusion to which the possessed were peculiarly subject. Confronted by so much hardness of heart, the Prioress could only retreat, either into madness, or into the attic, with her dear, good, credulous Father Surin.

But even Father Surin was a trial to her. He was ready enough to believe all that she said about her extraordinary graces; but his ideals of sanctity were uncomfortably high, and his estimation of Sœur Jeanne’s character uncomfortably low. To confess that one is proud and sensual is one thing; to be told these home truths by someone else is another and very different matter. And Surin was not content with telling Sœur Jeanne what her faults were; he was forever trying to correct them. He was convinced that the Prioress was possessed by devils; but he was also convinced that the devils derived their power from the victim’s own defects. By getting rid of the defects one would get rid of the demons. It was therefore necessary, in Surin’s words, “to attack the horse in order to overthrow the rider.” But the horse found it most unpleasant to be attacked. For, though Sœur Jeanne had resolved to “go to God with perfection,” though she already saw herself as a saint and was pained when other people saw only the unconscious (or perhaps the all too conscious) comedian, she found the process of sanctification extremely painful and distressing. Surin took her very seriously as an ecstatic — and that was flattering; that was all as it should be. But, unfortunately for the Prioress, he took her still more seriously as a penitent and an ascetic. When she became too uppish, he snubbed her. When she asked for showy penances — public confession of her sin, degradation to the rank of a lay sister — he insisted, instead, on the practice of small, inconspicuous, but unremitting mortifications. When, as sometimes happened, she played the great lady, he treated her as though she were a scullery maid. Exasperated, she took refuge in Leviathan’s proud anger, in Behemoth’s ravings against God, in Balaam’s buffoonery. Instead of resorting to exorcisms, which, by this time, all the devils thoroughly enjoyed, Surin ordered the infesting entities to whip themselves. And, since the Prioress always retained enough liberty and enough genuine desire for self-improvement to give her consent, the demons had to obey. “We can stand

up to the Church,” they said, “we can defy the priests. But we cannot resist the will of this bitch.” Whining or cursing, according to their various temperaments, they swung the discipline. Leviathan was the hardest hitter; Behemoth, a close second. But Balaam and, above all, Isacaaron had a horror of pain, and could hardly be induced to hurt themselves. “It was an admirable spectacle,” says Surin, “when the demon of sensuality inflicted the punishment.” The blows were light, but the screams were piercing, the tears profuse. The devils could take less punishment than Sœur Jeanne in her normal state. Once it took a whole hour of flagellation to dispel certain psychosomatic symptoms brought on by Leviathan; but on most occasions a few minutes of self-punishment were enough. The possessor took flight, and Sœur Jeanne was free to resume the march toward perfection.

It was a tedious march and, for Sœur Jeanne at least, perfection had one grave defect: it was as inconspicuous as those nagging little mortifications prescribed by Father Surin. You were raised to the degree of contemplation, you were honored by private communications from on high. But what was there to show for it? Nothing at all. You had to tell them about the graces you had received, and all they did was to shake their heads or shrug their shoulders. And when you behaved as the blessed Mother Teresa must have behaved, they either roared with laughter or flew into a rage and called you a hypocrite. Something more convincing was needed, something spectacular, something obviously supernatural.

Diabolical miracles were no longer in order; for Sœur Jeanne had ceased to be the queen of the demoniacs and was now aspiring to immediate canonization. The first of her divine miracles took place in February, 1635. One day Isacaaron confessed that three anonymous magicians, two from Loudun, one a Parisian, had come into possession of three consecrated wafers, which they intended to burn. Surin immediately ordered Isacaaron to go and fetch the wafers, which were hidden under a mattress in Paris. Isacaaron disappeared and did not return. Balaam was then commanded to go to his assistance, stubbornly refused, but was finally forced, by the help of Surin’s good angel, to obey. The orders were that the wafers should be produced at the after-dinner exorcism on the following day. At the appointed time, Balaam and Isacaaron made their appearance and, after much resistance and many contortions of the Prioress’s body, announced that the wafers were in a niche above the tabernacle. “The demons then caused the Mother Superior’s body, which was very small, to stretch.” At the end of its elongated arm the hand was thrust into the niche and came out with a neatly folded sheet of paper containing three wafers.

To this painfully fishy marvel Surin attached enormous importance. In Sœur Jeanne’s autobiography it is not so much as mentioned. Was she ashamed of the trick she had so successfully played on her trusting director? Or was it that she found the miracle essentially unsatisfactory? True, she had played the principal part in the affair; but the affair was not primarily hers. What she needed was a miracle all her own, and in the autumn of that same year she finally got what she wanted.

Toward the end of October, yielding to the pressure of public opinion within the Order, the Provincial of Aquitaine gave orders that Surin should return to Bordeaux and that his place at Loudun should be taken by another, less eccentric exorcist. The news got out. Leviathan exulted; but Sœur Jeanne, when she came to her senses, was greatly distressed. Something, she felt, would have to be done. She prayed to St. Joseph, and had a strong conviction “that God would help us and that this proud demon would be humiliated.” After this, for three or four days, she was ill in bed; then suddenly felt well enough to ask to be exorcised. “It happened that day (it was the fifth of November) that many persons of quality were present in the church to watch the exorcisms; this was not without a special providence of God.” (Special providences were the rule, where very important personages were concerned. It was always in the presence of the nobility that the devils performed their greatest feats.)

The exorcism began and “Leviathan appeared in an altogether extraordinary manner, boasting that he had triumphed over the minister of the Church.” Surin counterattacked by ordering the demon to adore the Blessed Sacrament. There were the customary howls and convulsions. Then “God in his mercy granted us more than we could have dared to hope.” Leviathan prostrated himself — or, to be more accurate, he prostrated Sœur Jeanne at the feet of the exorcist. He acknowledged that he had plotted against Surin’s honor and begged to be forgiven; then, after one last paroxysm, he left the Prioress’s body — forever. It was a triumph for Surin and a vindication of his method. Impressed, the other exorcists changed their tune, the Provincial gave him another chance. Sœur Jeanne had got what she wanted and, in doing so, had demonstrated that, while she was possessed by devils, the devils were, to some extent at least, possessed by her. They had power to make her behave like a lunatic; but when she chose to use it, she had power to make them behave as though they didn’t exist.

After the departure of Leviathan, a bloody cross appeared on the Prioress’s forehead and remained there, plainly visible, for three full weeks. This was good; but something much better was to follow. Balaam now announced that he was ready to go and promised that, when he took his leave, he would write his name on the Prioress’s left hand, where it should remain until her death. The prospect of being thus branded indelibly with the signature of the spirit of buffoonery did not appeal to Sœur Jeanne. How much better if the demon could be constrained to write the name, say, of St. Joseph! On Surin’s advice, she embarked on a course of nine consecutive communions in honor of the saint. Balaam did all he could to interrupt the novena. But illness and mental obfuscation were without avail; the Prioress struggled on. One morning, just before the hour of mass, Balaam and Behemoth — buffoonery and blasphemy — got into her head and set up such a turmoil and confusion that, though she knew quite well that she was doing wrong, she could not resist a mad impulse to rush headlong to the refectory. There “I breakfasted with such intemperateness that I ate, at this one meal, more than three famished persons could have eaten in a whole day.” Communion was now out of the question. Overcome with grief, Sœur Jeanne appealed to Surin for help. He put on his stole and gave the necessary orders. “The demon re-entered my head and

forthwith caused me to vomit with such abundance that it was quite inconceivable.” Balaam now swore that the stomach was completely empty, and Father Surin judged that she might safely take communion. “And thus I went on with my novena to the end.”

On November 29th the spirit of buffoonery finally took his leave. Among the spectators on this occasion were two Englishmen — Walter Montague, son of the first Earl of Manchester and a new-made Catholic with all the convert’s will-to-believe-everything, and his young friend and protégé, Thomas Killigrew, the future playwright. A few days after the event Killigrew wrote a long letter to a friend in England, describing all that he had seen at Loudun. The experience, he says, had been “beyond his expectation.” Going from chapel to chapel in the convent church, he had seen, on the first day of his visit, four or five of the energumens, quietly kneeling in prayer, each with her exorcist kneeling behind her and holding one end of a string, the other end of which was tied round the nun’s neck. Small crosses were fastened to this string, which served as a leash to control, in some small measure, the frenzies of the devils. For the moment, however, all was peace and quiet, and “I saw nothing but kneeling.” In the course of the next half hour, two of the nuns became unruly. One of them flew at a friar’s throat; the other stuck out her tongue, threw her arms about the neck of her exorcist and tried to kiss him. All the while, through the gratings separating the church from the convent, came a sound of howling. After that the young man was called by Walter Montague to witness a display of diabolic thought-reading. The devils succeeded with the convert, but were not so successful with Killigrew. In the intervals of this performance they offered prayers for Calvin and heaped curses on the Church of Rome. When one of the fiends departed, the tourists asked where he had gone. The nun’s reply was so unequivocal that the Editor of the *European Magazine* could not bring himself to print it.

Next came the exorcism of pretty little Sister Agnes. Killigrew’s account of this has already been given in an earlier chapter. The spectacle of this delicious creature being held down by a pair of sturdy peasants, while her friar triumphantly set his foot first on her breast, then on the white throat, filled our young cavalier with horror and disgust.

Next day it all began again; but this time the performance ended in a more interesting, a less revolting manner. “Prayers being ended,” writes Killigrew, “she (the Prioress) turned herself to the friar [Surin], who cast a string of crosses about her neck, and there tied it with three knots. She kneeled still, and ceased not to pray till the strings were fastened; but then she stood up and quitted her beads; and after a reverence made to the altar, she went to a seat like a couch with one end, made purposely for the exorcism, whereof there are diverse in the chapel.” [It would be interesting to know if any of these ancestors of the psychoanalyst’s sofa are still extant.] “The head of this seat stood to the altar; she went to it with so much humility that you would have thought that this patience would merit enough, without the prayers of the priests, to chase out the devil. When she came to it, she lay down and helped the priest to bind her to it with two ropes, one about her waist, another about her thighs and legs.

When she was bound, and saw the priest with the box wherein the sacrament was included, she sighed and trembled with a sense of the tortures she was to suffer. Nor is this a particular humility and patience that she showed; for they are all so, and in the same instances. When this exorcism was performed, another of the possessed called another of the Fathers unto her, and set her seat herself, and then lay down upon it, and tied herself upon it as the other did. 'Tis strange to see how modestly they go to the altar, when they are themselves, and how they walk in the nunneries. Their modest looks and faces express what they are (maids vowed to religion). This nun, upon the beginning of the exorcism, lay as if she had slept. . . ." Surin now set to work on the Prioress. In a few minutes Balaam made his appearance. There were writhings and convulsions, abominable blasphemies, frightful grimaces. Sœur Jeanne's belly suddenly swelled, until it looked like that of a woman far gone in pregnancy; then the breasts puffed themselves up to the size of the belly. The exorcist applied relics to each part as it was affected, and the swellings subsided. Killigrew now stepped forward and touched her hand — it was cool; felt her pulse — it was calm and slow. The Prioress pushed him aside and began to claw at her coif. A moment later the bald, close-shaven head was bare. She rolled up her eyes, she stuck out her tongue. It was prodigiously swollen, black in color and had the pimply texture of morocco leather. Surin now untied her, ordering Balaam to adore the Sacrament. Sœur Jeanne slid backward off the seat and landed on the floor. For a long time Balaam stubbornly resisted; but at last he was bullied into performing the act of worship demanded of him. "Then," writes Killigrew, "as she lay on her back, she bent her waist like a tumbler and went so, shoving herself with her heels, on her bare shaven head, all about the chapel after the friar. And many other strange, unnatural postures, beyond anything that ever I saw, or could believe possible for any man or woman to do. Nor was this a sudden motion, and away; but a continuous thing, which she did for above an hour together; and yet not out of breath nor hot with all the motions she used." All this time the tongue hung out, "swollen to an incredible bigness, and never within her mouth from the first falling into her fit; I never saw her for a moment contract it. Then I heard her, after she had given a start and a shriek that you would have thought had torn her to pieces, speak one word and that was, 'Joseph.' At which all the priests started up and cried, 'That is the sign, look for the mark!' On which one, seeing her hold out her arm, looked for it. Mr. Montague and myself did the same very earnestly; and on her hand I saw a color rise, a little ruddy, and run for the length of an inch along her vein, and in that a great many red specks, which made a distinct word; and it was the same she spake, 'Joseph.' This mark the Jesuit said the devil promised, when he went out, he would make." Minutes of the proceedings were drawn up and signed by the officiating exorcists. Montague then added a postscript in English, to which he and Killigrew put their names. And so, the letter gaily concludes, "I hope you will believe it, or at leastways say there are more liars than myself, and greater, though there be none more

your humble servant than
Thomas Killigrew."

To the name of St. Joseph were added, in due course, those of Jesus, of Mary and of François de Sales. Bright red at their first appearance, these names tended to fade after a week or two, but were then renewed by Sister Jane's good angel. The process was repeated at irregular intervals from the winter of 1635 to St. John's Day, 1662. After that date the names disappeared completely, "for no known reason," writes Surin, "except that, to be rid of the continual importunity of those whose desire to see them distracted her from Our Lord, the Mother Superior had insistently prayed to be released from this affliction."

Surin, together with some of his colleagues and a majority of the general public, believed that this novel form of stigmatization was an extraordinary grace from God. Among his educated contemporaries there was a general skepticism. These people had not believed in the reality of the possession, and they did not now believe in the divine origin of the names. Some, like John Maitland, were of the opinion that they had been etched into the skin with an acid; others that they might have been traced on the surface with colored starch. Many remarked on the fact that, instead of being distributed on both hands, all the names were crowded onto the left — where it would be easier for a right-handed person to write them.

In their edition of Sœur Jeanne's autobiography Drs. Gabriel Legué and Gilles de la Tourette, both of them pupils of Charcot, incline to the belief that the writing on the hand was produced by autosuggestion, and support this view by citing several modern examples of hysterical stigmatization. It should be added that in most cases of hysteria the skin becomes peculiarly sensitive. A fingernail lightly drawn over its surface raises a red welt that may last for several hours.

Autosuggestion, deliberate fraud or a mixture of both — we are at liberty to take our choice of explanations. For myself, I incline to the third hypothesis. The stigmata were probably spontaneous enough to seem to Jeanne herself genuinely miraculous. And if they were genuinely miraculous, there could be no harm in improving on the phenomenon so as to make it more edifying to the public and more creditable to herself. Her sacred names were like Sir Walter Scott's novels — founded on fact, but considerably beholden to imagination and art.

Sœur Jeanne had now had her own, her private miracle. And it was not merely private, it was chronic. Renewed by her good angel, the sacred names were ever present, and could be shown at any time to distinguished visitors or the crowds of common sightseers. She was now a walking relic.

Isaac Aaron took flight on January 7, 1636. Only Behemoth remained; but this demon of blasphemy was tougher than all the rest put together. Exorcisms, penances, mental prayer — nothing availed. Religion had been forced upon an unwilling and undisciplined mind, and the inductive reaction of that mind had been an irreligion so violent and so shocking that the normal personality had felt obliged to dissociate itself from this negation of everything it revered. The negation became a Someone-Else, an evil spirit leading an autonomous existence in the mind, causing confusion within and scandal without. Surin wrestled with Behemoth for ten more months; then, in October,

broke down completely. The Provincial recalled him to Bordeaux, and another Jesuit took over the direction of the Prioress.

Father Ressès was a great believer in what may be called “straight” exorcism. He was persuaded, says Sœur Jeanne, that those who watched the exorcisms were greatly benefited by the sight of demons adoring the Sacrament. Surin had tried to “overthrow the rider by attacking the horse.” Ressès attacked the rider directly and in public — and attacked him regardless of the horse’s feelings and without any attempt to modify its behavior.

“One day,” writes the Prioress, “a celebrated company being assembled, the good Father planned to perform some exorcisms for their spiritual good.” The Prioress told her director that she was feeling ill and that the exorcisms would do her harm. “But the good Father, who was most anxious to perform the exorcisms, told me to take courage and trust in God; after which he began the exorcism.” Sœur Jeanne was put through all her tricks, with the result that she took to her bed with a high fever and a pain in her side. Dr. Fanton, a Huguenot, but the best physician in the town, was called in. She was bled three times and given medicine. It was so effective that there was “an evacuation and flux of blood lasting seven or eight days.” She felt better; then, after a few more days, fell ill again. “Father Ressès thought fit to recommence the exorcisms; after which I was troubled by violent nausea and vomiting.” This was followed by fever, pain in the side and spitting of blood. Fanton was recalled, pronounced that she had pleurisy, bled her seven times in as many days and administered four clysters. After which he informed her that her malady was mortal. That night Sœur Jeanne heard an inward voice. It told her that she would not die, but that God would bring her into the last extremity of danger in order, the more gloriously, to manifest His power by healing her when she was at the very doors of death. For two days she seemed to grow steadily worse and weaker, so much so that, on the seventh of February, Extreme Unction was administered. The doctor was then sent for, and while she was awaiting his arrival Sœur Jeanne uttered the following prayer: “Lord, I have always thought that You wished to display some extraordinary mark of your power in healing me of this sickness; if this be the case, reduce me to such a state that, when he sees me, the doctor will judge that I am past help.” Dr. Fanton came and pronounced that she had only one or two hours to live. Hurrying home he penned a report to Laubardemont, who was then in Paris. The pulse, he wrote, was convulsive, the stomach distended; the state of weakness was such that no remedies, not even a clyster, could have any effect. However, she was being given a small suppository in the hope that it might relieve an “oppression, so great that it cannot be described.” Not that this palliative would make any real difference; for the patient was in extremis. At half past six Sœur Jeanne fell into a lethargy and had a vision of her good angel in the form of a wonderfully beautiful youth of eighteen, with long fair curls. The angel, we are told by Surin, was the living image of the Duc de Beaufort, son of César de Vendôme, and grandson of Henri IV and Gabrielle d’Estrées. This prince had recently been in Loudun to see the devils, and his shoulder-length bob of golden hair had made a profound impression on

the Prioress. After the angel came St. Joseph, who laid his hand on Sœur Jeanne's right side, at the spot where she felt the greatest pain, and anointed her with some kind of oil. "After which I came to my senses and found myself completely cured."

It was another miracle. Yet again Sœur Jeanne had demonstrated that, to some extent at least, she possessed her possessors. She had willed and suggested the expulsion of Leviathan, and now she had willed and suggested the disappearance of all the symptoms of an acute and apparently fatal psychosomatic illness.

She got out of bed, dressed, went down to the chapel and joined her sisters in singing a *Te Deum*. Dr. Fanton was sent for again and, after being told of what had happened, remarked that the power of God is greater than that of our remedies. "Nevertheless," writes the Prioress, "he would not be converted and declined in future to take care of us."

Poor Dr. Fanton! After Laubardemont's return to Loudun, he was called before a commission of magistrates and asked to sign a certificate to the effect that his patient's restoration to health had been miraculous. He refused. Pressed to explain the reasons for this refusal he answered that the sudden passage from mortal sickness to perfect health might easily have happened in the course of nature, "By reason of the sensible issue of the humor, or by its insensible excretion through the pores of the skin, or else by the conveyance of the humor from the part where it caused these accidents to another, less important part. Furthermore the distressing symptoms produced by the humor being in a certain place can be relieved without the necessity of a change of part; this is brought about by mitigation of the humor as it is subdued by nature, or by the onset of another humor which, being less savage, will blunt the acrimony of the first humor." Dr. Fanton added "that manifest excretion is by urines and fluxes of the intestines, or by vomits, sweats and losses of blood; and that insensible excretion takes place when the parts discharge themselves insensibly; these last kinds of excretion are most frequent among patients who work up hot humors, notably bile, without seeing the signs of coction which precede such excretions, even though it may be in the moment of crisis and of the discharge of nature. It is obvious that, in the cure of diseases, smaller quantities of humors must leave the body when these have previously been evacuated by remedies, which carry away not merely the antecedent cause of diseases, but also their conjoint causes. To which must be added that, in their movements, the humors observe certain regular hours." Molière, we perceive, invented nothing: he merely recorded.

Two days passed. Then the Prioress suddenly remembered that she had not wiped away the unction which had cured her, so that some of it must still be on her chemise. In the presence of the sub-Prioress she removed her habit. "Both of us smelled an admirable odor; I took off my chemise, which we then cut at the waist. On it were five drops of this divine balm, which gave forth an excellent perfume."

"Where are your young mistresses?" Gorgibus asks at the beginning of *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. "In their room," says Marotte. "What are they up to?" "Making pomade for the lips." It was an age when every woman of fashion had to be her own Elizabeth

Arden. Recipes for face creams and hand lotions, for rouge and perfume, were treasured as secret weapons or generously exchanged between particular friends. In her youth at home, and even since her profession, Sœur Jeanne had been a famous cosmetician and amateur pharmacist. St. Joseph's unction came, we may suspect, from a source some way this side of heaven. But, meanwhile, there the Five Drops were, for all to see. "It is not to be believed," writes the Prioress, "how great was the devotion of the people toward this blessed unction and how many miracles God worked by means of it."

Sœur Jeanne now had two first-class prodigies to her credit, with a stigmatized hand and a perfumed chemise as perpetual witnesses to the extraordinary graces she had received. But this was not yet enough. At Loudun, she felt, her light had been put under a bushel. True, there were the tourists, the visiting princes, lords and prelates. But think of all the millions who would never make the pilgrimage! Think of the King and Queen! Think of His Eminence! Think of all the Dukes and Marquises, all the Marshals of France, all the Papal Legates, the Envoys Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary, the Doctors of the Sorbonne, the Deans, the Abbots, the Bishops and Archbishops! Shouldn't these be given a chance to admire the marvels, to see and hear the humble recipient of such astounding favors?

Coming from her own lips, the suggestion might have seemed presumptuous, and so it was Behemoth who first broached the subject. When, after the most strenuous of exorcisms, Father Ressès asked him why he so stubbornly resisted, the fiend replied that he would never leave the Prioress's body until that body had made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. François de Sales at Annecy, in Savoy. Exorcism followed exorcism. Under the torrent of anathemas Behemoth merely smiled. To his earlier ultimatum he now added another condition: Father Surin must be recalled — otherwise even the trip to Annecy would be of no avail.

By the middle of June Surin was back at Loudun. But the pilgrimage proved harder to arrange. Vitelleschi, the General of the Order, did not like the idea of one of his Jesuits promenading through France with a nun; and on his side the Bishop of Poitiers did not like the idea of one of his nuns promenading with a Jesuit. Besides, there was the question of money. The royal treasury was, as usual, empty. What with the subsidies to the nuns and the salaries of the exorcists, the possession had already cost a pretty penny. There was nothing to spare for jaunts to Savoy. Behemoth stuck to his guns. As a great concession, he agreed to take his leave at Loudun — but only if Sœur Jeanne and Surin were permitted to make a vow to go to Annecy afterward. In the end he had his way. Surin and Sœur Jeanne were permitted to meet at the tomb of St. Francis, but would have to go and come by different roads. The vows were made and, a little later, on October 15th, Behemoth departed. Sœur Jeanne was free. Two weeks later Surin returned to Bordeaux. The following spring Father Tranquille died in a paroxysm of demoniac frenzy. The treasury ceased to pay the salary of the surviving exorcists, who were all recalled to their various houses. Left to themselves such devils as remained soon took their leave. After six years of incessant struggle, the Church

Militant gave up the fight. Its enemies promptly disappeared. The long orgy was at an end. If there had been no exorcists, it would never have begun.

Chapter Ten

WITH SŒUR JEANNE'S pilgrimage we emerge for a few brief weeks from the shades of a provincial cloister into the great world. It is the world of the history books, the world of royal personages and intriguing courtiers, the world of duchesses with a taste for love and prelates with a taste for power, the world of high policy and high fashion, of Rubens and Descartes, of science, literature, learning. From Loudun and the company of a mystic, seven devils and sixteen hysterics, the Prioress now stepped out into the full glare of the seventeenth century.

The charm of history and its enigmatic lesson consist in the fact that, from age to age, nothing changes and yet everything is completely different. In the personages of other times and alien cultures we recognize our all too human selves and yet are aware, as we do so, that the frame of reference within which we do our living has changed, since their day, out of all recognition, that propositions which seemed axiomatic then are now untenable and that what we regard as the most self-evident postulates could not, at an earlier period, find entrance into even the most boldly speculative mind. But however great, however important for thought and technology, for social organization and behavior, the differences between then and now are always peripheral. At the center remains a fundamental identity. Insofar as they are incarnated minds, subject to physical decay and death, capable of pain and pleasure, driven by craving and abhorrence and oscillating between the desire for self-assertion and the desire for self-transcendence, human beings are faced, at every time and place, with the same problems, are confronted by the same temptations and are permitted by the Order of Things to make the same choice between unregeneracy and enlightenment. The context changes, but the gist and the meaning are invariable.

Sœur Jeanne was in no position to understand the prodigious developments in scientific thought and practice, which had begun to take place in the world around her. Of those aspects of seventeenth-century culture represented by Galileo and Descartes, by Harvey and van Helmont, the Prioress was totally unaware. What she had known as a child and what she now rediscovered in the course of her pilgrimage was the social hierarchy and the conventions of thought and feeling and behavior, to which the existence of that hierarchy gave rise.

In one of its aspects the culture of the seventeenth century, especially in France, was simply a prolonged effort, on the part of the ruling minority, to overstep the limitations of organic existence. More than at almost any other period of recent history, men and women aspired to identify themselves with their social persona. They were not content merely to bear a great name; they longed to be it. Their ambition was actually to become the offices they held, the dignities they had acquired or inherited. Hence the

elaboration of baroque ceremonial, hence those rigid and complex codes of precedence, of honor, of good manners. Relations were not between human beings, but between titles, genealogies and positions. Who had the right to sit in the royal presence? For Saint-Simon, at the end of the century, the question was one of capital importance. Three generations earlier, similar questions had preyed upon the mind of the infant Louis XIII. By the time he was four he had come to feel very strongly that his bastard half-brother, the Duke of Vendôme, should not be permitted to eat his meals with him or remain covered in his presence. When Henri IV decreed that “Féfé Vendôme” was to sit at the Dauphin’s table and keep his hat on while dining, the little Prince was forced to obey — but with the worst possible grace. Nothing more vividly illuminates the theory and practice of the Divine Right of Kings than this matter of the royal hat. At nine years of age Louis XIII passed from the care of a governess to that of a governor. In the presence of a being who was, by definition, divine, the King’s tutor remained permanently hatless. And this rule held good even when (as the late King and the Queen Mother had charged him to do) he was inflicting corporal punishment on his pupil. On these occasions the monarch, with his hat on, but his pants off, was birched till the blood ran by a subject, reverently bareheaded, as though before the Sacrament on the altar. The spectacle, as we try to visualize it, is unforgettably instructive. “There’s a divinity doth hedge a king, rough-hew him how we may.”

The longing to be something more than mere flesh and blood reveals itself very clearly in the arts of our period. Kings and queens, lords and ladies, liked to think of themselves as Rubens represented their persons and their allegorized characteristics — as superhumanly energetic, divinely healthy, heroically commanding. They were ready to pay through the nose in order to see themselves as Van Dyck portraits — elegant, refined, infinitely aristocratic. In the theater they loved the heroes and heroines of Corneille, loved them for their mere size, loved them for their monolithic and super-human consistency, their cult of the will, their worship of themselves. And ever more strictly, as the years went by, they insisted on the unities of time, place and action; for what they wished to see in their tragic theater was not life as it is, but life corrected, life reduced to order, life as it might be if only men and women were something other than what in fact they are.

In the field of domestic architecture the desire for a more than human grandiosity was no less conspicuously displayed. The fact was remarked by a poet who was a boy when the Palais Cardinal was building and who died before Versailles was completed — Andrew Marvell.

Why should, of all things, man unrul’d
Such unproportioned dwellings build?
The beasts are by their dens express’d
And birds contrive an equal nest;
The low-roofed tortoises do dwell
In cases fit of tortoise-shell:
No creature loves an empty space;

Their bodies measure out their place.
But he, superfluously spread,
Demands more room alive than dead,
And in his hollow palace goes
Where winds, as he, themselves may lose.
What need of all this marble crust
T'impark the wanton mote of dust?

And as the marble crusts expanded, the periwigs of the wanton motes imparked within them became more luxuriant, the heels of their shoes yet higher. Tottering on stilts and crowned with towering piles of horsehair, the Grand Monarch and his courtiers proclaimed themselves larger than life and hairier than Samson at the height of his virility.

Needless to say, these attempts to overstep the limits set by nature were always unsuccessful. Doubly so; for not only did our seventeenth-century ancestors fail to be, they failed even to seem, superhuman. The absurd and bumptious spirit was willing enough; but the flesh was incurably weak. The Grand Siècle did not possess the material and organizational resources, without which the game of pretending to be superhuman cannot be played. That sublimity, those prodigies of grandeur, which Richelieu and Louis XIV so ardently desired, can be achieved only by the greatest of stage managers, by a Ziegfeld, a Cochran, a Max Reinhardt. But great showmanship depends on an armory of gadgets, a well-stocked property room and the highly trained and disciplined collaboration of all concerned. In the Grand Siècle such training and discipline were lacking, and even the material basis of theatrical sublimity — the *machina* which introduces and, indeed, creates the *deus* — was deficient. Even Richelieu, even the Sun King were “Old Men of Thermopylae, who never did anything properly.” Versailles itself was curiously unimpressive — gigantic but trivial, grandiose but of no effect. Seventeenth-century pageantry was sloppy to a degree. Nothing was adequately rehearsed, and the most grotesque of avoidable mishaps would mar the most solemn of occasions. Consider, for example, the case of La Grande Mademoiselle, that pathetic figure of fun who was Louis XIV’s first cousin. After death, according to the curious custom of the time, her body was dissected and buried piecemeal — here the head and there a limb or two, here the heart and there the entrails. These last were so badly embalmed that, even after treatment, they went on fermenting. The gases of putrefaction accumulated and the porphyry urn containing the viscera became a kind of anatomic bomb, which suddenly exploded, in the middle of the funeral service, to the horror and dismay of all present.

Such physiological accidents were by no means exclusively posthumous. The authors of memoirs and the collectors of anecdotes abound in stories about belching in high places, about the breaking of wind in a royal presence, about the gamy aroma of kings, the bromidrosis of dukes and marshals. Henri IV’s feet and armpits enjoyed an international reputation. Bellegarde had a perpetually running nose, Bassompierre a set of toes which rivaled those of his royal master. The copiousness of these anecdotes

and the delighted amusement, which the telling of them evidently evoked, were in direct proportion to the enormity of kingly and aristocratic pretensions. It was precisely because great men tried to seem more than human that the rest of the world welcomed any reminder that, in part at least, they were still merely animal.

Identifying himself with a persona which was simultaneously princely, sacerdotal, political and literary, Cardinal Richelieu comported himself as though he were a demigod. But the wretched man had to play his part in a body which disease had rendered so repulsive that there were times when people could hardly bear to sit in the same room with him. He suffered from tubercular osteitis of his right arm and a fissure of the fundament, and was thus forced to live in the fetid atmosphere of his own suppuration. Musk and civet disguised but could not abolish this carrion odor of decay. Richelieu could never escape from the humiliating knowledge that he was an object, to all around him, of physical abhorrence. This brutally violent contrast between the quasi-divine persona and the body of death, with which it was associated, strongly impressed the popular imagination. When the relics of St. Fiacre (the miraculous specific for hemorrhoids) were brought from Meaux to the Cardinal's palace, an anonymous poet celebrated the occasion with a copy of verses which would have delighted Dean Swift.

Cependant sans sortir un pas hors de sa chambre

Qu'il faisait parfumer toute de muse et d'ambre,

Pour n'estonner le Sainct de cette injection

Qui du parfait ministre est l'imperfection,

Et modérer un peu l'odeur puantissime

Qui sort du cul pourry de l'Eminentissime. . . .

And here is another fragment from a ballad describing the great man's last illness.

Il vit grouiller les vers dans ses salles ulceres,

Il vit mourir son bras —

Son bras qui l'Europe alluma tant de guerres,

Qui brusla tant d'autels. . . .

Between the rotting body of the actual man and the glory of the persona, the gulf was unbridgeable. In Jules de Gaultier's phrase, "the Bovaric angle" separating fact from phantasy approximated to one hundred and eighty degrees. To a generation, which had been brought up to regard the divine right of kings and priests and nobles as axiomatic, and which therefore welcomed every opportunity of pricking the bubble of its rulers' pretensions, the case of Cardinal Richelieu was the most acceptable of parables. Hubris invites its corresponding Nemesis. That dreadful stench, those worms battenning on the living corpse, seemed poetically just and appropriate. During the Cardinal's last hours, when the relics had failed to work and the doctors had given him up, an old peasant woman, who had a reputation as a healer, was called to the great man's bedside. Muttering spells, she administered her panacea — four ounces of horse dung macerated in a pint of white wine. It was with the taste of excrement in his mouth that the arbiter of Europe's destinies gave up the ghost.

When Sœur Jeanne was taken to see him, Richelieu was at the highest pinnacle of his glory, but already a sick man, suffering much pain and in constant need of medical attention. "My lord Cardinal had been bled that day, and all the doors of his château of Ruel were closed, even to bishops and marshals of France; nonetheless we were introduced into his antechamber, though he himself was in bed." After dinner ("it was magnificent, and we were served by his pages") the Mother Superior and an Ursuline companion were ushered into the bedroom, knelt to receive His Eminence's benediction and could only with difficulty be persuaded to rise and take chairs. ("The contestation of politeness on his part and of humility on ours lasted quite a long time; but at last I was obliged to obey.")

Richelieu began the conversation by remarking that the Prioress was under great obligations to God, inasmuch as He had chosen her, in this age of unbelief, to suffer for the honor of the Church, the conversion of souls and the confounding of the wicked.

Sœur Jeanne replied with a paean of gratitude. She and her sisters would never forget that, while the rest of the world had treated them as crazy impostors, His Eminence had been to them not merely a father, but a mother, a nurse and a protector as well.

But the Cardinal would not permit himself to be thanked. On the contrary, he felt himself extremely obliged to Providence for having given him the opportunity and the means to assist the afflicted. (All these things, the Prioress remarks, were spoken "with a ravishing grace and much sweetness.")

Next, the great man asked if he might look at the sacred names inscribed on Sister Jane's left hand. And after the sacred names it was the turn of the unction of St. Joseph. The chemise was unfolded. Before taking it into his hands, the Cardinal piously took off his nightcap; then he sniffed at the blessed object and exclaiming, "That smells perfectly good!" kissed it twice. After which, holding the chemise "with respect and admiration," he pressed it against a reliquary which was standing on the table beside the bed — presumably in order to recharge its contents with the mana inhering in the unction. At his request the Prioress described (for the how many hundredth time?) the miracle of her healing, then knelt for another blessing. The interview was over. Next day His Eminence sent her five hundred crowns to defray the expenses of her pilgrimage.

One reads Sœur Jeanne's account of this interview, then turns to the letters in which the Cardinal had ironically twitted Gaston d'Orléans with his credulity in regard to the possession. "I am delighted to hear that the devils of Loudun have converted Your Highness and that you have now quite forgotten the oaths with which your mouth was habitually filled." And again, "the assistance you will receive from the master of the devils of Loudun will be powerful enough to enable you, in a very short time, to make a long journey on the road to virtue." On another occasion he learns by a courier who is "one of the devils of Loudun" that the Prince has contracted a disease, whose nature is sufficiently indicated by the fact that "you have deserved it." Richelieu commiserates with His Highness and offers him "the exorcisms of the good Father Joseph" as a

remedy. Addressed to the King's brother by the man who had had Grandier burned for trafficking with devils, these letters are as astounding for their insolence as for their ironic skepticism. The insolence may be attributed to that urge to "score off" his social superiors which remained, throughout life, an incongruously childish element in the Cardinal's complex character. And what of the skepticism, the cynical irony? What was His Eminence's real opinion of witchcraft and possession, of the calligraphic stigmata and the blessed chemise? The best answer, I would guess, is that, when he felt well and was in the company of laymen, the Cardinal regarded the whole affair as either a fraud, or an illusion, or a mixture of both. If he affected to believe in the devils, it was solely for political reasons. Like Canning, he had called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old — the only difference being that, in his case, the New World was not America, but hell. True, the public's reaction to the devils had been unsatisfactory. In the face of so general a skepticism, his plans for an inquisitorial Gestapo to fight sorcery and incidentally to strengthen the royal authority had had to be abandoned. But it is always good to know what not to do, and the experiment, though negative in its results, had been well worth making. True, an innocent man had been tortured and burned alive. But after all one can't make omelettes without breaking eggs. And anyhow the parson had been a nuisance and was better out of the way.

But then the trouble in his shoulder would flare up again, and his fistula would keep him awake at nights with its intolerable pain. The doctors were called in; but how little they could do! The efficacy of medicine depended upon the *vis medicatrix Naturae*. But in this wretched body of his nature seemed to have lost her healing power. Could it be that his sickness had a supernatural origin? He sent for relics and holy images, he asked for prayers to be said on his behalf. And meanwhile, in secret, he consulted his horoscope, he fingered his tried and trusted talismans, he repeated under his breath the spells he had learned in childhood from his old nurse. When sickness came, when the doors of his palace were closed "even to bishops and marshals of France," he was ready to believe in anything — even in Urbain Grandier's guilt, even in the unction of St. Joseph.

For Sœur Jeanne, the interview with His Eminence was but one in a long series of triumphs and excitements. From Loudun to Paris, and from Paris to Annecy, she moved in a blaze of glory, traveling from popular ovation to popular ovation, and from one aristocratic reception to others yet more flattering to her vanity.

At Tours she was received, with marks of "extraordinary kindness" by the Archbishop, Bertrand de Chaux, an old gentleman of eighty, much addicted to gambling, who had recently made himself notoriously ridiculous by falling head over ears in love with a lady fifty years his junior, the charming Mme. de Chevreuse. "He'll do anything I like," she used to say. "All I have to do is, when we are at table, to let him pinch my thigh." After listening to Sœur Jeanne's story, the Archbishop gave orders that the sacred names should be examined by a committee of physicians. The examination was made, and the Prioress came through with flying colors. From four thousand a day

the crowds of sightseers besieging the convent, in which she was lodged, rose to seven thousand.

There was another interview with the Archbishop, this time to meet Gaston d'Orléans, detained at Tours by his liaison with a sixteen-year-old girl called Louise de la Marbelière, who later bore him a son, was duly abandoned by her royal lover and finally became a nun. "The Duke of Orléans came to meet me as far as the door of the drawing room; he welcomed me warmly, congratulated me on my deliverance and said, 'I once came to Loudun; the devils who were in you gave me a great fright; they served to cure me of my habit of swearing, and there and then I resolved to be a better man than I had been up till that time.' " After which he hurried back to Louise.

From Tours the Prioress and her companions proceeded to Amboise. So many people wanted to look at the sacred names that it was necessary to keep the convent parlor open until eleven at night.

At Blois, next day, the doors of the inn at which Sœur Jeanne was dining, were forcibly broken open by the crowd.

At Orléans, she was visited at the Ursuline convent by the bishop, who examined her hand and then exclaimed, "We must not hide God's work, we must give satisfaction to the people!" The doors of the convent were then thrown open, so that the crowds could gaze their fill at the sacred names through the grating.

In Paris the Prioress lodged at the house of M. de Laubardemont. Here she was visited frequently by M. de Chevreuse and the Prince de Guémenée, as well as by a daily multitude of twenty thousand members of the lower orders. "What was most embarrassing," writes Sœur Jeanne, "was that people were not content merely to look at my hand, but asked me a thousand questions about the possession and the expulsion of the devils; which obliged us to issue a printed booklet, in which the public was informed of the most considerable events which had occurred during the entrance of the demons into my body and their departure therefrom, with additional matter regarding the impression of the sacred names upon my hand."

There followed a visit to M. de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris. His politeness in accompanying the Prioress as far as her coach made such an impression that all Paris now thronged to see her and it became necessary to seat this supernatural equivalent of a movie star at a window on the ground floor of the Hotel de Laubardemont, where the mob could look at her. From four in the morning until ten at night she sat there, her elbow on a cushion, her miraculous hand dangling out of the window. "I was given no leisure to hear Mass or to eat my meals. The weather was very hot and the crowd so increased the heat that my head began to swim and I finally fell in a faint on the floor."

The visit to Cardinal Richelieu took place on the twenty-fifth of May and a few days later, at the command of the Queen, the Prioress was taken in Laubardemont's coach to Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Here she had a long conversation with Anne of Austria, who for more than an hour held the miraculous hand between her own royal fingers, "gazing in admiration at a thing which, until then, had never been seen, since the first

beginnings of the Church. She exclaimed, 'How can anyone disapprove of a thing so marvelous, a thing that inspires so much devotion? Those who decry and condemn this marvel are the enemies of the Church.' "

A report of the marvel was brought to the King, who decided to come and see for himself. He looked attentively at the sacred names, then said, "I never doubted the truth of this miracle; but seeing it as I now see it, I find my faith strengthened." Then he sent for those of his courtiers who had shown themselves most skeptical as to the reality of the possession.

"What do you say to that?" the King asked, showing them Sœur Jeanne's hand.

"But these people," writes the Prioress, "would not give in. Moved by a principle of charity, I have never mentioned the names of these gentlemen."

The only embarrassing moment in what was otherwise a perfect day came when the Queen asked to be given a little piece of the sacred chemise, "in order that she might obtain from God, through the prayers of St. Joseph, a happy delivery." (At this time Anne of Austria was six months pregnant with the future Louis XIV.) The Prioress had to answer that she did not think it was the will of God that a thing so precious should be cut in pieces. If Her Majesty absolutely commanded it, she was ready to leave her the whole chemise. However, she ventured to point out that, if the chemise were left in her possession, an infinite number of souls devoted to St. Joseph would derive great consolation from seeing with their own eyes a true relic of their patron saint. The Queen allowed herself to be persuaded, and the Prioress returned to Paris with her chemise intact.

After that visit to Saint-Germain everything seemed a little flat — even a two-hour interview with the Archbishop of Sens, even crowds of thirty thousand, even a chat with the papal Nuncio, who said that "it was one of the finest things ever seen in the Church of God," and that he simply couldn't understand how "the Huguenots contrived to persist in their blindness after so sensible a proof of the verities they had opposed."

Sœur Jeanne and her companions left Paris on the twentieth of June and found the usual crowds, prelates and very important persons awaiting them at every halt. At Lyon, which they reached fourteen days after their departure from Paris, they were visited by the Archbishop, Cardinal Alphonse de Richelieu, the Prime Minister's elder brother. It had been intended by his parents that Alphonse should become a Knight of Malta. But all Knights of Malta had to be able to swim, and since Alphonse could never learn to swim, he had to be content with the family bishopric of Luçon, which he soon resigned in order to become a Carthusian monk. After his brother's accession to power, he was taken out of the Grande Chartreuse, made Archbishop first of Aix, then of Lyon, and given a Cardinal's hat. He had the reputation of an excellent prelate, but was subject to occasional fits of mental derangement. During these fits he would put on a crimson robe embroidered with gold thread and affirm that he was God the Father. (This kind of thing seems to have run in the family; for there is a tradition, which may or may not be true, that his younger brother sometimes imagined himself to be a horse.)

Cardinal Alphonse's interest in the sacred names was intense to the point of being surgical. Could they be erased by natural means? He took a pair of scissors and began the experiment. "I took the liberty," writes Sœur Jeanne, "of saying, 'My lord, you are hurting me.' " The Cardinal then sent for his doctor and ordered him to shave the names off. "I objected and said, 'My lord, I have no orders from my superiors to undergo these trials.' My lord Cardinal asked me who these superiors might be." The Prioress's answer was a master stroke. Her superior of superiors was the Cardinal-Duke, Cardinal Alphonse's brother. The experiment was promptly called off.

Next morning, who should turn up but Father Surin. He had already been to Annecy and was on his way home. Afflicted by hysterical dumbness, which he attributed to the operations of the devil, Surin prayed for deliverance at the tomb of St. François de Sales — in vain. The Visitandines of Annecy possessed a large supply of dried blood, which the saint's valet had collected, over a long period of years, adding to his stock every time his master was bled by the barber-surgeon. The Abbess, Jeanne de Chantal, was so much distressed by Surin's affliction that she gave him a clot of this dried blood to eat. For a moment he was able to speak. "Jesu Maria," he cried; but that was all, and he could say no more.

After some discussion and a consultation with the Jesuit fathers of Lyon, it was decided that Surin and his companion, Father Thomas, should turn back and accompany the Prioress to the goal of her pilgrimage. On the road to Grenoble something which Sœur Jeanne qualifies merely as "somewhat extraordinary" took place. Father Thomas intoned the *Veni Creator*, and immediately Father Surin responded. From that moment he was able (at least for some time) to speak without impediment.

At Grenoble Surin made use of his new-found voice to preach a number of eloquent sermons on the unction of St. Joseph and the sacred names. There is something at once lamentable and sublime in the spectacle of this great lover of God passionately maintaining that evil had been good and falsehood, truth. Shouting from the pulpit, he spends the last resources of a sick body, a mind tottering on the brink of disintegration, in an effort to persuade his hearers of the rightness of a judicial murder, the otherworldliness of hysteria and the miraculousness of fraud. It was all done, of course, for the greater glory of God. But the subjective morality of intentions requires to be supplemented by the objective and utilitarian morality of results. One may mean well; but if one acts in an unrealistic and inappropriate manner, the consequences can only be disastrous. By their credulity and their reluctance to think of human psychology in any but the old, dogmatic terms, men like Surin made it certain that the breach between traditional religion and developing science should come to seem unbridgeable. Surin was a man of great ability, and therefore had no right to be as silly as, in this instance, he proved himself to be. That he made himself a martyr to his zeal cannot excuse the fact that this zeal was misdirected.

At Annecy, which they reached a day or two after leaving Grenoble, they found that the fame of St. Joseph's unction had preceded them. People came from as much as eight leagues away to see and smell. From morning till night Surin and Thomas

were kept busy at the task of bringing the sacred chemise into contact with the objects brought for that purpose by the faithful — rosaries, crosses, medals, even bits of cotton and paper.

The Prioress, meanwhile, was lodged in the Visitandine convent, whose Abbess was Mme. de Chantal. We turn to her autobiography, expecting to find that she has devoted at least as many pages to this saintly friend and disciple of St. François as she had given to Anne of Austria or the unspeakable Gaston d'Orléans. But we are disappointed. The only reference to St. Jeanne Chantal occurs in the following paragraph.

"The places, where the unction was, became dirty. Madame de Chantal and her nuns laundered the linen on which the unction was, and the unctions retained their ordinary color."

What were the reasons for this strange silence in regard to a person so remarkable as the founder of the Visitation? One can only speculate. Can it be that Mme. de Chantal was too perspicacious and that, when Sœur Jeanne embarked upon her celebrated impersonation of St. Teresa, she was not impressed? Saints tend to acquire a most embarrassing gift for looking through the persona at the real self behind the mask, and it may be that poor Sister Jane suddenly found herself spiritually naked before this formidably gentle old woman — naked and, all of a sudden, overpoweringly ashamed.

At Briare, on the homeward road, the two Jesuits took leave of their companions. Sœur Jeanne was never again to see the man who had sacrificed himself in order to bring her back to sanity. Surin and Thomas turned westward to Bordeaux; the others took the road to Paris, where Sœur Jeanne had a rendezvous with the Queen. She reached Saint-Germain just in time. During the night of September 4, 1638, the labor pains began. The Blessed Virgin's girdle, which had been brought from Notre-Dame du Puy, was fastened about the Queen's waist and the Prioress's chemise was spread over the royal abdomen. At eleven o'clock on the following morning Anne of Austria was safely delivered of the male child who, five years later, was to become Louis XIV. "Thus it was," wrote Surin, "that St. Joseph demonstrated his mighty power, not only in securing for the Queen a happy delivery, but also in presenting France with a King incomparable in power and in greatness of mind, a King of rare discretion, of admirable prudence and of a godliness without previous example."

As soon as the Queen was out of all danger, Sœur Jeanne packed up her chemise and took the homeward road to Loudun. The doors of the convent opened, then closed behind her, forever. Her crowded hour of glorious life was over; but she could not immediately reconcile herself to the humdrum routine, which was henceforth to be her lot. A little before Christmas she fell ill with congestion of the lungs. Her life, according to her own account, was despaired of. "Our Lord," she told her confessor, "has given me a great desire to go to heaven; but he has also conveyed to me the knowledge that, if I were to remain on earth a while longer, I could do Him some service. And so, Reverend Father, if you will but apply the holy unction, I shall most assuredly be healed." The miracle seemed so certain to occur, that Sœur Jeanne's confessor as good as sent out invitations for the blessed occasion. On Christmas night "there assembled

in our church an incredible multitude of people desirous of witnessing my recovery." Persons of quality were accommodated with seats in a chamber adjoining the Prioress's bedroom, into which they could look through a grating. "After nightfall, I being at the height of my sickness, Father Alange, a Jesuit, in full canonicals, including the chasuble, entered our room, bearing the holy unction. Drawing near to my bed, he placed the relic on my head and began to repeat the litanies of St. Joseph which he intended to say in their entirety. No sooner had he placed that holy deposit (*dépôt*) on my head than I felt myself entirely cured. However, I decided to say nothing until the good father had finished the litanies. Then I announced the fact and asked for my clothes."

Perhaps this second and all too punctual miracle failed to make any very great impression on the public. In any case it was the last of its kind.

Time passed. The Thirty Years' War went on and on. Richelieu grew richer and richer, and the people more and more miserable. There were peasant revolts against high taxes, and bourgeois revolts (in which Pascal's father participated) against the lowering of interest rates on government bonds. Among the Ursulines of Loudun life went on as usual. Every few weeks the Good Angel (who was still M. de Beaufort, but in miniature, being now only three and a half feet high and not more than sixteen years old) renewed the fading names on the Prioress's left hand. Enclosed now in a handsome reliquary, her chemise, with the unction of St. Joseph, had taken its place among the convent's most precious and most efficacious relics.

At the end of 1642 Richelieu died and was followed to the grave, a few months later, by Louis XIII. On behalf of the five-year-old King, Anne of Austria and her lover, Cardinal Mazarin, ineptly ruled the country.

In 1644 Sœur Jeanne began to write her memoirs and acquired a new Jesuit director, Father Saint-Jure, to whom she sent her own and Surin's still unfinished, work on the devils. Saint-Jure lent the manuscripts to the Bishop of Evreux, and the Bishop, who was in charge of the demoniacs of Louviers, proceeded to direct this new and, if possible, even more revolting orgy of madness and malice along the lines laid down at Loudun. "I think," Laubardemont wrote to the Prioress, "I think that your correspondence with Father Saint-Jure has been of great service in this present affair."

Less successful than the Louviers affair was the possession organized by M. Barré at Chinon. At first all seemed to be going well. A host of young women, including some belonging to the best families of the town, succumbed to the psychological infection. Blasphemy, convulsions, denunciations, obscenity — everything was in order. Unfortunately, one of the demoniac girls, called Beloquin, had a grudge against M. Giloire, a local priest. Going to church early one morning, she poured a bottleful of chicken's blood on the high altar, then announced, during M. Barré's exorcism, that it was her own, shed at midnight, while M. Giloire was violating her. Barré, of course, believed every word of it and began to question the other girls' devils, with a view to collecting more incriminating evidence against his colleague. But the woman, from whom Beloquin had bought the chicken, confided her suspicions to a magistrate. The Lieutenant Criminel started an investigation. Barré was indignant and Beloquin coun-

terattacked with excruciating pains in the hypochondries, magically induced, so her devils declared, by M. Giloire. Unimpressed, the Lieutenant Criminel called more witnesses. To escape from him, Beloquin fled to Tours, whose Archbishop was notoriously in favor of possessions. But the Archbishop was out of town and his place had been taken by an unsympathetic Coadjutor. He listened to Beloquin's stories, then called in two midwives, who discovered that the pains, though real enough, were due to the presence in the uterus of a small pewter cannon ball. Cross-examined, the girl admitted that she had put it there herself. After which poor M. Barré was deprived of all his benefices and banished from the archdiocese of Touraine. He ended his days obscurely, as a pensioner in a monastery at Le Mans.

At Loudun, in the meantime, the devils had been tolerably quiet. On one memorable occasion, it is true, "I saw before me the forms of two exceedingly horrible men, and smelt a great stink. Each of these men carried rods; they seized me, took off my clothes, tied me to the bed post and birched me for the space of half an hour or more." Fortunately, as her chemise had been pulled up over her head, the Prioress did not see herself naked. And when the two stinking personages pulled it down again and untied her, she "did not notice that anything occurred which was contrary to modesty." There were some subsequent assaults from the same quarter; but in the main the miracles recorded by Sœur Jeanne during the next twenty years were celestial in origin. For example, her heart was split in two and marked, inwardly and invisibly, with the instruments of the Passion. On several occasions the souls of departed sisters appeared and spoke of purgatory. And all the time, of course, the sacred names were being exhibited through the parlor grating to visitors of quality, some devout, others merely curious or downright skeptical. At every renewal of the names, and frequently betweenwhiles, the Angel appeared and gave a prodigious amount of good advice, which was passed on, in interminable letters, to her director. He also gave advice to third parties — to gentlemen involved in lawsuits, to anxious mothers who wanted to know whether it would be better to marry off their daughters, rather disadvantageously, now, or to hang on in the hope of a better match presenting itself before it was too late for anything but the convent.

In 1648 the Thirty Years' War came to an end. The power of the Habsburgs was broken and a third of the inhabitants of Germany had been liquidated. Europe was now ready for the antics of the Grand Monarque and French hegemony. It was a triumph. But meanwhile there was an interlude of anarchy, Fronde succeeded Fronde. Mazarin exiled himself and returned to power; retired once more and reappeared; then vanished forever from the scene.

At about the same time, obscure and out of favor, Laubardemont died. His only son had turned highwayman and been killed. His last surviving daughter had been obliged to take the veil and was now an Ursuline at Loudun, under her father's old protégée.

In January, 1656, the first of the Provincial Letters was published, and four months later occurred the great Jansenist miracle — the healing of Pascal's niece's eye by the Holy Thom preserved at Port-Royal.

A year later Saint-Jure died, and the Prioress had nobody to write to except other nuns and poor Father Surin, who was still too ill to reply. What was her joy when, at the beginning of 1658, she received a letter in Surin's hand — the first in more than twenty years. "How admirable," she wrote to her friend Mme. du Houx, now a nun of the Visitation at Rennes, "how admirable is the leading of God, who having deprived me of Father Saint-Jure, now brings the dear Father of my soul into the condition of being able to write to me! Only a few days before receiving his letter, I had written to him at length about the state of my soul."

She went on writing about the state of her soul — to Surin, to Mme. du Houx, to anyone who was ready to read and reply. If they were ever published, the Prioress's surviving letters would fill several volumes. And how many more must have been lost! Sœur Jeanne, it is evident, was still under the impression that the "inner life" is a life of constant self-analysis in public. But in fact, of course, the inner life begins where the analyzable self leaves off. The soul that goes on talking about its states thereby prevents itself from knowing its divine ground. "It was not from want of will that I have refrained from writing to you, for truly I wish you all good; but because it seemed to me that enough has been said to effect all that is needed, and that what is wanting (if anything be wanting) is not writing or speaking — whereof ordinarily there is more than enough — but silence and work." These words were addressed by St. John of the Cross to a group of nuns, who had complained that he did not answer the letters in which they had so minutely catalogued their mental states. But "speaking distracts; silence and work collect the thoughts and strengthen the spirit." Nothing, alas, could silence the Prioress. She was as copious as Mme. de Sévigné; but the gossip was exclusively about herself.

In 1660, with the Restoration, the two British tourists, who had seen Sœur Jeanne in all her diabolic glory, at last came into their own. Tom Killigrew was made a Groom of the Bedchamber and licensed to build a theater, where he might put on plays without submitting them to censorship. As for John Maitland, who had been taken prisoner at Worcester and had spent nine years in confinement — he now became Secretary of State and the new King's prime favorite.

The prioress, meanwhile, was feeling her age. She was ailing, and her double role of walking relic and verger, of sacred object and loquacious guide, fatigued her now beyond endurance. In 1662 the sacred names were renewed for the last time; thenceforward there was nothing for the devout or the curious to see. But though the miracles had ceased, the spiritual pretension remained as great as ever. "I propose," Surin wrote to her in one of his letters, "to speak to you of the prime necessity, of the very basis of grace — I mean humility. Let me beg you, then, to act in such a way that this holy humility may become the true and solid foundation of your soul. These things of which we speak in our letters — things, very often, of a sublime and lofty nature — must in no wise be permitted to compromise that virtue." In spite of his credulity, in spite of his overestimation of the merely miraculous, Surin understood his correspondent only too well. Sœur Jeanne belonged to what, at that particular moment of history, was

evidently a very common subspecies of bovarists. Just how common, we may infer from a note in Pascal's *Pensées*. In St. Teresa, he writes, "what pleases God is her profound humility in revelations; what pleases men is the knowledge revealed to her. And so we work ourselves to death trying to imitate her words, imagining that thereby we are imitating her state of being. We neither love the virtue which God loves, nor do we try to bring ourselves into the state of being which God loves."

With part of her mind Sœur Jeanne was probably convinced that she actually was the heroine of her own comedy. With another she must have been even more certain of the contrary. Mme. du Houx who, on more than one occasion, spent long months at Loudun was of opinion that her poor friend was living almost all the time in illusion.

Did that illusion persist to the very end? Or did Sœur Jeanne at least succeed in dying, not as the heroine before the footlights, but as herself behind the scenes? It was absurd, this backstage self of hers, it was pathetic; but if she would but acknowledge the fact, if she would only cease to impersonate the authoress of the Interior Castle, all might still be well. So long as she insisted on pretending to be someone else, there was no chance; but if she humbly confessed to being herself, then perhaps she might discover that, in reality, she had always been Someone Else.

After her death, which came in January, 1665, the Prioress's comedy was transformed by the surviving members of the Community into the broadest of farces. The corpse was decapitated and Sœur Jeanne's head took its place, in a silver-gilt box with crystal windows, beside the sacred chemise. A provincial artist was commissioned to paint an enormous picture of the expulsion of Behemoth. At the center of the composition the Prioress was shown kneeling in ecstasy before Father Surin, who was assisted by Father Tranquille and a Carmelite. In the middle distance sat Gaston d'Orléans and his Duchess, majestically looking on. Behind them, at a window, could be seen the faces of spectators of less exalted rank. Surrounded by a gloria and accompanied by cherubim, St. Joseph hovered overhead. In his right hand he held three thunderbolts, to be hurled at the black host of imps and demons that issued from between the demoniac's parted lips.

For more than eighty years this picture hung in the Ursulines' chapel and was an object of popular devotion. But in 1750 a visiting bishop of Poitiers ordered its removal. Torn between institutional patriotism and the duty to obey, the good sisters compromised by hanging a second, yet larger painting over the first. The Prioress might be in eclipse, but she was still there. Not, however, for very long. The convent fell on evil days and in 1772 was suppressed. The picture was entrusted to a canon of Sainte-Croix, the chemise and the mummified head were sent, in all probability, to some other, more fortunate nunnery of the Order. All three have now disappeared.

Chapter Eleven

WE PARTICIPATE IN a tragedy; at a comedy we only look. The tragic author feels himself into his personages; and so, from the other side, does the reader or listener. But in pure comedy there is no identification between creator and literary creature, between spectator and spectacle. The author looks, judges and records, from the outside; and from the outside his audience observes what he has recorded, judges as he has judged and, if the comedy is good enough, laughs. Pure comedy cannot be kept up for very long. That is why so many of the greatest comic writers have adopted the impure form, in which there is a constant transition from outwardness to inwardness, and back again. At one moment we merely see and judge and laugh; the next, we are made to sympathize and even to identify ourselves with one who, a few seconds before, was merely an object. Every figure of fun is potentially an Amiel or a Bashkirtseff; and every tormented author of confessions or an intimate journal can be seen, if we so desire, as a figure of fun.

Jeanne des Anges was one of those unfortunate human beings who consistently invite the outward approach, the purely comic treatment. And this in spite of the fact that she wrote confessions, which were intended to evoke the reader's heartfelt sympathy with her very considerable sufferings. That we can read these confessions and still think of the poor Prioress as a comic figure is due to the fact that she was supremely an actress; and that, as an actress, she was almost always external even to herself. The "I" who does her confessing is sometimes a pastiche of St. Augustine, sometimes the queen of the demoniacs, sometimes the second St. Teresa — and sometimes, giving the whole show away, a shrewd and momentarily sincere young woman, who knows precisely who she is and how she is related to these other, more romantic personages. Without, of course, desiring to turn herself into a figure of fun, Sœur Jeanne employs all the devices of the comic writer — the sudden shift from mask to absurd face; the emphasis, the excessive protestations; the pious verbiage that so naively rationalizes some all too human wish below the surface.

Moreover, Sœur Jeanne wrote her confessions without reflecting that her readers might have other sources of information about the facts therein recorded. Thus, from the official record of the counts upon which Grandier was condemned, we know that the Prioress and several other nuns were overpowered by remorse at what they had done and tried to withdraw a testimony which they knew, even in the paroxysms of hysteria, to be completely false. Sœur Jeanne's autobiography abounds in the conventional avowals of vanity, of pride, of lukewarmness. But of her greatest offense — the systematic lying which had brought an innocent man to the question and the flames — she makes no mention. Nor does she ever refer to the only creditable episode in the whole hideous story — her repentance and the public confession of her guilt. On second thoughts she preferred to accept the cynical assurances of Laubardemont and the Capuchins: her contrition was a trick of the devils, her lies were gospel truth. Any account of this episode, even the most favorable, would inevitably have spoiled her

portrait of the authoress as a victim of the devil, miraculously rescued by God. Suppressing the strange and tragic facts, she chose to identify herself with an essentially bookish fiction. This sort of thing is the very stuff of comedy.

In the course of his life Jean-Joseph Surin thought, wrote and did many foolish, ill-judged and even grotesque things. But for anyone who has read his letters and his memoirs he must always remain an essentially tragic figure, in whose sufferings (however odd and however, in a certain sense, well-deserved) we always participate. We know him as he knew himself — from inside and without disguise. The “I” who does his confessing is always Jean-Joseph, never someone else, more romantic, never, as with the poor Prioress, that other, spectacular personage, who invariably ends by letting the cat out of the bag and so transforming the would-be sublime into the comic, the downright farcical.

The beginnings of Surin’s long tragedy have already been described. An iron will, directed by the highest ideal of spiritual perfection and by erroneous notions as to the relations between Absolute and relative, between God and nature, had overdriven a weak constitution, a temperament in unstable equilibrium. He was a sick man even before he came to Loudun. There, though he tried to mitigate the Manichaeian excesses of the other exorcists, he became the victim of a too close and intense preoccupation with the idea and the apparent fact of radical Evil. The devils derived their strength from the very violence of the campaign, which was waged against them. Strength in the nuns, and strength in their exorcists. Under the influence of an organized obsession with evil, the normally latent tendencies (tendencies to license and blasphemy, to which, by induction, a strict religious discipline always gives rise) came rushing to the surface. Lactance and Tranquille died in convulsions, “hand and foot in Belial’s gripe.” Surin underwent the same self-inflicted ordeal, but survived.

While working at Loudun, Surin found time, between the exorcisms and his own seizures, to write many letters. But except to his indiscreet friend, Father d’Attichy, he made no confidences. Meditation, mortification, purity of heart — these are the ordinary themes of his letters. The devils and his own trials are scarcely mentioned.

“In regard to your mental prayer,” he writes to one of his cloistered correspondents, “I do not take it as a bad sign that you should be unable, as you tell me, to keep your mind fixed on some particular subject, which you have prepared in advance. I advise you not to pin yourself down to any specific topic, but to go to your prayers with the same freedom of heart, with which, in the past, you used to go to Mother d’Arrérac’s room, to talk with her and help her to pass the time. To these meetings you did not bring an agenda of carefully studied subjects for discussion; for that would have put an end to the pleasure of your conversation. You went to her with a general disposition to foment and cultivate your friendship. Go to God in the same way.”

“Love the dear God,” he writes to another of his friends, “and permit Him to do as He likes. Where He works, the soul should give up its own coarse way of acting. Do this, and remain exposed to the will of Love, and to its power. Lay aside your busy practices, which are mingled with many imperfections that need to be purified.”

And what is this divine Love, to whose will and power the soul is required to expose itself? "Love's work is to ravage, to destroy, to abolish, and then to make new, to set up again, to resuscitate. It is marvelously terrible and marvelously sweet; and the more terrible, the more desirable, the more attractive. To this Love we must resolutely give ourselves. I shall not be happy until I have seen it triumph over you, to the point of consuming and annihilating you."

In Surin's case the process of annihilation was only just beginning. During the greater part of 1637 and the first months of 1638 he was a sick man, but a sick man with intervals of health. His malady consisted of a series of departures from a state that was still tolerably normal.

"This obsession," he wrote twenty-five years later in *La Science Expérimentale des choses de l'autre vie*, "was accompanied by extraordinary mental vigor and cheerfulness, which helped him to bear this burden not merely with patience, but with contentment." True, sustained concentration was already out of the question; he could not study. But he could make use of the fruits of earlier studies in astonishing improvisations. Inhibited, not knowing what he was going to say, or whether he would be able to open his mouth, he would climb up into the pulpit, with the feelings of a condemned criminal mounting the scaffold. Then, suddenly he would feel "a dilatation of the interior sense and the heat of so strong a grace that he would discharge his heart like a trumpet, with a mighty power of voice and thought, as if he had been another man. . . . A pipe had been opened, disgorging into his mind an abundance of strength and knowledge."

Then came a sudden change. The pipe was stopped; the torrent of inspiration dried up. The sickness took a new form, and was no longer the spasmodic obsession of a relatively normal soul in touch with its God, but a total deprivation of light, accompanied by a diminution and degradation of the whole man into something less than himself. In a series of letters, written for the most part in 1638, and addressed to a nun who had passed through experiences similar to his own, Surin describes the first beginnings of that new phase of his malady.

In part, at least, his sufferings were physical. There were days and weeks when a low, but almost unrelenting fever, kept him in a state of extreme weakness. At other times he suffered from a kind of partial paralysis. He still had some control over his limbs; but every movement cost him an enormous effort and was often accompanied by pain. The smallest actions were torturing ordeals, and every task, the most trifling and ordinary, was a labor of Hercules. It would take him two or three hours to unfasten the hooks on his cassock. As for completely undressing, it was a physical impossibility. For nearly twenty years, Surin slept in his clothes. Once a week, however, it was necessary (if he was to remain free of vermin, "for which I had a great aversion") to change his shirt. "I suffered so enormously from this change of linen that sometimes I would spend almost the whole of the night from Saturday to Sunday in taking off the soiled shirt and putting on the clean one. Such was the pain involved that, if ever I seemed to find some gleam of happiness, it was always before Thursday, whereas from Thursday onward I suffered the greatest anguish, thinking of my change of shirt; for this was a

torture from which, if I could have had my choice, I would have ransomed myself by almost any other kind of suffering.”

Eating was almost as bad as dressing and undressing. Shirts were changed only once a week. But these Sisyphean cuttings of meat, these raisings of forks to mouth, these laborious graspings and takings of the glass, were daily ordeals, all the more unbearable because of a total lack of appetite and the diner’s knowledge that he would probably throw up everything he had eaten or, if he did not, would suffer from excruciating indigestion.

The doctors did their best for him. He was bled, he was purged, he was made to take warm baths. Nothing did any good. The symptoms were physical, no doubt; but their cause was to be sought, not in the patient’s corrupted blood and peccant humors, but in his mind.

That mind had ceased to be possessed. The struggle was no longer between Leviathan and a soul that, in spite of him, was tranquilly conscious of the presence of God. It was between a certain notion of God and a certain notion of nature, with Surin’s divided spirit fighting on both sides and getting the worst of every encounter.

That the infinite must include the finite and must therefore be totally present at every point of space, every instant of time, seems sufficiently evident. To avoid this obvious conclusion and to escape its practical consequences, the older and more rigorous Christian thinkers expended all their ingenuity, the severer Christian moralists all their persuasions and coercions.

This is a fallen world, proclaimed the thinkers, and nature, human and subhuman, is radically corrupt. Therefore, said the moralists, nature must be fought on every front — suppressed within, ignored and depreciated without.

But it is only through the datum of nature that we can hope to receive the donum of Grace. It is only by accepting the given, as it is given, that we may qualify for the Gift. It is only through the facts that we can come to the primordial Fact. “Do not hunt after the truth,” advises one of the Zen masters, “only cease to cherish opinions.” And the Christian mystics say substantially the same thing — with this difference, however, that they have to make an exception in favor of the opinions known as dogmas, articles of faith, pious traditions and the like. But at best these are but signposts; and if we “take the pointing finger for the Moon,” we shall certainly go astray. The Fact must be approached through the facts; it cannot be known by means of words, or by means of phantasies inspired by words. The heavenly kingdom can be made to come on earth; it cannot be made to come in our imagination or in our discursive reasonings. And it cannot come even on earth, so long as we persist in living, not on the earth as it is actually given, but as it appears to an ego obsessed by the idea of separateness, by cravings and abhorrences, by compensatory phantasies and by ready-made propositions about the nature of things. Our kingdom must go before God’s can come. There must be a mortification, not of nature, but of our fatal tendency to set up something of our own contriving in the place of nature. We have to get rid of our catalogue of likes and dislikes, of the verbal patterns to which we expect reality to conform, of the fancies

into which we retire, when the facts do not come up to our expectation. This is the “holy indifference” of St. François de Sales; this is de Caussade’s “abandonment,” the conscious willing, moment by moment, of what actually happens; this is that “refusal to prefer” which, in Zen phraseology, is the mark of the Perfect Way.

On authority and because of certain experiences of his own, Surin believed that God could be known directly, in a transfiguring union of the soul with the divine Ground of its own and the world’s being. But he also cherished the opinion that, because of our first parents’ sin, nature is totally depraved, and that this depravity sets a great gulf between the Creator and the creature. Given these notions about God and the universe (notions idolatrously regarded as interchangeable with facts and the primordial Fact), Surin felt that it was only logical to attempt the eradication from his mind-body of every element of nature that could be uprooted without actually causing death. In his old age he recognized that he had made a mistake. “For it must be remarked that, several years before he went to Loudun, the Father” [Surin is writing of himself in the third person] “had held himself exceedingly tight (*s’était extrêmement serré*) for reasons of mortification, and in an effort to remain unceasingly in the presence of God; and though there was in this some commendable zeal, there were also great excesses in the reserve and constraint of his mind. For this reason he was in a condition of cramped contraction (*rétrécissement*), which was assuredly blameworthy, though well meant.” Because he cherished the opinion that the infinite is somehow outside the finite, that God is in some way opposed to his creation, Surin had tried to mortify, not his egotistic attitude toward nature, not the fancies and notions which he had set up in the place of nature, but nature itself, the given facts of embodied existence among human beings on this particular planet.

“Hate nature,” is his advice, “and let it suffer the humiliations God wills for it.” Nature has been “condemned and sentenced to death,” and the sentence is just; that is why we must “allow God to flay and crucify us at His pleasure.” That it was His pleasure, Surin knew by the bitterest experience. Cherishing the opinion of nature’s total depravity, he had transformed the world-weariness, which is so common a symptom of neurosis, into a loathing for his own humanity, an abhorrence for his environment — a loathing and an abhorrence all the more intense because he still had cravings, because creatures, though disgusting, were still a source of temptation. In one of his letters he states that, for some days past, he has had some business to transact. To his sick nature the occupation brings a certain relief. He feels a little less miserable, until the moment comes when he realizes that the improvement was due to the fact that “every moment had been filled with infidelities.” His misery returns, aggravated by a sense of guilt, a conviction of sin. He feels a chronic remorse. But it is a remorse which does not spur him to action; for he finds himself incapable of action, incapable even of confession, so that he has to “swallow his sins like water, to feed on them as though on bread.” He lives in a paralysis of the will and the faculties, but not of the sensibilities. For though he cannot do anything, he can still suffer. “The more one is stripped, the more acutely does one feel the blows.” He is in “the void of death.” But

this void is more than a mere absence; it is nothingness with a vengeance, “hideous and horrible, it is an abyss, where there can be no help or relief from any creature,” and where the Creator is a tormentor, for whom the victim can feel only hatred. The new Master demands to reign alone; that is why He is making his servant’s life utterly unlivable; that is why nature has been hunted down to its last retreat and is being slowly tortured to death. Nothing remains of the personality but its most repulsive elements. Surin can no longer think, or study, or pray, or do good works, or lift up his heart to his Maker in love and gratitude; but “the sensual and animal side of his nature” is still alive and “plunged in crime and abomination.” And so are the criminally frivolous cravings for diversion, so are pride and self-love and ambition. Annihilated from within by neurosis and his rigorist opinions, he resolves to accelerate the destruction of nature by mortifying himself from without. There are still certain occupations that bring him a little relief from his miseries. He gives them up; for it is necessary, he feels, to “join outward emptiness to inward emptiness.” By this means the very hope of external support will be removed, and nature will be left, utterly defenseless, to the mercy of God. Meanwhile the doctors have ordered him to eat plenty of meat; but he cannot bring himself to obey. God has sent him this sickness as a means of purgation. If he tries to get well prematurely, he will be thwarting the divine will.

Health is rejected, business and recreation are rejected. But there are still those flashy products of his talents and learning — the sermons, the theological treatises, the homilies, the devotional poems, at which he has worked so hard and of which he is still so wickedly vain. After long and torturing indecision, he feels a strong impulse to destroy everything he has ever written. The manuscripts of several books, together with many other papers, are torn up and burned. He is now “despoiled of everything and abandoned stark naked to his sufferings.” He is “in the hands of the Workman who (I assure you) presses on with his work forcing me to travel by hard roads, which my nature revolts against taking.”

A few months later the road had become so hard that Surin was physically and mentally incapable of describing it. From 1639 to 1657 there is a great gap in his correspondence, a total blank. During all this time he suffered from a kind of pathological illiteracy, and was incapable either of writing or reading. At moments it was difficult for him even to speak. He was in solitary confinement, cut off from all communication with the outside world. Exile from humanity was bad enough; but it was as nothing to that exile from God, to which he was now condemned. Not long after his return from Annecy, Surin came to be convinced (and the conviction endured for many years) that he was already damned. Nothing now remained for him but to wait, in utter despair, for a death which was predestined to be the passage from hell on earth to an infinitely more terrible hell in hell.

His confessor and his superiors assured him that God’s mercy is boundless and that, so long as there is life, there can be no certainty of damnation. One learned theologian proved the point by syllogisms; another came to the infirmary loaded with folios and proved it by the authority of the Doctors of the Church. It was all in vain. Surin knew

that he was lost and that the devils, over whom he had so recently triumphed, were gleefully preparing a place for him among the everlasting fires. Men might talk as they liked; but facts and his own deeds spoke louder than any words. Everything that happened, everything he felt and was inspired to do, confirmed him in his conviction. If he sat near the fire, a burning ember (the symbol of eternal damnation) was sure to jump out at him. If he entered a church, it was always at the moment when some phrase about God's justice, some denunciation of the wicked, was read or sung — for him. If he listened to a sermon, he would invariably hear the preacher affirm that there was a lost soul in the congregation — it was his. Once, when he had gone to pray at the bedside of a dying brother, the conviction came to him that, like Urbain Grandier, he was a sorcerer and had the power to command devils to enter the bodies of innocent persons. And that was what he was doing now — putting a spell upon the dying man. Ordering Leviathan, the demon of pride to enter into him. Summoning Isacaaron, the demon of lust, Balaam, the spirit of buffoonery, Behemoth, the lord of all blasphemies. A man was standing on the brink of eternity, ready to take the last, decisive step. If, when he took that step, his soul were full of love and faith, all would go well with him. If not . . . Surin could actually smell the sulphur, could hear the howling and the gnashing of teeth — and yet, against his will (or was he doing it voluntarily?) he kept calling on the devils, he kept hoping that they would show themselves. All at once the sick man stirred uneasily in his bed and began to talk — not as he had done before, of resignation to God's will, not of Christ and Mary, not of the divine mercy and the joys of paradise, but incoherently of the flapping of black wings, of assailing doubts and unspeakable terrors. With an overpowering sense of horror, Surin realized that it was perfectly true: he was a sorcerer.

To these external and inferential proofs of his damnation were added the inward assurances inspired in his mind by some alien and evidently supernatural power. "He who speaks of God," he wrote, "speaks of a sea of rigors and (if I dare say it) of severities, passing all measure." In those long hours of helplessness, while he lay pinned to his bed by a paralysis of the will, an alternate collapse and cramping of the muscles, he received "impressions of God's fury so great that there is no pain in the world to compare with it." Year followed year, and one kind of suffering was succeeded by another; but the sense of God's enmity never wavered within him. He knew it intellectually; he felt it as an enormous weight, pressing upon him — the weight of divine judgment. *Et pondus ejus ferre non potui*. He could not bear it, and yet there it always was.

To reinforce this felt conviction, there were repeated visions — so vivid, so substantial, that he was hard put to it to decide whether he had seen them with the eyes of the mind or with those of the body. They were visions, for the most part, of Christ. Not of Christ the Redeemer, but of Christ the Judge. Not of Christ teaching or Christ suffering, but of Christ on the Last Day, Christ as the unrepentant sinner sees him at the moment of death, Christ as he appears to the damned souls in the pit of hell, Christ wearing "an insupportable look" of anger, of abhorrence, of vengeful hatred. Sometimes Surin saw him as an armed man in a scarlet cloak. Sometimes, floating in

the air at the height of a pike, the vision would stand guard at church doors, forbidding the sinner to enter. Sometimes, as a visible and tangible something, Christ seemed to radiate from the Sacrament and was experienced by the sick man as a current of loathing so powerful that, on one occasion, it actually knocked him off a ladder, from which he was watching a religious procession. (At other times — such is the intensity of the doubt which honest faith creates, by induction, in the minds of the believer — he knew for a certainty that Calvin was right and that Christ was not really present in the Sacrament. The dilemma admitted of no passage between its horns. When he knew, by direct experience, that Christ was in the consecrated wafer, he knew, by direct experience, that Christ had damned him. But he was no less certainly damned, when he knew with the heretics, that the doctrine of the real presence was untrue.)

Surin's visions were not of Christ alone. Sometimes he saw the Blessed Virgin, frowning at him with an expression of disgust and indignation. Raising her hand, she would discharge a bolt of avenging lightning, and his whole being, mental and physical, would feel the pain of it. Sometimes other saints rose up before him, each with his "insupportable look" and thunderbolt. Surin would see them in his dreams and wake up with a start and in agony, as the lightning struck him. The most unlikely saints made their appearance. One night, for example, he was transfixed by a bolt from the hand of "St. Edward, King of England." (Was this Edward the Martyr? Or can it have been poor Edward the Confessor?) In any case, St. Edward displayed a "horrible anger against me; and I am convinced that this [throwing of thunderbolts by saints] is what happens in hell."

At the beginning of his long exile from heaven and the world of men, Surin was still capable, at least on his good days, of trying to re-establish contact with his surroundings. "I was always running after my superiors and the other Jesuits in order to pour into their ears an account of what was going on in my soul." In vain. (One of the chief horrors of mental derangement, as of extreme physical disability, consists in the fact that "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed." The state of the catalectic, for example, is incommensurable with the state of the normal man or woman. The universe inhabited by the paralyzed is radically different from the world known to those who have the full use of their bodies. Love may build a bridge, but cannot abolish the gulf; and where there is no love, there is not even a bridge.) Surin ran after his superiors and his colleagues; but they understood nothing of what he told them; they did not even wish to sympathize. "I recognized the truth of what St. Teresa said: that there is no pain more unbearable than that of falling into the hands of a confessor who is too prudent." Impatiently, they moved away from him. He caught them by the sleeve and tried, yet again, to explain what was happening to him. It was all so simple, so obvious, so unutterably terrible! They smiled contemptuously and tapped their foreheads. The man was mad and, what was more, he had brought his madness on himself. God, they assured him, was punishing him for his pride and his singularity — for wanting to be more spiritual than other people, for imagining that he could go to perfection by some eccentric, un-Jesuit road of his own choosing. Surin

protested against their judgment. "That natural common sense, on which our faith is built, fortifies us so strongly against the objects of the other life that, so soon as a man asserts that he is damned, other people treat the idea as though it were an expression of madness." But the follies of the melancholy and the hypochondriacal are of quite another kind — to imagine, for example, that "one is a jug, or a cardinal," or (if one is actually a cardinal, like Alphonse de Richelieu) that one is God the Father. To believe that one is damned, Surin insisted, was never a sign of madness; and to prove his point, he cited the cases of Henry Suso, of St. Ignatius, of Blosius, of St. Teresa, of St. John of the Cross. At one time or another all of these had believed themselves to be damned; and all of them had been both sane and eminently holy. But the prudent ones either refused to listen, or if they did hear him out (with what an undisguised impatience!) were not convinced.

Their attitude deepened Surin's already enormous misery and drove him yet further along the road to despair. On the seventeenth of May, 1645, at the little Jesuit house at Saint-Macaire, near Bordeaux, he tried to commit suicide. All the preceding night he had wrestled with the temptation to self-murder and most of the morning was spent in prayer before the Holy Sacrament. "A little before dinner time he went up to his room. Entering it, he saw that the window was open, went to it and, after looking down at the precipice which had inspired this mad instinct in his mind [the house was built on a rocky eminence above the river], withdrew into the middle of the room, still facing the window. There he lost all consciousness and suddenly, as if he had been asleep, without any knowledge of what he was doing, he was hurled out of the window." The body fell, bounced on a projection of the rock and came to rest at the water's edge. The thigh bone was broken; but there were no internal injuries. Prompted by his inveterate passion for the miraculous, Surin rounds off the account of his tragedy with an almost comic postscript. "At the very moment of this accident, and at the very place where the fall took place, a Huguenot came down to the river, and while being ferried across he made jokes about the occurrence. Once over, he remounted and, in the meadow, on a perfectly smooth road, his horse threw him and he broke his arm, and he himself said that God had punished him because he had laughed at the Father for trying to fly, and he, from a much smaller height, had fallen into the same mishap. Now, the height from which the Father fell is great enough to be fatal; for less than a month since a cat, which was trying to catch a sparrow, fell from the same place, and was killed, though these animals, being light and adroit, ordinarily fall without hurting themselves."

Surin's leg was set and, after some months, he was able to walk, though always, thenceforward, with a limp. The mind, however, was not to be cured so easily as the body. The temptation to despair persisted for years. High places continued to hold a fearful fascination. He could not look at a knife or a rope without an intense desire to hang himself or cut his own throat.

And the urge to destruction was directed outward as well as inward. There were times when Surin found himself filled with an almost irresistible desire to set fire to the

house in which he was living. The buildings and their human occupants, the library with all its treasures of wisdom and devotion, the chapel, the vestments, the crucifixes, the Blessed Sacrament itself — all should be reduced to ashes. Only a fiend could harbor such malice. But that precisely was what he was — a damned soul, a devil incarnate, hated by God and hating in return. For him, this kind of wickedness would be entirely in order. And yet, lost though he knew himself to be, there was still a part of him that rejected the evil which it was his duty, as one of the damned, to think and feel and do. The temptations to suicide and arson were strong; but he struggled against them. And meanwhile those all too prudent persons who surrounded him were taking no chances. After his first attempt at self-murder he was either watched by a lay brother, or actually tied with ropes to his bed. For the next three years Surin was subjected to that systematic inhumanity which our fathers reserved for the insane.

By those who get a kick out of this sort of thing (and they are very numerous) inhumanity is enjoyed for its own sake, but often, nonetheless, with a bad conscience. To allay their sense of guilt, the bullies and the sadists provide themselves with creditable excuses for their favorite sport. Thus, brutality toward children is rationalized as discipline, as obedience to the Word of God — “he that spareth the rod, hateth his son.” Brutality toward criminals is a corollary of the Categorical Imperative. Brutality toward religious or political heretics is a blow for the True Faith. Brutality toward members of an alien race is justified by arguments drawn from what may once have passed for Science. Once universal, brutality toward the insane is not yet extinct — for the mad are horribly exasperating. But this brutality is no longer rationalized, as it was in the past, in theological terms. The people who tormented Surin and the other victims of hysteria or psychosis did so, first, because they enjoyed being brutal and, second, because they were convinced that they did well to be brutal. And they believed that they did well, because, *ex hypothesi*, the mad had always brought their troubles upon themselves. For some manifest or obscure sin, they were being punished by God, who permitted devils to besiege or obsess them. Both as God’s enemies and as temporary incarnations of radical evil, they deserved to be maltreated. And maltreated they were — with a good conscience and a heart-warming sense that the divine will was being done on earth, as in heaven. The Bedlamite was beaten, starved, chained up in the filthiest of dungeons. If he was visited by a minister of religion, it was to be told that it was all his own fault and that God was angry with him. To the general public he was a mixture between a baboon and a mountebank, with some of the characteristics of a condemned criminal thrown in. On Sundays and holidays one took the children to see the insane, as one takes them now to the zoo or the circus. And there were no rules against teasing the animals. On the contrary, the animals being what they were, the enemies of God, tormenting them was not merely permissible; it was a duty. The sane person who is treated as a lunatic and subjected to every kind of insult and practical joke — this is a favorite theme of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dramatists and storytellers. One thinks of Malvolio, one thinks of Lasca’s Dr. Manente, one thinks of

the wretched victim in Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus*. And the facts are even more unpleasant than the fictions.

Louise du Tronchay has left an account of her experiences in the great Parisian madhouse of the Salpêtrière, to which she was committed, in 1674, after being found in the streets, screaming and laughing to herself, and followed by large numbers of stray cats. These cats aroused a vehement suspicion that, as well as mad, she was a witch. At the hospital, she was chained up in a cage for the public amusement. Through the bars visitors would poke her with their walking sticks and make jokes about the cats and the punishment reserved for witches. That dirty straw she was lying on — what a fine blaze it would make when she was brought to execution! Every few weeks new straw was provided and the old was burned in the courtyard. Louise would be brought to look at the flames and hear the gleeful shouts of "Fire for the witch!" One Sunday she was made to listen to a sermon, of which she herself was the subject. The preacher exhibited her to his congregation as an awful example of the way in which God punishes sin. In this world it was a cage in the Salpêtrière; in the next it would be hell. And while the wretched victim sobbed and shuddered, he expatiated with relish on the flames, the stench, the draughts of boiling oil, the scourges of red-hot wire — forever and ever, Amen.

Under this regimen Louise, very naturally, grew worse and worse. That she finally recovered was due to the common decency of one man — a visiting priest who treated her kindly and had the charity to teach her to pray.

Surin's experiences were essentially similar. True, he was spared the mental and physical tortures of life in a public madhouse. But even in the infirmary of a Jesuit college, even among the highly educated scholars and dedicated Christians who were his colleagues, there were horrors enough. The lay brother, who acted as his attendant, beat him unmercifully. The schoolboys, if ever they caught a glimpse of the crazed Father, would hoot and jeer. Of such actors such actions were only to be expected. They were not to be expected of grave and learned priests, his brothers, his fellow apostles. And yet how crassly insensitive, how totally without the bowels of compassion they proved themselves to be! There were the bluff and hearty ones, the Muscular Christians, who assured him that there was nothing wrong with him, who forced him to do all the things it was impossible for him to do, and then laughed when he cried out in pain and told him it was all imagination. There were the malignant moralists who came and sat at his bedside and told him, at enormous length and with evident satisfaction, that he was only getting what he had so richly deserved. There were the priests who visited him out of curiosity and to be amused, who talked nonsense to him as though he were a child or a cretin, who showed off their wit, their priceless sense of humor, by being waggish at his expense, by making derisive jokes which they assumed, because he could not answer, that he could not understand. On one occasion "a Father of some importance came to the infirmary, where I was all alone, sitting on my bed, looked at me fixedly for a long time and then, though I had done him no harm and had no wish to do him any, gave me a well aimed slap in the face; after which he went out."

Surin did his best to turn these brutalities to the profit of his soul. God desired that he should be humiliated by being thought mad and treated as an outlaw, with no right to men's respect, no right even to their pity. He resigned himself to what was happening; he went further and actively willed his own humiliation. But this conscious effort to reconcile himself to his fate was not enough, of itself, to effect a cure. As in the case of Louise du Tronchay, the healing agent was another's kindness. In 1648 Father Bastide, the only one of his colleagues who had persistently argued that Surin was not irretrievably mad, was appointed to the rectorship of the college of Saintes. He asked for permission to take the invalid with him. It was granted. At Saintes, for the first time in ten years, Surin found himself treated with sympathy and consideration — as a sick man undergoing a spiritual ordeal, not as a kind of criminal undergoing punishment at the hands of God and therefore deserving of yet more punishment at the hands of men. It was still all but impossible for him to leave his prison and communicate with the world; but now the world was moving in and trying to communicate with him.

The patient's first responses to this new treatment were physical. For years, chronic anxiety had kept his breathing so shallow that he seemed to be living always on the brink of asphyxiation. Now, almost suddenly, his diaphragm started to move; he breathed deeply, he was able to fill his lungs with life-giving air. "All my muscles had been locked tight, as though with clasps, and now one clasp was opened, then another, with extraordinary relief." He was experiencing in his body an analogue of spiritual liberation. Those who have suffered from asthma or hay fever know the horror of being physically cut off from the cosmic environment, and the bliss, when they recover, of being restored to it. On the spiritual level most human beings suffer from the equivalent of asthma, but are only very obscurely and fitfully aware that they are living in a state of chronic asphyxiation. A few, however, know themselves for what they are — nonbreathers. Desperately they pant for air; and if at last they contrive to fill their lungs, what an unspeakable blessedness!

In the course of his strange career, Surin was alternately strangled and released, locked up in stifling darkness and transported to a mountain top in the sun. And his lungs reflected the state of his soul — cramped and rigid when the soul was stifled, dilated when it drew breath. The words *serré*, *bandé*, *retréci*, and their antithesis, *dilaté*, recur again and again in Surin's writings. They express the cardinal fact of his experience — a violent oscillation between the extremes of tension and release, of a contraction into less than self and a letting go into more abundant Life. It was an experience of the same kind as that which is so minutely described in Maine de Biran's diary, as that which finds its most powerfully beautiful expression in certain poems of George Herbert and Henry Vaughan — an experience made up of a succession of incommensurables.

In Surin's case psychological release was sometimes accompanied by an altogether extraordinary degree of thoracic dilation. During one period of ecstatic self-abandonment he found that his leather waistcoat, which was laced up the front, like a boot, had to be let out five or six inches. (As a young man, St. Philip Neri

experienced an ecstatic dilatation so extreme that his heart became permanently enlarged and he broke two ribs. In spite, or because, of which, he lived to a ripe old age, working prodigiously to the very end.)

Surin was always conscious that there was an actual, as well as a merely etymological connection between breath and spirit. He lists four types of breathing — a breath of the devil, of nature, of grace and of glory — and assures us that he has had experience of each. Unfortunately he does not elaborate on his statement and we are left in ignorance of what he actually discovered in the field of pranayana.

Thanks to Father Bastide's kindness, Surin had recovered the sense of being a member of the human race. But Bastide could speak only for men and not for God — or, to be more accurate, for Surin's cherished notion of God. The invalid could breathe again; but it was still impossible for him to read or write or say Mass, to walk, or eat, or undress without discomfort or even acute pain. These disabilities were all related to Surin's enduring conviction that he was damned. It was a source of terror and despair, from which the only effective distractions were pain and acute illness. To feel better mentally he had to feel worse physically.

The strangest feature of Surin's malady is the fact that there was a part of his mind which was never ill. Unable to read or write, unable to perform the simplest actions without excruciating and disabling pain, convinced of his own damnation, haunted by compulsions to suicide, to blasphemy, to impurity, to heresy (at one moment he was a convinced Calvinist, at another a believing and practicing Manichee), Surin retained, during the whole of his long ordeal, an unimpaired capacity for literary composition. During the first ten years of his madness, he composed mainly in verse. Setting new words to popular tunes, he converted innumerable ballads and drinking songs into Christian canticles. Here are some lines about St. Teresa and St. Catherine of Genoa, from a ballad entitled *Les Saints enivrés d'Amour* to the tune of *J'ai rencontré un Allemand*.

J'aperçus d'un autre côté,
Une vierge rare en beauté,
Qu'on appelle Thérèse;
Son visage tout allumé
Montrait bien qu'elle avait humé
De ce vin à son aise.
Elle me dit: "Prends-en pour toi,
Bois-en et chantes avec moi:
Dieu, Dieu, Dieu, je ne veux que Dieu:
Tout le reste me pèse."
Une Génoise, dont le cœur
Était plein de cette liqueur,
Semblait lui faire escorte:
Elle aussi rouge qu'un charbon
S'écriait: "Que ce vin est bon. . . ."

That the verses are feeble and the taste atrocious was due to a want, not of health, but of talent. Surin's poetry was as poor when he was sane as when he was out of his wits. His gift (and it was considerable) was for the clear and exhaustive exposition of a subject in prose. And this precisely was what, during the second half of his illness, he actually undertook. Composing in his head and dictating every evening to an amanuensis, he produced, between 1651 and 1655, his greatest work, *Le Catéchisme Spirituel*. This is a treatise comparable in scope and in intrinsic merit to the Holy Wisdom of its author's English contemporary, Augustine Baker. In spite of its great length of more than a thousand duodecimo pages, the Catechism remains a very readable book. True, the surface texture of the writing is somewhat uninteresting; but this is not the fault of Surin, whose pleasantly old-fashioned style has been corrected, in the modern editions of the book, by what his nineteenth-century editor calls, with unconscious irony, "a friendly hand." Luckily, the friendly hand could not spoil the book's essential qualities of simplicity even in the subtlest analyses, of matter-of-factness even when it deals with the sublime.

At the time he composed his Catechism, Surin was incapable of consulting books of reference, or of going back over his own manuscript. And yet, in spite of this, the references to other authors are copious and apt, and the work itself is admirably well organized in a series of returns to the same themes, which are treated on each occasion from a different viewpoint, or with a graduated increase of elaboration. To compose such a book under such handicaps required a prodigious memory and exceptional powers of concentration. But Surin, though somewhat better than he had been at his worst, was still generally regarded (and not without reason) as a lunatic.

To be mad with lucidity and in complete possession of one's intellectual faculties — this, surely, must be one of the most terrible of experiences. Unimpaired, Surin's reason looked on helplessly, while his imagination, his emotions and his autonomic nervous system comported themselves like an alliance of criminal maniacs, bent on his destruction. It was a struggle, in the last analysis, between the active person and the victim of suggestion, between Surin the realist, doing his best to cope with actual facts, and Surin the verbalist, converting words into hideous pseudo-realities, in regard to which it was only logical to feel terror and despair.

Surin's was merely an extreme case of the universal human predicament. "In the beginning was the word." So far as human history is concerned, the statement is perfectly true. Language is the instrument of man's progress out of animality, and language is the cause of man's deviation from animal innocence and animal conformity to the nature of things into madness and diabolism. Words are at once indispensable and fatal. Treated as working hypotheses, propositions about the world are instruments, by means of which we are enabled progressively to understand the world. Treated as absolute truths, as dogmas to be swallowed, as idols to be worshiped, propositions about the world distort our vision of reality and lead us into all kinds of inappropriate behavior. "Wishing to entice the blind," says Dai-o Kokushi, "the Buddha playfully let words escape from his golden mouth. Heaven and earth have been filled, ever since,

with entangling briars.” And the briars have not been exclusively of Far Eastern manufacture. If Christ came “not to send peace on earth, but a sword,” it was because he and his followers had no choice but to embody their insights in words. Like all other words, these Christian words were sometimes inadequate, sometimes too sweeping, and always imprecise — therefore always susceptible of being interpreted in many different ways. Treated as working hypotheses — as useful frames of reference, within which to organize and cope with the given facts of human existence — propositions made up of these words have been of inestimable value. Treated as dogmas and idols, they have been the cause of such enormous evils as theological hatred, religious wars and ecclesiastical imperialism, together with such minor horrors as the orgy at Loudun and Surin’s self-suggested madness.

Moralists harp on the duty of controlling the passions; and of course they are quite right to do so. Unhappily most of them have failed to harp on the no less essential duty of controlling words and the reasoning based upon them. Crimes of passion are committed only in hot blood, and blood is only occasionally hot. But words are with us all the time, and words (owing, no doubt, to the conditioning of early childhood) are charged with a suggestive power so prodigious as to justify, in some sort, the belief in spells and magic formulas. Far more dangerous than crimes of passion are the crimes of idealism — the crimes which are instigated, fostered and moralized by hallowed words. Such crimes are planned when the pulse is normal and committed in cold blood and with unwavering perseverance over a long course of years. In the past, the words which dictated the crimes of idealism were predominantly religious; now they are predominantly political. The dogmas are no longer metaphysical, but positivistic and ideological. The only things that remain unchanged are the idolatrous superstition of those who swallow the dogmas, and the systematic madness, the diabolic ferocity, with which they act upon their beliefs.

Transferred from the laboratory and the study to the church, the parliament and the council chamber, the notion of working hypotheses might liberate mankind from its collective insanities, its chronic compulsions to wholesale murder and mass suicide. The fundamental human problem is ecological: men must learn how to live with the cosmos on all its levels, from the material to the spiritual. As a race, we have to discover how a huge and rapidly increasing population can go on existing satisfactorily on a planet of limited size and possessed of resources, many of which are wasting assets that can never be renewed. As individuals, we have to find out how to establish a satisfactory relationship with that infinite Mind, from which we habitually imagine ourselves to be isolated. By concentrating our attention on the datum and the Donum we shall develop, as a kind of byproduct, satisfactory methods of getting on with one another. “Seek ye first the Kingdom, and all the rest shall be added.” But instead of that, we insist on first seeking all the rest — the all too human interests born of self-centered passion on the one hand and idolatrous word-worship on the other. The result of this is that our basic ecological problems remain unsolved and insoluble. Concentration on power politics makes it impossible for organized societies to improve their relationship with

the planet. Concentration on idolatrously worshiped word-systems makes it impossible for individuals to improve their relations with the primordial Fact. Seeking first all the rest, we lose not only it, but the Kingdom as well, and the earth on which alone the Kingdom can come.

In Surin's case certain of the propositions he had been taught to worship as dogmas drove him out of his mind by creating occasions for terror and despair. But fortunately there were other propositions, more encouraging and equally dogmatic.

On October 12, 1655, one of the Fathers at the College of Bordeaux (to which, by this time, Surin had returned) came to his room to hear his confession and prepare him for communion. The only grave sin of which the sick man could accuse himself was that of not having behaved sufficiently wickedly; for, since God had already damned him, it was only right that he should live up to his damnation by wallowing in all the vices, whereas in fact he always tried to be virtuous. "To say that a Christian ought to feel scruples in regard to doing good will seem ridiculous to the reader, as it now does to me." These words were written in 1663. In 1655 Surin still felt that it was his duty, as a lost soul, to be wholly bad. But, in spite of this duty, he found it morally impossible to be anything but good. In this, he was convinced, he had committed a sin more enormous than that of premeditated murder. It was this sin which he now confessed, "not as a man living on the earth, for whom there is still hope, but as one of the damned." The confessor, who was evidently a kindly, sensible man, well acquainted with Surin's weakness for the extraordinary, assured his penitent that, though not at all prone to this kind of thing, he had often felt a strong impression, call it an inspiration, that all would finally be well. "You will recognize your mistake, you will be able to think and act like other men, you will die in peace." The words made a profound impression on Surin's mind, and from that moment the suffocating cloud of fear and misery began to lift. God had not rejected him; there was still hope. Hope for recovery in this world, hope for salvation in the next.

With hope came a slow return to health. One by one the physical inhibitions and paralyses disappeared. The first to go was the inability to write. One day, in 1657, after eighteen years of enforced illiteracy, he picked up a pen and was able to scrawl three pages of thoughts on the spiritual life. The characters were "so confused that they seemed scarcely human"; but that did not matter. What mattered was that his hand had at last been able to co-operate, however inadequately, with his mind.

Three years later he recovered the ability to walk. It happened while he was staying in the country, at the house of a friend. At the beginning of his stay, he had to be carried by two footmen from his bedroom to the dining room, "for I could not take a step without great pain. These pains were not like the pains of paralytics; they were pains which tended toward a shrinking and contraction of the stomach, and at the same time I used to feel a great violence in my bowels." On October 27, 1660, one of his relatives called to see him and, when the time came for him to go, Surin painfully dragged himself to the door to say good-by. Standing there, after the visitor's departure, he looked out into the garden "and began to study, with a certain distinctness, the objects

that were in it, a thing which, on account of an extreme debility of the nerves, I had not been able to do for fifteen years.” Feeling, instead of the familiar pains, “a certain suavity,” he went down the five or six steps into the garden and looked about him for a little while longer. Looked at the black mold and the shiny green of the box hedges, looked at the lawns and the Michaelmas daisies and the alley of pleached hornbeams. Looked at the low hills in the distance with their autumnal woods, fox-brown under the pale sky, in the almost silvery sunlight. There was no wind, and the silence was like an enormous crystal, and everywhere was a living mystery of colors merging, of forms distinct and separate, of the innumerable and the one, of passing time and the presence of eternity.

Next day Surin ventured out again into the universe he had almost forgotten; and, the day after that, his voyage of rediscovery took him as far as the well — and it did not invite him to suicide. He even left the garden and walked, ankle-deep in the dead leaves, through the little wood that lay beyond the walls. He was cured.

Surin accounts for his unawareness of the external world by an “extreme debility of the nerves.” But this debility never prevented him from concentrating his attention on theological notions and the phantasies to which those notions gave rise. Actually it was his obsession with these images and abstractions which so disastrously cut him off from the natural world. Long before the onset of his illness he had forced himself to live, at one remove from the given facts, in a world where words and reactions to words were more important than things and lives. With the sublime insanity of one who carries a faith to its logical conclusions, Lallemant had taught that “we ought not to see or wonder at anything on this earth except the Holy Sacrament. If God were capable of wonder, He would wonder only at this mystery, and that of the Incarnation. . . . After the Incarnation, we ought not to wonder at anything.” In neither seeing nor wondering at anything in the given world, Surin was merely acting on his master’s injunctions. Hoping to deserve the Donum, he ignored the datum. But the highest Gift is by means of the given. The Kingdom of God comes on earth and through the perception of earth as it is in itself, and not as it appears to a will distorted by self-centered cravings and revulsions, to an intellect distorted by ready-made beliefs.

As a rigorist theologian, convinced of the total depravity of a fallen world, Surin agreed with Lallemant that there was nothing in nature worth looking or wondering at. But his theories were not in accord with his immediate experience. “Sometimes,” he writes in *Le Catéchisme Spirituel*, “the Holy Spirit enlightens the soul successively and by degrees; and then He takes advantage of everything that presents itself to consciousness — animals, trees, flowers or anything else in creation — in order to instruct the soul in the great truths and to teach her secretly what she must do for the service of God.” And here is another passage in the same vein. “In a flower, in a tiny insect, God makes manifest to souls all the treasures of his wisdom and goodness; and there needs no more to provoke a new conflagration of love.” Writing directly of himself, Surin records that “on a number of occasions my soul was invested with these states of glory, and the sunlight seemed to grow incomparably brighter than usual, and yet was

so soft and bearable that it seemed to be of another kind than natural sunlight. Once when I was in this state, I went out into the garden of our college at Bordeaux; and so great was this light that I seemed to myself to be walking in paradise." Every color was more "intense and natural," every form more exquisitely distinct than at ordinary times. Spontaneously and by a kind of blessed accident, he had entered that infinite and eternal world, which we would all inhabit if only, in Blake's words, "the doors of perception were cleansed." But the glory departed and, through all the years of his illness, never returned. "Nothing remains to me but the memory of a very great thing, surpassing in beauty and grandeur all that I have experienced in this world."

That a man, for whom the Kingdom had actually manifested itself upon earth should yet subscribe to the rigorist's wholesale dismissal of all created things, is a melancholy tribute to the obsessive power of mere words and notions. He had had experiences of God in nature; but instead of making a systematic devotional use of these experiences, as Traherne was to do in his *Centuries of Meditations*, Surin chose to revert, after each theophany, to the old insane refusal to see or wonder at anything in creation. Instead, he concentrated all his attention on the more dismal propositions in his creed and on his own emotional and imaginative reactions to those propositions. No more certain way of shutting out the infinite goodness could possibly have been devised.

Each time Antaeus touched the earth, he received a new accession of strength. That was why Hercules had to lift him up and strangle him in mid-air. Simultaneously the giant and the hero, Surin both experienced the healing which comes from a contact with nature and, by sheer will power, raised himself from the ground and wrung his own neck. He had aspired to liberation; but because he conceived of union with the Son as a systematic denial of the essential divinity of nature, he had realized only the partial enlightenment of union with the Father apart from the manifested world, together with union with the Spirit in all kinds of psychic experiences. In its opening phase, Surin's cure was not a passage from darkness into that "sober certainty of waking bliss," which comes when mind permits Mind to know itself, through a finite consciousness, for what it really is; it was rather the exchange of a profoundly abnormal condition for another condition of opposite sign, in which "extraordinary graces" became as ordinary as extraordinary desolations had been before. It should be remarked that, even in the worst times of his malady, Surin had experienced brief flashes of joy, ephemeral convictions that, in spite of his damnation, God was eternally with him. These flashes were now multiplied, these convictions, from being momentary, became lasting. Psychic experience succeeded psychic experience, and every vision was luminous and encouraging, every feeling was one of bliss. But "to honor Our Lord as He deserves to be honored, you should disentangle your heart from all attachment to spiritual delights and perceptible graces. You should in no wise depend upon these things. Faith alone should be your support. It is faith which raises us to God in purity; for it leaves the soul in emptiness, and it is this emptiness which is filled by God." So Surin had written, more than twenty years before, to one of the nuns who asked

him for advice. And it was in the same vein that Father Bastide — the man to whose charity he owed the first inception of his cure — now spoke to Surin. However elevated they may be, however consoling, psychic experiences are not enlightenment, nor even the means to enlightenment. And Bastide did not say these things on his own authority. He had all the accredited mystics of the Church behind him, he could quote St. John of the Cross. For some time Surin did his best to follow Bastide's advice. But his extraordinary graces came crowding in upon him, incessantly, insistently. And when he rejected them, they changed their sign once more, and turned into aridities and desolations. God seemed now to have withdrawn again and left him on the brink of the old despair. In spite of Bastide, in spite of St. John of the Cross, Surin went back to his visions, his locutions, his ecstasies, his inspirations. In the course of the ensuing controversy the two disputants and their Superior, Father Anginot, appealed to Jeanne des Anges. Would she kindly ask her Good Angel what he thought about extraordinary graces? The Good Angel began by favoring Bastide's cause. Surin protested, and after the exchange of many letters between Sœur Jeanne and the three Jesuits, the Angel announced that both disputants were in the right, inasmuch as each was doing his best to serve God in his own way. Surin was fully satisfied and so was Anginot. Bastide, however, stuck to his guns and even went so far as to suggest that it was time for Sœur Jeanne to break off communications with the heavenly counterpart of M. de Beaufort. Nor was he the only one to raise objections. In 1659, Surin informed the Prioress that an eminent ecclesiastic had complained "that you have set up a kind of shop for finding out from your Angel all the things people press you to ask of him, that you have a regular information bureau for marriages, lawsuits and other things of the kind." This sort of thing must be stopped immediately — not, as Father Bastide had suggested, by breaking off relations with the Angel, but by consulting him only for spiritual purposes.

Time passed. Surin was well enough now to visit the sick, to hear confessions, to preach, to write, to direct souls by word of mouth or by letter. His behavior was still somewhat odd, and his superiors thought it necessary to censor all his letters, incoming and outgoing, for fear that they might contain unorthodoxies or at least embarrassing extravagances. Their suspicions were groundless. The man who had dictated *Le Catéchisme Spirituel*, while (to all appearances) out of his mind, could be relied on to display an equal prudence now that he was well.

In 1663 he wrote the *Science Expérimentale*, with its history of the possession and its account of his own subsequent trials. Louis XIV was already well embarked on his disastrous career; but Surin was not interested in "public affairs and the schemes of the great." He had the sacraments, he had the gospels to read and ruminate, he had his experiences of God; these were enough. In certain respects, indeed, they were more than enough; for he was growing old, he was losing his strength, "and love does not go too well with weakness; for it requires a stout vessel to resist the pressure of its workings." The almost manic well-being of a few years before had gone; the regular and easy succession of extraordinary graces was a thing of the past. But he had something

else, something better. To Soeur Jeanne he writes that "God has recently given me some slight knowledge of His love. But what a difference there is between the depth of the soul and its faculties! For in effect the soul is often rich in its depths and actually glutted with the supernatural treasures of grace, while its faculties are in a state of utter poverty. In her depths, as I say, the soul has a very high, very delicate, very fruitful sense of God, accompanied by a most comforting love and a wondrous dilatation of the heart, without, however, being able to communicate any of these things to other people. Outwardly, persons in this state give the impression of being without any taste (for the things of religion), devoid of all talent and reduced to an extremity of indigence. . . . There is an exceedingly great distress when the soul is unable, if the expression may be permitted, to disgorge herself through her faculties; the overplus within her causes an oppression more painful than can be imagined. What is happening in the soul's depths is like the banking up of great waters, whose mass, for lack of an issue by which to escape, overwhelms her with an unbearable weight and causes a deathly exhaustion." In some impossibly paradoxical way, a finite being contains the infinite and is almost annihilated by the experience. But Surin does not complain. It is a blessed anguish, a death devoutly to be desired.

In the midst of his ecstasies and visions, Surin had been on a track that led, no doubt, through very picturesque country, but toward a luminous dead end. Now that the extraordinary graces were over, now that he was free to be aware of the proximity of total Awareness, he had achieved the possibility of enlightenment. For now at last he was living "in faith," precisely as Bastide had urged him to do. Now at last he was standing in intellectual and imaginative nakedness before the given facts of the world and his own life — empty that he might be filled, poor that he might be made supremely rich. "I am told," he writes two years before his death, "that there are pearl fishers, who have a pipe that goes from the sea floor to the surface, where it is buoyed up with corks, and that through this pipe they breathe — and are yet at the bottom of the sea. I do not know if this be true; but in any case it expresses very well what I have to say; for the soul has a pipe that goes to heaven, a channel, says St. Catherine of Genoa, that leads to the very heart of God. Through it she breathes wisdom and love, and is sustained. While the soul is here, fishing for pearls at the bottom of the earth, she speaks with other souls, she preaches, she does God's business; and all the time there is a pipe that goes to heaven to draw down eternal life and consolation. . . . In this state the soul is at once happy and wretched. And yet I think she is really happy. . . . For without visions or ecstasies or suspensions of the senses, in the midst of the ordinary miseries of earthly life, in weakness and many-sided impotency, our Lord gives something that passes all understanding and all measure. . . . This something is a certain wound of love which, without any visible outward effect, pierces the soul and keeps it incessantly longing for God."

And so, fishing for pearls at the bottom of the earth, his pipe between his teeth, his lungs dilated by the air from another world, the old man advanced toward his consummation. A few months before he died, Surin finished the last of his devotional

writings, *Questions sur l'Amour de Dieu*. Reading certain passages of this book, we divine that the last barrier had now gone down and that, for one more soul, the Kingdom had come on earth. Through that channel to the very heart of God had flowed "a peace that is not merely a calm, like the lull of the sea, or the tranquil flow of mighty rivers; but it enters into us, this divine peace and repose, like a flooding torrent; and the soul, after so many tempests, feels, as it were, an inundation of peace; and the relish of divine repose not only enters the soul, not only takes her captive, but comes upon her, like the onrush of a multitude of waters.

"We find that, in the Apocalypse, the Spirit of God makes mention of a music of harps and lutes that is like thunder. Such are the marvelous ways of God — to make a thunder like well-tuned lutes and a symphony of lutes like thunder. Likewise, who will ever believe or imagine that there can be torrents of peace, which sweep away the dykes, which breach the levees and shatter the sea walls? And yet this is what actually happens, and it is the nature of God to make assaults of peace and silences of love. . . . God's peace is like a river, whose course was in one country and has been diverted into another by the breaking of a dyke. This invading peace does things which do not seem proper to the nature of peace; for it comes with a rush, it comes with impetuosity; and this belongs only to the peace of God. Only the peace of God can march in such equipage, like the noise of the rising tide as it comes, not to ravage the land, but to fill the bed prepared for it by God. It comes as though fiercely, it comes with a roaring, even though the sea be calm. This roaring is caused only by the abundance of the waters, and not by their fury; for the moving of the waters is not by a tempest, but by the waters themselves, in all their native calm, when there is not a breath of wind. The sea in its fullness comes to visit the earth and to kiss the shores assigned for its limits. It comes in majesty and in magnificence. Even so it is in the soul when, after long suffering, the immensity of peace comes to visit her — and not a breath of wind to make a ripple on its surface. This is a divine peace, which brings with it the treasures of God and all the wealth of His Kingdom. It has its harbingers, the halcyons and heralding birds that announce its approach; these are the visits of angels which precede it. It comes like an element of the other life, with a sound of celestial harmony and with such swiftness that the soul is utterly overthrown, not because she has made any resistance to the blessing, but because of its very abundance. This abundance does no violence except to the obstacles in the way of its benediction; and all the animals that are not peaceable take flight before the onset of this peace. And with peace come all the treasures promised to Jerusalem — cassia and amber and the other rarities upon her shores. Even so comes this divine peace — comes with abundance, comes with a wealth of blessings, comes with all the precious treasures of grace."

More than thirty years before, at Marennes, Surin had often watched the calm, irresistible mounting of the Atlantic tides; and now the memory of that everyday marvel was the means by which this consummated soul was able, at last, to "disgorge herself" in a not inadequate expression of the experienced Fact. *Tel qu'en Lui-même enfin l'éternité le change*, he had come to the place where, without knowing it, he had

always been; and when, in the spring of 1665 death overtook him, there was, as Jacob Boehme had said, “no necessity for him to go anywhere”: he was already there.

Epilogue

(IN AMPLIFICATION OF material in Chapter Three)

Without an understanding of man's deep-seated urge to self-transcendence, of his very natural reluctance to take the hard, ascending way, and his search for some bogus liberation either below or to one side of his personality, we cannot hope to make sense of our own particular period of history or indeed of history in general, of life as it was lived in the past and as it is lived today. For this reason I propose to discuss some of the more common Grace-substitutes, into which and by means of which men and women have tried to escape from the tormenting consciousness of being merely themselves.

In France there is now one retailer of alcohol to every hundred inhabitants, more or less. In the United States there are probably at least a million desperate alcoholics, besides a much larger number of very heavy drinkers whose disease has not yet become mortal. Regarding the consumption of intoxicants in the past we have no precise or statistical knowledge. In Western Europe, among the Celts and Teutons, and throughout medieval and early modern times, the individual intake of alcohol was probably even greater than it is today. On the many occasions when we drink tea, or coffee, or soda pop, our ancestors refreshed themselves with wine, beer, mead and, in later centuries, with gin, brandy and usquebaugh. The regular drinking of water was a penance imposed on wrongdoers, or accepted by the religious, along with occasional vegetarianism, as a very severe mortification. Not to drink an intoxicant was an eccentricity sufficiently remarkable to call for comment and the using of a more or less disparaging nickname. Hence such patronymics as the Italian Bevilacqua, the French Boileau and the English Drink water.

Alcohol is but one of the many drugs employed by human beings as avenues of escape from the insulated self. Of the natural narcotics, stimulants and hallucinators there is, I believe, not a single one whose properties have not been known from time immemorial. Modern research has given us a host of brand new synthetics; but in regard to the natural poisons it has merely developed better methods of extracting, concentrating and recombining those already known. From poppy to curare, from Andean coca to Indian hemp and Siberian agaric, every plant or bush or fungus capable, when ingested, of stupefying or exciting or evoking visions, has long since been discovered and systematically employed. The fact is strangely significant; for it seems to prove that, always and everywhere, human beings have felt the radical inadequacy of their personal existence, the misery of being their insulated selves and not something else, something wider, something in Wordsworthian phrase, "far more deeply interfused." Exploring the world around him, primitive man evidently "tried all things and held

fast to that which was good.” For the purpose of self-preservation the good is every edible fruit and leaf, every wholesome seed, root and nut. But in another context — the context of self-dissatisfaction and the urge to self-transcendence — the good is everything in nature by means of which the quality of individual consciousness can be changed. Such drug-induced changes may be manifestly for the worse, may be at the price of present discomfort and future addiction, degeneration and premature death. All this is of no moment. What matters is the awareness, if only for an hour or two, if only for a few minutes, of being someone or, more often, something other than the insulated self. “I live, yet not I, but wine or opium or peyotl or hashish liveth in me.” To go beyond the limits of the insulated ego is such a liberation that, even when self-transcendence is through nausea into frenzy, through cramps into hallucinations and coma, the drug-induced experience has been regarded by primitives and even by the highly civilized as intrinsically divine. Ecstasy through intoxication is still an essential part of the religion of many African, South American and Polynesian peoples. It was once, as the surviving documents clearly prove, a no less essential part of the religion of the Celts, the Teutons, the Greeks, the peoples of the Middle East and the Aryan conquerors of India. It is not merely that “beer does more than Milton can to justify God’s ways to man.” Beer is the god. Among the Celts, Sabazios was the divine name given to the felt alienation of being dead drunk on ale. Further to the south, Dionysos was, among other things, the supernatural objectification of the psychophysical effects of too much wine. In Vedic mythology, Indra was the god of that now unidentifiable drug called soma. Hero, slayer of dragons, he was the magnified projection upon heaven of the strange and glorious otherness experienced by the intoxicated. Made one with the drug, he becomes, as Soma-Indra, the source of immortality, the mediator between the human and the divine.

In modern times beer and the other toxic short cuts to self-transcendence are no longer officially worshiped as gods. Theory has undergone a change, but not practice; for in practice millions upon millions of civilized men and women continue to pay their devotions, not to the liberating and transfiguring Spirit, but to alcohol, to hashish, to opium and its derivatives, to the barbiturates, and the other synthetic additions to the age-old catalogue of poisons capable of causing self-transcendence. In every case, of course, what seems a god is actually a devil, what seems a liberation is in fact an enslavement. The self-transcendence is invariably downward into the less than human, the lower than personal.

Like intoxication, elementary sexuality, indulged in for its own sake and divorced from love, was once a god, worshiped not only as the principle of fecundity, but as a manifestation of the radical Otherness immanent in every human being. In theory, elementary sexuality has long since ceased to be a god. But in practice it can still boast of a countless host of sectaries.

There is an elementary sexuality which is innocent, and there is an elementary sexuality which is morally and aesthetically squalid. D. H. Lawrence has written very beautifully of the first; Jean Genêt, with horrifying power and in copious detail, of the

second. The sexuality of Eden and the sexuality of the sewer — both of them have power to carry the individual beyond the limits of his or her insulated self. But the second and (one would sadly guess) the commoner variety takes those who indulge in it to a lower level of subhumanity, evokes the consciousness, and leaves the memory, of a completer alienation, than does the first. Hence, for all those who feel the urge to escape from their imprisoning identity, the perennial attraction of debauchery and of such strange equivalents of debauchery as have been described in the course of this narrative.

In most civilized communities public opinion condemns debauchery and drug addiction as being ethically wrong. And to moral disapproval is added fiscal discouragement and legal repression. Alcohol is heavily taxed, the sale of narcotics is everywhere prohibited and certain sexual practices are treated as crimes. But when we pass from drug-taking and elementary sexuality to the third main avenue of downward self-transcendence, we find, on the part of moralists and legislators, a very different and much more indulgent attitude. This seems all the more surprising since crowd-delirium, as we may call it, is more immediately dangerous to social order, more dramatically a menace to that thin crust of decency, reasonableness and mutual tolerance which constitutes a civilization, than either drink or debauchery. True, a generalized and long-continued habit of overindulgence in sexuality may result, as J. D. Unwin has argued, in lowering the energy level of an entire society, thereby rendering it incapable of reaching or maintaining a high degree of civilization. Similarly drug addiction, if sufficiently widespread may lower the military, economic and political efficiency of the society in which it prevails. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries raw alcohol was the secret weapon of the European slave traders; heroin, in the twentieth, of the Japanese militarists. Dead drunk, the Negro was an easy prey. As for the Chinese drug addict, he could be relied upon to make no trouble for his conquerors. But these cases are exceptional. When left to itself, a society generally manages to come to terms with its favorite poison. The drug is a parasite on the body politic, but a parasite which its host (to speak metaphorically) has strength and sense enough to keep under control. And the same applies to sexuality. No society which based its sexual practices upon the theories of the Marquis de Sade could possibly survive; and in fact no society has ever come near to doing such a thing. Even the most easygoing of the Polynesian paradises have their rules and regulations, their categorical imperatives and commandments. Against excessive sexuality, as against excessive drug-taking, societies seem to be able to protect themselves with some degree of success. Their defense against crowd-delirium and its often disastrous consequences is, in all too many cases, far less adequate. The professional moralists who inveigh against drunkenness are strangely silent about the equally disgusting vice of herd-intoxication — of downward self-transcendence into subhumanity by the process of getting together in a mob.

“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” In the midst of two or three hundred, the divine presence becomes more problematical. And when the numbers run into the thousands, or tens of thousands,

the likelihood of God being there, in the consciousness of each individual, declines almost to the vanishing point. For such is the nature of an excited crowd (and every crowd is automatically self-exciting) that, where two or three thousand are gathered together, there is an absence not merely of deity, but even of common humanity. The fact of being one of a multitude delivers a man from his consciousness of being an insulated self and carries him down into a less than personal realm, where there are no responsibilities, no right or wrong, no need for thought or judgment or discrimination — only a strong vague sense of togetherness, only a shared excitement, a collective alienation. And the alienation is at once more prolonged and less exhausting than that induced by debauchery; the morning after less depressing than that which follows self-poisoning by alcohol or morphine. Moreover, the crowd-delirium can be indulged in, not merely without a bad conscience, but actually, in many cases, with a positive glow of conscious virtue. For, so far from condemning the practice of downward self-transcendence through herd-intoxication, the leaders of church and state have actively encouraged the practice whenever it could be used for the furtherance of their own ends. Individually and in the co-ordinated and purposive groups which constitute a healthy society, men and women display a certain capacity for rational thought and free choice in the light of ethical principles. Herded into mobs, the same men and women behave as though they possessed neither reason nor free will. Crowd-intoxication reduces them to a condition of infra-personal and antisocial irresponsibility. Drugged by the mysterious poison which every excited herd secretes, they fall into a state of heightened suggestibility, resembling that which follows an injection of sodium amytal or the induction, by whatever means, of a light hypnotic trance. While in this state they will believe any nonsense that may be bawled at them, will act upon any command or exhortation, however senseless, mad or criminal. To men and women under the influence of herd-poison, “whatever I say three times is true” — and whatever I say three hundred times is Revelation, is the directly inspired Word of God. That is why men in authority — the priests and the rulers of peoples — have never unequivocally proclaimed the immorality of this form of downward self-transcendence. True, crowd-delirium evoked by members of the opposition and in the name of heretical principles has everywhere been denounced by those in power. But crowd-delirium aroused by government agents, crowd-delirium in the name of orthodoxy, is an entirely different matter. In all cases where it can be made to serve the interests of the men controlling church and state, downward self-transcendence by means of herd-intoxication is treated as something legitimate, and even highly desirable. Pilgrimages and political rallies, corybantic revivals and patriotic parades — these things are ethically right so long as they are our pilgrimages, our rallies, our revivals and our parades. The fact that most of those who take part in these affairs are temporarily dehumanized by herd-poison is of no account in comparison with the fact that their dehumanization may be used to consolidate the religious and political powers that be.

When crowd-delirium is exploited for the benefit of governments and orthodox churches, the exploiters are always very careful not to allow the intoxication to go

too far. The ruling minorities make use of their subjects' craving for downward self-transcendence in order, first, to amuse and distract them and, second, to get them into a subpersonal state of heightened suggestibility. Religious and political ceremonials are welcomed by the masses as opportunities for getting drunk on herd-poison, and by their rulers as opportunities for planting suggestions in minds which have momentarily ceased to be capable of reason or free will.

The final symptom of herd-intoxication is a maniacal violence. Instances of crowd-delirium culminating in gratuitous destructiveness, in ferocious self-mutilation, in fratricidal savagery without purpose and against the elementary interests of all concerned, are to be met with on almost every page of the anthropologists' textbooks and — a little less frequently, but still with dismal regularity — in the histories of even the most highly civilized peoples. Except when they wish to liquidate an unpopular minority the official representatives of state and church are chary of evoking a frenzy which they cannot be sure of controlling. No such scruples restrain the revolutionary leader, who hates the status quo and has only one wish — to create a chaos on which, when he comes to power, he may impose a new kind of order. When the revolutionary exploits men's urge to downward self-transcendence, he exploits it to the frantic and demoniac limit. To men and women sick of being their insulated selves and weary of the responsibilities which go with membership in a purposive human group, he offers exciting opportunities for "getting away from it all" in parades and demonstrations and public meetings. The organs of the body politic are purposive groups. A crowd is the social equivalent of a cancer. The poison it secretes depersonalizes its constituent members to the point where they start to behave with a savage violence, of which, in their normal state, they would be completely incapable. The revolutionary encourages his followers to manifest this last and worst symptom of herd-intoxication and then proceeds to direct their frenzy against his enemies, the holders of political, economic and religious power.

In the course of the last forty years the techniques for exploiting man's urge toward this most dangerous form of downward self-transcendence have reached a pitch of perfection unmatched in all of history. To begin with, there are more people to the square mile than ever before, and the means of transporting vast herds of them from considerable distances, and of concentrating them in a single building or arena, are much more efficient than in the past. Meanwhile, new and previously undreamed-of devices for exciting mobs have been invented. There is the radio, which has enormously extended the range of the demagogue's raucous yelling. There is the loudspeaker, amplifying and indefinitely reduplicating the heady music of class-hatred and militant nationalism. There is the camera (of which it was once naively said that "it cannot lie") and its offspring, the movies and television; these three have made the objectification of tendentious phantasy absurdly easy. And finally there is that greatest of our social inventions, free, compulsory education. Everyone now knows how to read and everyone consequently is at the mercy of the propagandists, governmental or commercial, who own the pulp factories, the linotype machines and the rotary presses. Assemble a mob

of men and women previously conditioned by a daily reading of newspapers; treat them to amplified band music, bright lights, and the oratory of a demagogue who (as demagogues always are) is simultaneously the exploiter and the victim of herd-intoxication, and in next to no time you can reduce them to a state of almost mindless subhumanity. Never before have so few been in a position to make fools, maniacs or criminals of so many.

In Communist Russia, in Fascist Italy, in Nazi Germany, the exploiters of humanity's fatal taste for herd-poison have followed an identical course. When in revolutionary opposition, they encouraged the mobs under their influence to become destructively violent. Later, when they had come to power, it was only in relation to foreigners and selected scapegoats that they permitted herd-intoxication to run its full course. Having acquired a vested interest in the status quo, they now checked the descent into subhumanity at a point well this side of frenzy. For these neo-conservatives, mass intoxication was chiefly valuable, henceforward, as a means for heightening their subjects' suggestibility and so rendering them more docile to the expressions of authoritarian will. Being in a crowd is the best known antidote to independent thought. Hence the dictators' rooted objection to "mere psychology" and a private life. "Intellectuals of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your brains."

Drugs, elementary sexuality and herd-intoxication — these are the three most popular avenues of downward self-transcendence. There are many others, not so well trodden as these great descending highways, but leading no less surely to the same infra-personal goal. Consider, for example, the way of rhythmic movement. In primitive religions prolonged rhythmic movement is very commonly resorted to for the purpose of inducing a state of infra-personal and subhuman ecstasy. The same technique for achieving the same end has been used by many civilized peoples — by the Greeks, for example, by the Hindus, by many of the orders of Dervishes in the Islamic world, by such Christian sects as the Shakers and the Holy Rollers. In all these cases rhythmic movement, long-drawn and repetitive, is a form of ritual deliberately practiced for the sake of the downward self-transcendence resulting from it. History also records many sporadic outbreaks of involuntary and uncontrollable jigging, swaying and head-wagging. These epidemics of what in one region is called Tarantism, in another St. Vitus's dance, have generally occurred in times of trouble following wars, pestilences and famines, and are most common where malaria is endemic. The unwitting purpose of the men and women who succumb to these collective manias is the same as that pursued by the sectaries who use the dance as a religious rite — namely, to escape from insulated selfhood into a state in which there are no responsibilities, no guilt-laden past or haunting future, but only the present, blissful consciousness of being someone else.

Intimately associated with the ecstasy-producing rite of rhythmic movement is the ecstasy-producing rite of rhythmic sound. Music is as vast as human nature and has something to say to men and women on every level of their being, from the self-regardingly sentimental to the abstractly intellectual, from the merely visceral to the

spiritual. In one of its innumerable forms music is a powerful drug, partly stimulant and partly narcotic, but wholly alterative. No man, however highly civilized, can listen for very long to African drumming, or Indian chanting, or Welsh hymn-singing, and retain intact his critical and self-conscious personality. It would be interesting to take a group of the most eminent philosophers from the best universities, shut them up in a hot room with Moroccan dervishes or Haitian voodooists, and measure, with a stop watch, the strength of their psychological resistance to the effects of rhythmic sound. Would the Logical Positivists be able to hold out longer than the Subjective Idealists? Would the Marxists prove tougher than the Thomists or the Vedantists? What a fascinating, what a fruitful field for experiment! Meanwhile, all we can safely predict is that, if exposed long enough to the tom-toms and the singing, every one of our philosophers would end by capering and howling with the savages.

The ways of rhythmic movement and of rhythmic sound are generally superimposed, so to speak, upon the way of herd-intoxication. But there are also private roads, roads which can be taken by the solitary traveler who has no taste for crowds, or no strong faith in the principles, institutions and persons in whose name crowds are assembled. One of these private roads is the way of the mantram, the way of what Christ called "vain repetition." In public worship "vain repetition" is almost always associated with rhythmic sound. Litanies and the like are chanted, or at least intoned. It is as music that they produce their quasi-hypnotic effects. "Vain repetition," when practiced privately, acts upon the mind, not because of its association with rhythmic sound (for it works even when the words are merely imagined), but in virtue of a concentration of attention and memory. The constant reiteration of the same word or phrase frequently brings on a state of light or even profound trance. Once induced, this trance can either be enjoyed for its own sake, as a delicious sense of infra-personal otherness, or else deliberately used for the purpose of improving personal conduct by autosuggestion and of preparing the way for the ultimate achievement of upward self-transcendence. Of the second possibility more will be said in a later paragraph. Here our concern is with "vain repetition" as a descending road into an infra-personal alienation.

We must now consider a strictly physiological method of escape from insulated selfhood. The way of corporal penance. The destructive violence which is the final symptom of herd-intoxication is not invariably directed outward. The history of religion abounds in gruesome tales of gregarious self-whipping, self-gashing, self-gelding, even self-killing. These acts are the consequences of crowd-delirium, and are performed in a state of frenzy. Very different is the corporal penance undertaken privately and in cold blood. Here the self-torment is initiated by an act of the personal will; but its result (in some cases at least) is a temporary transformation of the insulated personality into something else. In itself, this something else is the consciousness, so intense as to be exclusive, of physical pain. The self-tortured person identifies himself with his pain and, in becoming merely the awareness of his suffering body, is delivered from that sense of past guilt and present frustration, that obsessive anxiety about the future, which constitute so large a part of the neurotic ego. There has been an escape from

selfhood, a downward passage into a state of pure physiological excruciation. But the self-tormentor need not necessarily remain in this region of infra-personal consciousness. Like the man who makes use of “vain repetition” to go beyond himself, he may be able to use his temporary alienation from selfhood as the bridge, so to speak, leading upward into the life of the spirit.

This raises a very important and difficult question. To what extent, and in what circumstances, is it possible for a man to make use of the descending road as a way to spiritual self-transcendence? At first sight it would seem obvious that the way down is not and can never be the way up. But in the realm of existence matters are not quite so simple as they are in our beautifully tidy world of words. In actual life a downward movement may sometimes be made the beginning of an ascent. When the shell of the ego has been cracked and there begins to be a consciousness of the subliminal and physiological othernesses underlying personality, it sometimes happens that we catch a glimpse, fleeting but apocalyptic, of that other Otherness, which is the Ground of all being. So long as we are confined within our insulated selfhood, we remain unaware of the various not-selves with which we are associated — the organic not-self, the subconscious not-self, the collective not-self of the psychic medium in which all our thinking and feeling have their existence, and the immanent and transcendent not-self of the Spirit. Any escape, even by a descending road, out of insulated selfhood makes possible at least a momentary awareness of the not-self on every level, including the highest. William James, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, gives instances of “anaesthetic revelations,” following the inhalation of laughing gas. Similar theophanies are sometimes experienced by alcoholics, and there are probably moments in the course of intoxication by almost any drug, when awareness of a not-self superior to the disintegrating ego becomes briefly possible. But these occasional flashes of revelation are bought at an enormous price. For the drug-taker, the moment of spiritual awareness (if it comes at all) gives place very soon to subhuman stupor, frenzy or hallucination, followed by dismal hangovers and, in the long run, by a permanent and fatal impairment of bodily health and mental power. Very occasionally a single “anaesthetic revelation” may act, like any other theophany, to incite its recipient to an effort of self-transformation and upward self-transcendence. But the fact that such a thing sometimes happens can never justify the employment of chemical methods of self-transcendence. This is a descending road and most of those who take it will come to a state of degradation, where periods of subhuman ecstasy alternate with periods of conscious selfhood so wretched that any escape, even if it be into the slow suicide of drug addiction, will seem preferable to being a person.

What is true of drugs is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of elementary sexuality. The road runs downhill; but on the way there may occasionally be theophanies. The Dark Gods, as Lawrence called them, may change their sign and become bright. In India there is a Tantric yoga, based upon an elaborate psychophysiological technique, whose purpose is to transform the downward self-transcendence of elementary sexuality into an upward self-transcendence. In the West the nearest equivalent to these Tantric practices was the

sexual discipline devised by John Humphrey Noyes and practiced by the members of the Oneida Community. At Oneida elementary sexuality was not only successfully civilized; it was made compatible with, and subordinate to, a form of Protestant Christianity, sincerely preached and earnestly acted upon.

Herd-intoxication disintegrates the ego more thoroughly than does elementary sexuality. Its frenzies, its follies, its heightened suggestibility can be matched only in the intoxications induced by such drugs as alcohol, hashish and heroin. But even to the member of an excited mob there may come (at some relatively early stage of his downward self-transcendence) a genuine revelation of the Otherness that is above selfhood. This is one of the reasons why some good may sometimes come out of even the most corybantic of revival meetings. Some good as well as very great evil may also result from the fact that men and women in a crowd tend to become more than ordinarily suggestible. While in this state they are subjected to exhortations which have the force, when they come once again to their senses, of posthypnotic commands. Like the demagogue, the revivalist and the ritualist disintegrate the ego of their hearers by herding them together and dosing them with plenty of vain repetition and rhythmic sound. Then, unlike the demagogue, they give suggestions some of which may be genuinely Christian. These, if they "take," result in a reintegration of broken-down personalities on a somewhat higher level. There can also be reintegrations of personality under the influence of the posthypnotic commands issued by a rabble-rousing politician. But these commands are all incitements to hatred on the one hand and to blind obedience and compensatory illusion on the other. Initiated by a massive dose of herd-poison, confirmed and directed by the rhetoric of a maniac who is at the same time a Machiavellian exploiter of other men's weakness, political "conversion" results in the creation of a new personality worse than the old and much more dangerous because wholeheartedly devoted to a party whose first aim is the liquidation of its opponents.

I have distinguished between demagogues and religionists, on the ground that the latter may sometimes do some good, whereas the former can scarcely, in the very nature of things, do anything but harm. But it must not be imagined that the religious exploiters of herd-intoxication are wholly guiltless. On the contrary, they have been responsible in the past for mischiefs almost as enormous as those brought upon their victims (along with the victims of those victims) by the revolutionary demagogues of our own time. In the course of the last six or seven generations, the power of religious organizations to do evil has, throughout the Western world, considerably declined. Primarily this is due to the astounding progress of applied science and the consequent demand by the masses for compensatory illusions that have an air of being positivistic rather than metaphysical. The demagogues offer such pseudo-positivistic illusions and the churches do not. As the attractiveness of the churches declines, so also does their influence, so do their wealth, their political power and, along with these, their capacity for doing evil on a large scale. Circumstances have now delivered the churchmen from certain of the temptations, to which, in earlier centuries, their predecessors almost invariably succumbed. They would be well advised voluntarily to

deliver themselves from such temptations as still remain. Conspicuous among these is the temptation to acquire power by pandering to men's insatiable craving for downward self-transcendence. Deliberately to induce herd-intoxication — even if it is done in the name of religion, even if it is all supposedly “for the good” of the intoxicated — cannot be morally justified.

On the subject of horizontal self-transcendence very little need be said — not because the phenomenon is unimportant (far from it), but because it is too obvious to require analysis and of occurrence too frequent to be readily classifiable.

In order to escape from the horrors of insulated selfhood most men and women choose, most of the time, to go neither up nor down, but sideways. They identify themselves with some cause wider than their own immediate interests, but not degradingly lower and, if higher, higher only within the range of current social values. This horizontal, or nearly horizontal, self-transcendence may be into something as trivial as a hobby, or as precious as married love. It can be brought about through self-identification with any human activity, from running a business to research in nuclear physics, from composing music to collecting stamps, from campaigning for political office to educating children or studying the mating habits of birds. Horizontal self-transcendence is of the utmost importance. Without it, there would be no art, no science, no law, no philosophy, indeed no civilization. And there would also be no war, no odium theologicum or ideologicum, no systematic intolerance, no persecution. These great goods and these enormous evils are the fruits of man's capacity for total and continuous self-identification with an idea, a feeling, a cause. How can we have the good without the evil, a high civilization without saturation bombing or the extermination of religious and political heretics? The answer is that we cannot have it so long as our self-transcendence remains merely horizontal. When we identify ourselves with an idea or a cause we are in fact worshiping something homemade, something partial and parochial, something that, however noble, is yet all too human. “Patriotism,” as a great patriot concluded on the eve of her execution by her country's enemies, “is not enough.” Neither is socialism, nor communism, nor capitalism; neither is art, nor science, nor public order, nor any given religion or church. All these are indispensable, but none of them is enough. Civilization demands from the individual devoted self-identification with the highest of human causes. But if this self-identification with what is human is not accompanied by a conscious and consistent effort to achieve upward self-transcendence into the universal life of the Spirit, the goods achieved will always be mingled with counterbalancing evils. “We make,” wrote Pascal, “an idol of truth itself; for truth without charity is not God, but His image and idol, which we must neither love or worship.” And it is not merely wrong to worship an idol; it is also exceedingly inexpedient. The worship of truth apart from charity — self-identification with science unaccompanied by self-identification with the Ground of all being — results in the kind of situation which now confronts us. Every idol, however exalted, turns out, in the long run, to be a Moloch, hungry for human sacrifice.

The Doors of Perception

First published in 1954, *The Doors of Perception* is a non-fiction work, exploring Huxley's interest in psychedelic drugs as a source of freeing consciousness and increasing awareness. The author dedicated the book to his first wife, Maria, who would die the following year of cancer; they had been married for more than thirty-five years and had one child together, Matthew, who would become a well-known epidemiologist and author. The title of the work references a line in William Blake's 1790-93 book, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, in which the poet writes 'If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, Infinite'. Interestingly, Huxley's novel inspired Jim Morrison to name his band, *The Doors* and was endorsed by the controversial psychologist, Timothy Leary.

The opening of *The Doors of Perception* describes the history of mescaline in Western science and explains that the source of the drug is the Peyote cactus. Huxley states that in 1953 he decided to aid the research into mescaline by being a 'guinea pig' and consuming the drug. He then proceeds to relate in fine detail his experience of the substance over the course of the day and how it affected his perception and appreciation of certain famous works of art and music. Huxley believes that for most people the 'longing to transcend themselves if only for a few moments, is and has always been one of the principal appetites of the soul'. He does not believe that experiences under mescaline or any other drug could truly provide 'the realization of the end and ultimate purpose of human life: Enlightenment, the Beatific Vision', but he does believe taking the substance offers a small reprieve from 'ordinary perception' and the opportunity to really see 'the outer and inner world'.

The first edition of the book

The poet William Blake by Thomas Phillips, 1807
FOR M.

If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.

William Blake

THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION

IT WAS IN 1886 that the German pharmacologist, Ludwig Lewin, published the first systematic study of the cactus, to which his own name was subsequently given. Anhalonium Lewinii was new to science. To primitive religion and the Indians of Mexico and the American Southwest it was a friend of immemorially long standing. Indeed, it was much more than a friend. In the words of one of the early Spanish visitors to the New World, 'they eat a root which they call Peyotl, and which they venerate as though it were a deity.'

Why they should have venerated it as a deity became apparent when such eminent psychologists as Jaensch, Havelock Ellis and Weir Mitchell began their experiments with mescaline, the active principle of peyotl. True, they stopped short at a point well this side of idolatry; but all concurred in assigning to mescaline a position among drugs of unique distinction. Administered in suitable doses, it changes the quality of consciousness more profoundly and yet is less toxic than any other substance in the pharmacologist's repertory.

Mescaline research has been going on sporadically ever since the days of Lewin and Havelock Ellis. Chemists have not merely isolated the alkaloid; they have learned how to synthesize it, so that the supply no longer depends on the sparse and intermittent crop of a desert cactus. Alienists have dosed themselves with mescaline in the hope thereby of coming to a better, a first-hand understanding of their patients' mental processes. Working unfortunately upon too few subjects within too narrow a range of circumstances, psychologists have observed and catalogued some of the drug's more striking effects. Neurologists and physiologists have found out something about the mechanism of its action upon the central nervous system. And at least one professional philosopher has taken mescaline for the light it may throw on such ancient unsolved riddles as the place of mind in nature and the relationship between brain and consciousness.

There matters rested until, two or three years ago, a new and perhaps highly significant fact was observed. Actually the fact had been staring everyone in the face for several decades; but nobody, as it happened, had noticed it until a young English psychiatrist, at present working in Canada, was struck by the close similarity, in chemical composition, between mescaline and adrenalin. Further research revealed that lysergic acid, an extremely potent hallucinogen derived from ergot, has a structural biochemical relationship to the others. Then came the discovery that adrenochrome, which is a product of the decomposition of adrenalin, can produce many of the symptoms

observed in mescaline intoxication. But adrenochrome probably occurs spontaneously in the human body. In other words, each one of us may be capable of manufacturing a chemical, minute doses of which are known to cause profound changes in consciousness. Certain of these changes are similar to those which occur in that most characteristic plague of the twentieth century, schizophrenia. Is the mental disorder due to a chemical disorder? And is the chemical disorder due, in its turn, to psychological distresses affecting the adrenals? It would be rash and premature to affirm it. The most we can say is that some kind of a *prima facie* case has been made out. Meanwhile the clue is being systematically followed, the sleuths – biochemists, psychiatrists, psychologists – are on the trail.

By a series of, for me, extremely fortunate circumstances I found myself, in the spring of 1953, squarely athwart that trail. One of the sleuths had come on business to California. In spite of seventy years of mescaline research, the psychological material at his disposal was still absurdly inadequate, and he was anxious to add to it. I was on the spot and willing, indeed eager, to be a guinea-pig. Thus it came about that, one bright May morning, I swallowed four-tenths of a gramme of mescaline dissolved in half a glass of water and sat down to wait for the results.

We live together, we act on, and react to, one another; but always and in all circumstances we are by ourselves. The martyrs go hand in hand into the arena; they are crucified alone. Embraced, the lovers desperately try to fuse their insulated ecstasies into a single self-transcendence; in vain. By its very nature every embodied spirit is doomed to suffer and enjoy in solitude. Sensations, feelings, insights, fancies – all these are private and, except through symbols and at second hand, incommunicable. We can pool information about experiences, but never the experiences themselves. From family to nation, every human group is a society of island universes.

Most island universes are sufficiently like one another to permit of inferential understanding or even of mutual empathy or ‘feeling into.’ Thus, remembering our own bereavements and humiliations, we can condole with others in analogous circumstances, can put ourselves (always, of course, in a slightly *Pickwickian* sense) in their places. But in certain cases communication between universes is incomplete or even non-existent. The mind is its own place, and the places inhabited by the insane and the exceptionally gifted are so different from the places where ordinary men and women live, that there is little or no common ground of memory to serve as a basis for understanding or fellow feeling. Words are uttered, but fail to enlighten. The things and events to which the symbols refer belong to mutually exclusive realms of experience.

To see ourselves as others see us is a most salutary gift. Hardly less important is the capacity to see others as they see themselves. But what if these others belong to a different species and inhabit a radically alien universe? For example, how can the sane get to know what it actually feels like to be mad? Or, short of being born again as a visionary, a medium or a musical genius, how can we ever visit the worlds which, to Blake, to Swedenborg, to Johann Sebastian Bach, were home? And how can a man at the extreme limits of ectomorphy and cerebrotonia ever put himself in the place of one

at the limits of endomorphy and viscerotonia or, except within certain circumscribed areas, share the feelings of one who stands at the limits of mesomorphy and somatotonia? To the unmitigated behaviourist such questions, I suppose, are meaningless. But for those who theoretically believe what in practice they know to be true – namely, that there is an inside to experience as well as an outside – the problems posed are real problems, all the more grave for being, some completely insoluble, some soluble only in exceptional circumstances and by methods not available to everyone. Thus, it seems virtually certain that I shall never know what it feels like to be Sir John Falstaff or Joe Louis. On the other hand, it had always seemed to me possible that, through hypnosis, for example, or autohypnosis, by means of systematic meditation, or else by taking the appropriate drug, I might so change my ordinary mode of consciousness as to be able to know, from the inside, what the visionary, the medium, even the mystic were talking about.

From what I had read of the mescaline experience I was convinced in advance that the drug would admit me, at least for a few hours, into the kind of inner world described by Blake and *Æ*. But what I had expected did not happen. I had expected to lie with my eyes shut, looking at visions of many-coloured geometries, of animated architectures, rich with gems and fabulously lovely, of landscapes with heroic figures, of symbolic dramas trembling perpetually on the verge of the ultimate revelation. But I had not reckoned, it was evident, with the idiosyncrasies of my mental make-up, the facts of my temperament, training and habits.

I am and, for as long as I can remember, I have always been a poor visualizer. Words, even the pregnant words of poets, do not evoke pictures in my mind. No hypnagogic visions greet me on the verge of sleep. When I recall something, the memory does not present itself to me as a vividly seen event or object. By an effort of the will, I can evoke a not very vivid image of what happened yesterday afternoon, of how the Lungarno used to look before the bridges were destroyed, of the Bayswater Road when the only buses were green and tiny and drawn by aged horses at three and a half miles an hour. But such images have little substance and absolutely no autonomous life of their own. They stand to real, perceived objects in the same relation as Homer's ghosts stood to the men of flesh and blood, who came to visit them in the shades. Only when I have a high temperature do my mental images come to independent life. To those in whom the faculty of visualization is strong my inner world must seem curiously drab, limited and uninteresting. This was the world – a poor thing but my own – which I expected to see transformed into something completely unlike itself.

The change which actually took place in that world was in no sense revolutionary. Half an hour after swallowing the drug I became aware of a slow dance of golden lights. A little later there were sumptuous red surfaces swelling and expanding from bright nodes of energy that vibrated with a continuously changing, patterned life. At another time the closing of my eyes revealed a complex of grey structures, within which pale blueish spheres kept emerging into intense solidity and, having emerged, would slide noiselessly upwards, out of sight. But at no time were there faces or forms of

men or animals. I saw no landscapes, no enormous spaces, no magical growth and metamorphosis of buildings, nothing remotely like a drama or a parable. The other world to which mescaline admitted me was not the world of visions; it existed out there, in what I could see with my eyes open. The great change was in the realm of objective fact. What had happened to my subjective universe was relatively unimportant.

I took my pill at eleven. An hour and half later I was sitting in my study, looking intently at a small glass vase. The vase contained only three flowers – a full-blown Belle of Portugal rose, shell pink with a hint at every petal's base of a hotter, flammier hue; a large magenta and cream-coloured carnation; and, pale purple at the end of its broken stalk, the bold heraldic blossom of an iris. Fortuitous and provisional, the little nosegay broke all the rules of traditional good taste. At breakfast that morning I had been struck by the lively dissonance of its colours. But that was no longer the point. I was not looking now at an unusual flower arrangement. I was seeing what Adam had seen on the morning of his creation – the miracle, moment by moment, of naked existence.

'Is it agreeable?' somebody asked. (During this part of the experiment, all conversations were recorded on a dictating machine, and it has been possible for me to refresh my memory of what was said.)

'Neither agreeable nor disagreeable,' I answered. 'It just is.'

Istigkeit – wasn't that the word Meister Eckhart liked to use? 'Is-ness.' The Being of Platonic philosophy – except that Plato seems to have made the enormous, the grotesque mistake of separating Being from becoming, and identifying it with the mathematical abstraction of the Idea. He could never, poor fellow, have seen a bunch of flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they were – a transience that was yet eternal life, a perpetual perishing that was at the same time pure Being, a bundle of minute, unique particulars in which, by some unspeakable and yet self-evident paradox, was to be seen the divine source of all existence.

I continued to look at the flowers, and in their living light I seemed to detect the qualitative equivalent of breathing – but of a breathing without returns to a starting-point, with no recurrent ebbs but only a repeated flow from beauty to heightened beauty, from deeper to ever deeper meaning. Words like Grace and Transfiguration came to my mind, and this of course was what, among other things, they stood for. My eyes travelled from the rose to the carnation, and from that feathery incandescence to the smooth scrolls of sentient amethyst which were the iris. The Beatific Vision, Sat Chit Ananda, Being-Awareness-Bliss – for the first time I understood, not on the verbal level, not by inchoate hints or at a distance, but precisely and completely what those prodigious syllables referred to. And then I remembered a passage I had read in one of Suzuki's essays. 'What is the Dharma-Body of the Buddha?' (The Dharma-Body of the Buddha is another way of saying Mind, Suchness, the Void, the Godhead.) The

question is asked in a Zen monastery by an earnest and bewildered novice. And with the prompt irrelevance of one of the Marx Brothers, the Master answers, 'The hedge at the bottom of the garden.' 'And the man who realizes this truth,' the novice dubiously enquires, 'what, may I ask, is he?' Groucho gives him a whack over the shoulders with his staff and answers, 'A golden-haired lion.'

It had been, when I read it, only a vaguely pregnant piece of nonsense. Now it was all as clear as day, as evident as Euclid. Of course the Dharma-Body of the Buddha was the hedge at the bottom of the garden. At the same time, and no less obviously, it was these flowers, it was anything that I – or rather the blessed Not-I released for a moment from my throttling embrace – cared to look at. The books, for example, with which my study walls were lined. Like the flowers, they glowed, when I looked at them, with brighter colours, a profounder significance. Red books, like rubies; emerald books; books bound in white jade; books of agate, of aquamarine, of yellow topaz; lapis lazuli books whose colour was so intense, so intrinsically meaningful, that they seemed to be on the point of leaving the shelves to thrust themselves more insistently on my attention.

'What about spatial relationships?' the investigator enquired, as I was looking at the books.

It was difficult to answer. True, the perspective looked rather odd, and the walls of the room no longer seemed to meet in right angles. But these were not the really important facts. The really important facts were that spatial relationships had ceased to matter very much and that my mind was perceiving the world in terms of other than spatial categories. At ordinary times the eye concerns itself with such problems as Where? – How far? – How situated in relation to what? In the mescaline experience the implied questions to which the eye responds are of another order. Place and distance cease to be of much interest. The mind does its perceiving in terms of intensity of existence, profundity of significance, relationships within a pattern. I saw the books, but was not at all concerned with their positions in space. What I noticed, what impressed itself upon my mind was the fact that all of them glowed with living light and that in some the glory was more manifest than in others. In this context, position and the three dimensions were beside the point. Not, of course, that the category of space had been abolished. When I got up and walked about, I could do so quite normally, without misjudging the whereabouts of objects. Space was still there; but it had lost its predominance. The mind was primarily concerned, not with measures and locations, but with being and meaning.

And along with indifference to space there went an even completer indifference to time.

'There seems to be plenty of it,' was all I would answer when the investigator asked me to say what I felt about time.

Plenty of it, but exactly how much was entirely irrelevant. I could, of course, have looked at my watch; but my watch, I knew, was in another universe. My actual ex-

perience had been, was still, of an indefinite duration or alternatively of a perpetual present made up of one continually changing apocalypse.

From the books the investigator directed my attention to the furniture. A small typing-table stood in the centre of the room; beyond it, from my point of view, was a wicker chair and beyond that a desk. The three pieces formed an intricate pattern of horizontals, uprights and diagonals – a pattern all the more interesting for not being interpreted in terms of spatial relationships. Table, chair and desk came together in a composition that was like something by Braque or Juan Gris, a still life recognizably related to the objective world, but rendered without depth, without any attempt at photographic realism. I was looking at my furniture, not as the utilitarian who has to sit on chairs, to write at desks and tables, and not as the camera-man or scientific recorder, but as the pure aesthete whose concern is only with forms and their relationships within the field of vision or the picture space. But as I looked, this purely aesthetic Cubist's-eye view gave place to what I can only describe as the sacramental vision of reality. I was back where I had been when I was looking at the flowers – back in a world where everything shone with the Inner Light, and was infinite in its significance. The legs, for example of that chair – how miraculous their tubularity, how supernatural their polished smoothness! I spent several minutes – or was it several centuries? – not merely gazing at those bamboo legs, but actually being them – or rather being myself in them; or, to be still more accurate (for 'I' was not involved in the case, nor in a certain sense were 'they') being my Not-self in the Not-self which was the chair.

Reflecting on my experience, I find myself agreeing with the eminent Cambridge philosopher, Dr C. D. Broad, 'that we should do well to consider much more seriously than we have hitherto been inclined to do the type of theory which Bergson put forward in connection with memory and sense perception. The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main eliminative and not productive. Each person is at each moment capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and of perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful.' According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at Large. But in so far as we are animals, our business is at all costs to survive. To make biological survival possible, Mind at Large has to be funnelled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system. What comes out at the other end is a measly trickle of the kind of consciousness which will help us to stay alive on the surface of this particular planet. To formulate and express the contents of this reduced awareness, man has invented and endlessly elaborated those symbol-systems and implicit philosophies which we call languages. Every individual is at once the beneficiary and the victim of the linguistic tradition into which he or she has been born – the beneficiary inasmuch as language gives access to the accumulated records of other people's experience, the

victim in so far as it confirms him in the belief that reduced awareness is the only awareness and as it bedevils his sense of reality, so that he is all too apt to take his concepts for data, his words for actual things. That which, in the language of religion, is called 'this world' is the universe of reduced awareness, expressed and, as it were, petrified by language. The various 'other worlds,' with which human beings erratically make contact are so many elements in the totality of the awareness belonging to Mind at Large. Most people, most of the time, know only what comes through the reducing valve and is consecrated as genuinely real by the local language. Certain persons, however, seem to be born with a kind of by-pass that circumvents the reducing valve. In others temporary by-passes may be acquired either spontaneously, or as the result of deliberate 'spiritual exercises,' or through hypnosis, or by means of drugs. Through these permanent or temporary by-passes there flows, not indeed the perception 'of everything that is happening everywhere in the universe' (for the by-pass does not abolish the reducing valve, which still excludes the total content of Mind at Large), but something more than, and above all something different from, the carefully selected utilitarian material which our narrowed, individual minds regard as a complete, or at least sufficient, picture of reality.

The brain is provided with a number of enzyme systems which serve to co-ordinate its workings. Some of these enzymes regulate the supply of glucose to the brain cells. Mescaline inhibits the production of these enzymes and thus lowers the amount of glucose available to an organ that is in constant need of sugar. When mescaline reduces the brain's normal ration of sugar, what happens? Too few cases have been observed, and therefore a comprehensive answer cannot yet be given. But what happens to the majority of the few who have taken mescaline under supervision can be summarized as follows.

(1) The ability to remember and to 'think straight' is little if at all reduced. (Listening to the recordings of my conversation under the influence of the drug, I cannot discover that I was then any stupider than I am at ordinary times.)

(2) Visual impressions are greatly intensified and the eye recovers some of the perceptual innocence of childhood, when the sensum was not immediately and automatically subordinated to the concept. Interest in space is diminished and interest in time falls almost to zero.

(3) Though the intellect remains unimpaired and though perception is enormously improved, the will suffers a profound change for the worse. The mescaline taker sees no reason for doing anything in particular and finds most of the causes for which, at ordinary times, he was prepared to act and suffer, profoundly uninteresting. He can't be bothered with them, for the good reason that he has better things to think about.

(4) These better things may be experienced (as I experienced them) 'out there,' or 'in here,' or in both worlds, the inner and the outer, simultaneously or successively. That they are better seems to be self-evident to all mescaline takers who come to the drug with a sound liver and an untroubled mind.

These effects of mescaline are the sort of effects you could expect to follow the administration of a drug having the power to impair the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve. When the brain runs out of sugar, the undernourished ego grows weak, can't be bothered to undertake the necessary chores, and loses all interest in those spatial and temporal relationships which mean so much to an organism bent on getting on in the world. As Mind at Large seeps past the no longer watertight valve, all kinds of biologically useless things start to happen. In some cases there may be extra-sensory perceptions. Other persons discover a world of visionary beauty. To others again is revealed the glory, the infinite value and meaningfulness of naked existence, of the given, unconceptualized event. In the final stage of egolessness there is an 'obscure knowledge' that All is in all – that All is actually each. This is as near, I take it, as a finite mind can ever come to 'perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe.'

In this context, how significant is the enormous heightening, under mescaline, of the perception of colour! For certain animals it is biologically very important to be able to distinguish certain hues. But beyond the limits of their utilitarian spectrum, most creatures are completely colour blind. Bees, for example, spend most of their time 'deflowering the fresh virgins of the spring'; but, as von Frisch has shown, they can recognize only a very few colours. Man's highly developed colour sense is a biological luxury – inestimably precious to him as an intellectual and spiritual being, but unnecessary to his survival as an animal. To judge by the adjectives which Homer puts into their mouths, the heroes of the Trojan War hardly excelled the bees in their capacity to distinguish colours. In this respect, at least, mankind's advance has been prodigious.

Mescaline raises all colours to a higher power and makes the percipient aware of innumerable fine shades of difference, to which, at ordinary times, he is completely blind. It would seem that, for Mind at Large, the so-called secondary characters of things are primary. Unlike Locke, it evidently feels that colours are more important, better worth attending to than masses, positions and dimensions. Like mescaline takers, many mystics perceive supernaturally brilliant colours, not only with the inward eye, but even in the objective world around them. Similar reports are made by psychics and sensitives. There are certain mediums to whom the mescaline taker's brief revelation is a matter, during long periods, of daily and hourly experience.

From this long but indispensable excursion into the realm of theory we may now return to the miraculous facts – four bamboo chair legs in the middle of a room. Like Wordsworth's daffodils, they brought all manner of wealth – the gift, beyond price, of a new direct insight into the very Nature of Things, together with a more modest treasure of understanding in the field, especially, of the arts.

A rose is a rose is a rose. But these chair legs were chair legs were St Michael and all angels. Four or five hours after the event, when the effects of a cerebral sugar shortage were wearing off, I was taken for a little tour of the city, which included a visit, towards sundown, to what is modestly claimed to be The World's Biggest Drug Store. At the Back of the W.B.D.S., among the toys, the greeting cards and comics stood a row,

surprisingly enough, of art books. I picked up the first volume that came to hand. It was on Van Gogh, and the picture at which the book opened was *The Chair* – that astounding portrait of a Ding an Sich, which the mad painter saw, with a kind of adoring terror, and tried to render on his canvas. But it was a task to which the power even of genius proved wholly inadequate. The chair Van Gogh had seen was obviously the same in essence as the chair I had seen. But, though incomparably more real than the chair of ordinary perception, the chair in his picture remained no more than an unusually expressive symbol of the fact. The fact had been manifested Suchness; this was only an emblem. Such emblems are sources of true knowledge about the Nature of Things, and this true knowledge may serve to prepare the mind which accepts it for immediate insights on its own account. But that is all. However expressive, symbols can never be the things they stand for.

It would be interesting, in this context, to make a study of the works of art available to the great knowers of Suchness. What sort of pictures did Eckhart look at? What sculptures and paintings played a part in the religious experience of St John of the Cross, of Hakuin, of Hui-neng, of William Law? The questions are beyond my power to answer; but I strongly suspect that most of the great knowers of Suchness paid very little attention to art – some refusing to have anything to do with it at all, others being content with what a critical eye would regard as second-rate, or even tenth-rate, works. (To a person whose transfigured and transfiguring mind can see the All in every this, the first-rateness or tenth-rateness of even a religious painting will be a matter of the most sovereign indifference.) Art, I suppose, is only for beginners, or else for those resolute dead-enders, who have made up their minds to be content with the ersatz of Suchness, with symbols rather than with what they signify, with the elegantly composed recipe in lieu of actual dinner.

I returned the Van Gogh to its rack and picked up the volume standing next to it. It was a book on Botticelli. I turned the pages. *The Birth of Venus* – never one of my favourites. Venus and Mars, that loveliness so passionately denounced by poor Ruskin at the height of his long-drawn-out sexual tragedy. The marvellously rich and intricate *Calumny of Apelles*. And then a somewhat less familiar and not very good picture, *Judith*. My attention was arrested and I gazed in fascination, not at the pale neurotic heroine or her attendant, not at the victim's hairy head or the vernal landscape in the background, but at the purplish silk of Judith's pleated bodice and long wind-blown skirts.

This was something I had seen before – seen that very morning, between the flowers and the furniture, when I looked down by chance, and went on passionately staring by choice, at my own crossed legs. Those folds in the trousers – what a labyrinth of endlessly significant complexity! And the texture of the grey flannel – how rich, how deeply, mysteriously sumptuous! And here they were again, in Botticelli's picture.

Civilized human beings wear clothes, therefore there can be no portraiture, no mythological or historical story telling without representations of folded textiles. But though it may account for the origins, mere tailoring can never explain the luxuriant

development of drapery as a major theme of all the plastic arts. Artists, it is obvious, have always loved drapery for its own sake – or, rather, for their own. When you paint or carve drapery, you are painting or carving forms which, for all practical purposes, are non-representational – the kind of unconditioned forms on which artists even in the most naturalistic tradition like to let themselves go. In the average Madonna or Apostle the strictly human, fully representational element accounts for about ten per cent of the whole. All the rest consists of many coloured variations on the inexhaustible theme of crumpled wool or linen. And these non-representational nine-tenths of a Madonna or an Apostle may be just as important qualitatively as they are in quantity. Very often they set the tone of the whole work of art, they state the key in which the theme is being rendered, they express the mood, the temperament, the attitude to life of the artist. Stoical serenity reveals itself in the smooth surfaces, the broad untortured folds of Piero's draperies. Torn between fact and wish, between cynicism and idealism, Bernini tempers the all but caricatural verisimilitude of his faces with enormous sartorial abstractions, which are the embodiment, in stone or bronze, of the everlasting commonplaces of rhetoric – the heroism, the holiness, the sublimity to which mankind perpetually aspires, for the most part in vain. And here are El Greco's disquietingly visceral skirts and mantles; here are the sharp, twisting, flame-like folds in which Cosimo Tura clothes his figures: in the first, traditional spirituality breaks down into a nameless physiological yearning; in the second, there writhes an agonized sense of the world's essential strangeness and hostility. Or consider Watteau; his men and women play lutes, get ready for balls and harlequinades, embark, on velvet lawns and under noble trees, for the Cythera of every lover's dream; their enormous melancholy and the flayed, excruciating sensibility of their creator find expression, not in the actions recorded, not in the gestures and the faces portrayed, but in the relief and texture of their taffeta skirts, their satin capes and doublets. Not an inch of smooth surface here, not a moment of peace or confidence, only a silken wilderness of countless tiny pleats and wrinkles, with an incessant modulation – inner uncertainty rendered with the perfect assurance of a master hand – of tone into tone, of one indeterminate colour into another. In life, man proposes, God disposes. In the plastic arts the proposing is done by the subject matter; that which disposes is ultimately the artist's temperament, proximately (at least in portraiture, history and genre) the carved or painted drapery. Between them these two may decree that a *fête galante* shall move to tears, that a crucifixion shall be serene to the point of cheerfulness, that a stigmatization shall be almost intolerably sexy, that the likeness of a prodigy of female brainlessness (I am thinking now of Ingres' incomparable Mme Moitessier) shall express the austerest, the most uncompromising intellectuality.

But this is not the whole story. Draperies, as I had now discovered, are much more than devices for the introduction of non-representational forms into naturalistic paintings and sculptures. What the rest of us see only under the influence of mescaline, the artist is congenitally equipped to see all the time. His perception is not limited to what is biologically or socially useful. A little of the knowledge belonging to Mind

at Large oozes past the reducing value of brain and ego into his consciousness. It is a knowledge of the intrinsic significance of every existent. For the artist as for the mescaline taker, draperies are living hieroglyphs that stand in some peculiarly expressive way for the unfathomable mystery of pure being. More even than the chair, though less perhaps than those wholly supernatural flowers, the folds of my grey flannel trousers were charged with 'is-ness.' To what they owed this privileged status, I cannot say. Is it, perhaps, because the forms of folded drapery are so strange and dramatic that they catch the eye and in this way force the miraculous fact of sheer existence upon the attention? Who knows? What is important is less the reason for the experience than the experience itself. Poring over Judith's skirts, there in the World's Biggest Drug Store, I knew that Botticelli – and not Botticelli alone, but many others too – had looked at draperies with the same transfigured and transfiguring eyes as had been mine that morning. They had seen the *Istigkeit*, the Allness and Infinity of folded cloth and had done their best to render it in paint or stone. Necessarily, of course, without success. For the glory and the wonder of pure existence belong to another order, beyond the power of even the highest art to express. But in Judith's skirt I could clearly see what, if I had been a painter of genius, I might have made of my old grey flannels. Not much, heaven knows, in comparison with the reality; but enough to delight generation after generation of beholders, enough to make them understand at least a little of the true significance of what, in our pathetic imbecility, we call 'mere things' and disregard in favour of television.

'This is how one ought to see,' I kept saying as I looked down at my trousers, or glanced at the jewelled books in the shelves, at the legs of my infinitely more than Van-Goghian chair. 'This is how one ought to see, how things really are.' And yet there were reservations. For if one always saw like this, one would never want to do anything else. Just looking, just being the divine Not-self of flower, of book, of chair, of flannel. That would be enough. But in that case what about other people? What about human relations? In the recording of that morning's conversations I find the question constantly repeated 'What about human relations?' How could one reconcile this timeless bliss of seeing as one ought to see with the temporal duties of doing what one ought to do and feeling as one ought to feel? 'One ought to be able,' I said, 'to see these trousers as infinitely important and human beings as still more infinitely important.' One ought – but in practice it seemed to be impossible. This participation in the manifest glory of things left no room, so to speak, for the ordinary, the necessary concerns of human existence, above all for concerns involving persons. For persons are selves and, in one respect at least, I was now a Not-self, simultaneously perceiving and being the Not-self of the things around me. To this new-born Not-self, the behaviour, the appearance, the very thought of the self it had momentarily ceased to be, and of other selves, its one-time fellows, seemed not indeed distasteful (for distastefulness was not one of the categories in terms of which I was thinking), but enormously irrelevant. Compelled by the investigator to analyse and report on what I was doing (and how I longed to be left alone with Eternity in a flower, Infinity in four chair legs and the

Absolute in the folds of a pair of flannel trousers!) I realized that I was deliberately avoiding the eyes of those who were with me in the room, deliberately refraining from being too much aware of them. One was my wife, the other a man I respected and greatly liked; but both belonged to the world from which, for the moment, mescaline had delivered me – the world of selves, of time, of moral judgments and utilitarian considerations, the world (and it was this aspect of human life which I wished, above all else, to forget) of self-assertion, of cocksureness, of over-valued words and idolatrously worshipped notions.

At this stage of the proceedings I was handed a large coloured reproduction of the well-known self portrait by Cézanne – the head and shoulders of a man in a large straw hat, red-cheeked, red-lipped, with rich black whiskers and a dark unfriendly eye. It is a magnificent painting; but it was not as a painting that I now saw it. For the head promptly took on a third dimension and came to life as a small goblin-like man looking out through a window in the page before me. I started to laugh. And when they asked me why, ‘What pretensions!’ I kept repeating. ‘Who on earth does he think he is?’ The question was not addressed to Cézanne in particular, but to the human species at large. Who did they all think they were?

‘It’s like Arnold Bennett in the Dolomites,’ I said, suddenly remembering a scene, happily immortalized in a snapshot of A. B. some four or five years before his death toddling along a wintry road at Cortina d’Ampezzo. Around him lay the virgin snow; in the background was a more than gothic aspiration of red crags. And there was dear, kind, unhappy A. B. consciously overacting the role of his favourite character in fiction, himself, the Card in person. There he went, toddling slowly in the bright Alpine sunshine, his thumbs in the armholes of a yellow waistcoat which bulged, a little lower down, with the graceful curve of a Regency bow window at Brighton – his head thrown back as though to aim some stammered utterance, howitzer-like, at the blue dome of heaven. What he actually said, I have forgotten; but what his whole manner, air and posture fairly shouted was, ‘I’m as good as those damned mountains.’ And in some ways, of course, he was infinitely better; but not, as he knew very well, in the way his favourite character in fiction liked to imagine.

Successfully (whatever that may mean) or unsuccessfully, we all overact the part of our favourite character in fiction. And the fact, the almost infinitely unlikely fact, of actually being Cézanne makes no difference. For the consummate painter, with his little pipe-line to Mind at Large by-passing the brain-valve and ego-filter, was also and just as genuinely this whiskered goblin with the unfriendly eye.

For relief I turned back to the folds in my trousers. ‘This is how one ought to see,’ I repeated yet again. And I might have added, ‘These are the sort of things one ought to look at.’ Things without pretensions, satisfied to be merely themselves, sufficient in their suchness, not acting a part, not trying, insanely, to go it alone, in isolation from the Dharma-Body, in Luciferian defiance of the grace of God.

‘The nearest approach to this,’ I said, ‘would be a Vermeer.’

Yes, a Vermeer. For that mysterious artist was trebly gifted – with the vision that perceives the Dharma-Body as the hedge at the bottom of the garden, with the talent to render as much of the vision as the limitations of human capacity permit, and with the prudence to confine himself in his paintings to the more manageable aspects of reality; for though Vermeer represented human beings, he was always a painter of still life. Cézanne, who told his female sitters to do their best to look like apples, tried to paint portraits in the same spirit. But his pippin-like women are more nearly related to Plato's Ideas than to the Dharma-Body in the hedge. They are Eternity and Infinity seen, not in sand or flower, but in the abstractions of some very superior band of geometry, Vermeer never asked his girls to look like apples. On the contrary, he insisted on their being girls to the very limit – but always with the proviso that they refrain from behaving girlishly. They might sit or quietly stand but never giggle, never display self-consciousness, never say their prayers or pine for absent sweethearts, never gossip, never gaze enviously at other women's babies, never flirt, never love nor hate nor work. In the act of doing any of these things they would doubtless become more intensely themselves, but would cease, for that very reason, to manifest their divine essential Not-self. In Blake's phrase, the doors of Vermeer's perception were only partially cleansed. A single panel had become almost perfectly transparent; the rest of the door was still muddy. The essential Not-self could be perceived very clearly in things and in living creatures on the hither side of good and evil. In human beings it was visible only when they were in repose, their minds untroubled, their bodies motionless. In these circumstances Vermeer could see Suchness in all its heavenly beauty – could see and, in some small measure, render it in a subtle and sumptuous still life. Vermeer is undoubtedly the greatest painter of human still lives. But there have been others, for example, Vermeer's French contemporaries, the Le Nain brothers. They set out, I suppose, to be genre painters; but what they actually produced was a series of human still lives, in which their cleansed perception of the infinite significance of all things is rendered not, as with Vermeer, by a subtle enrichment of colour, and texture, but by a heightened clarity, an obsessive distinctness of form, within an austere, almost monochromatic tonality. In our own day we have had Vuillard, the painter, at his best, of unforgettably splendid pictures of the Dharma-Body manifested in a bourgeois bedroom, of the Absolute blazing away in the midst of some stockbroker's family in a suburban garden, taking tea.

Ce qui fait que l'ancien bandagiste renie
 Le comptoir dont le faste alléchait les passants,
 C'est son jardin d'Auteuil, où, veufs de tout encens,
 Les Zinnias ont l'air d'être en tôle vernie.

For Laurent Taillade the spectacle was merely obscene. But if the retired rubber goods merchant had sat still enough, Vuillard would have seen in him only the Dharma-Body, would have painted, in the zinnias, the goldfish pool, the villa's Moorish tower and Chinese lanterns, a corner of Eden before the Fall.

But meanwhile my question remained unanswered. How was this cleansed perception to be reconciled with a proper concern with human relations, with the necessary chores and duties, to say nothing of charity and practical compassion? The age-old debate between the actives and the contemplatives was being renewed – renewed, so far as I was concerned, with an unprecedented poignancy. For until this morning I had known contemplation only in its humbler, its more ordinary forms – as discursive thinking; as a rapt absorption in poetry or painting or music; as a patient waiting upon those inspirations, without which even the prosiest writer cannot hope to accomplish anything; as occasional glimpses, in nature, of Wordsworth’s ‘something far more deeply interfused’; as systematic silence leading, sometimes, to hints of an ‘obscure knowledge.’ But now I knew contemplation at its height. At its height, but not yet in its fullness. For in its fullness the way of Mary includes the way of Martha and raises it, so to speak, to its own higher power. Mescaline opens up the way of Mary, but shuts the door on that of Martha. It gives access to contemplation – but to a contemplation that is incompatible with action and even with the will to action, the very thought of action. In the intervals between his revelations the mescaline taker is apt to feel that, though in one way everything is supremely as it should be, in another there is something wrong. His problem is essentially the same as that which confronts the quietist, the arhat and, on another level, the landscape painter and the painter of human still lives. Mescaline can never solve that problem: it can only pose it, apocalyptically, for those to whom it had never before presented itself. The full and final solution can be found only by those who are prepared to implement the right kind of *Weltanschauung* by means of the right kind of behaviour and the right kind of constant and unstrained alertness. Over against the quietist stands the active-contemplative, the saint, the man who, in Eckhart’s phrase, is ready to come down from the seventh heaven in order to bring a cup of water to his sick brother. Over against the arhat, retreating from appearances into an entirely transcendental Nirvana, stands the Bodhisattva, for whom Suchness and the world of contingencies are one, and for whose boundless compassion every one of those contingencies is an occasion not only for transfiguring insight, but also for the most practical charity. And in the universe of art, over against Vermeer and the other painters of human still lives, over against the masters of Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, over against Constable and Turner, against Sisley and Seurat and Cézanne stands the all-inclusive art of Rembrandt. These are enormous names, inaccessible eminences. For myself, on this memorable May morning, I could only be grateful for an experience which had shown me, more clearly than I have ever seen it before, the true nature of the challenge and the completely liberating response.

Let me add, before we leave this subject, that there is no form of contemplation, even the most quietistic, which is without its ethical values. Half at least of all morality is negative and consists in keeping out of mischief. The Lord’s prayer is less than fifty words long, and six of those words are devoted to asking God not to lead us into temptation. The one-sided contemplative leaves undone many things that he ought to do; but to make up for it he refrains from doing a host of things he ought not to do.

The sum of evil, Pascal remarked, would be much diminished if men could only learn to sit quietly in their rooms. The contemplative whose perception has been cleansed does not have to stay in his room. He can go about his business, so completely satisfied to see and be a part of the divine Order of Things that he will never even be tempted to indulge in what Traherne called 'the dirty Devices of the world.' When we feel ourselves to be sole heirs of the universe, when 'the sea flows in our veins ... and the stars are our jewels,' when all things are perceived as infinite and holy, what motive can we have for covetousness or self-assertion, for the pursuit of power or the drearier forms of pleasure? Contemplatives are not likely to become gamblers, or procurers, or drunkards; they do not as a rule preach intolerance, or make war; do not find it necessary to rob, swindle or grind the faces of the poor. And to these enormous negative virtues we may add another which, though hard to define, is both positive and important. The arhat and the quietist may not practise contemplation in its fullness; but if they practise it at all, they may bring back enlightening reports of another, a transcendent country of the mind; and if they practise it in the height, they will become conduits through which some beneficent influence can flow out of that other country into a world of darkened selves, chronically dying for lack of it.

Meanwhile I had turned, at the investigator's request, from the portrait of Cézanne to what was going on, inside my head, when I shut my eyes. This time, the inscape was curiously unrewarding. The field of vision was filled with brightly coloured, constantly changing structures that seemed to be made of plastic or enamelled tin.

'Cheap,' I commented. 'Trivial. Like things in a Five and Ten.'

And all this shoddiness existed in a closed, cramped universe.

'It's as though one were below decks in a ship,' I said. 'A five-and-ten-cent ship.'

And as I looked, it became very clear that this five-and-ten-cent ship was in some way connected with human pretensions. This suffocating interior of a dime-store ship was my own personal self; these gimcrack mobiles of tin and plastic were my personal contributions to the universe.

I felt the lesson to be salutary, but was sorry, none the less, that it had had to be administered at this moment and in this form. As a rule the mescaline taker discovers an inner world as manifestly a datum, as self-evidently infinite and holy, as that transfigured outer world which I had seen with my eyes open. From the first, my own case had been different. Mescaline had endowed me temporarily with the power to see things with my eyes shut; but it could not, or at least on this occasion did not, reveal an inscape remotely comparable to my flowers or chair or flannels 'out there.' What it had allowed me to perceive, inside, was not the Dharma-Body in images, but my own mind; not archetypal Suchness, but a set of symbols – in other words, a homemade substitute for Suchness.

Most visualizers are transformed by mescaline into visionaries. Some of them – and they are perhaps more numerous than is generally supposed – require no transformation; they are visionaries all the time. The mental species to which Blake belonged is fairly widely distributed even in the urban-industrial societies of the present day. The

poet-artist's uniqueness does not consist in the fact that (to quote from his Descriptive Catalogue) he actually saw 'those wonderful originals called in the Sacred Scriptures the Cherubim.' It does not consist in the fact that 'these wonderful originals seen in my visions were some of them one hundred feet in height ... all containing mythological and recondite meaning.' It consists solely in his ability to render, in words or (somewhat less successfully) in line and colour, some hint at least of a not excessively uncommon experience. The untalented visionary may perceive an inner reality no less tremendous, beautiful and significant than the world beheld by Blake; but he lacks altogether the ability to express, in literary or plastic symbols, what he has seen.

From the records of religion and the surviving monuments of poetry and the plastic arts it is very plain that, at most times and in most places, men have attached more importance to the inscape than to objective existents, have felt that what they saw with their eyes shut possessed a spiritually higher significance than what they saw with their eyes open. The reason? Familiarity breeds contempt, and how to survive is a problem ranging in urgency from the chronically tedious to the excruciating. The outer world is what we wake up to every morning of our lives, is the place where, willy-nilly, we must try to make our living. In the inner world there is neither work nor monotony. We visit it only in dreams and musings, and its strangeness is such that we never find the same world on two successive occasions. What wonder, then, if human beings in their search for the divine have generally preferred to look within! Generally, but not always. In their art no less than in their religion, the Taoists and the Zen Buddhists looked beyond visions to the Void, and through the Void at 'the ten thousand things' of objective reality. Because of their doctrine of the Word made flesh, Christians should have been able, from the first, to adopt a similar attitude towards the universe around them. But because of the doctrine of the Fall, they found it very hard to do so. As recently as three hundred years ago an expression of thorough-going world denial and even world condemnation was both orthodox and comprehensible. 'We should feel wonder at nothing at all in Nature, except only the Incarnation of Christ.' In the seventeenth century, Lallemant's phrase seemed to make sense. Today it has the ring of madness.

In China the rise of landscape painting to the rank of a major art form took place about a thousand, in Japan about six hundred and in Europe about three hundred years ago. The equation of Dharma-Body with hedge was made by those Zen Masters, who wedded Taoist naturalism with Buddhist transcendentalism. It was, therefore, only in the Far East that landscape painters consciously regarded their art as religious. In the West religious painting was a matter of portraying sacred personages, of illustrating hallowed texts. Landscape painters regarded themselves as secularists. Today we recognize in Seurat one of the supreme masters of what may be called mystical landscape painting. And yet this man who was able, more effectively than any other, to render the One in the many, became quite indignant when somebody praised him for the 'poetry' of his work. 'I merely apply the System,' he protested. In other words he was merely a pointilliste and, in his own eyes, nothing else. A similar anecdote

is told of John Constable. One day towards the end of his life, Blake met Constable at Hampstead and was shown one of the younger artist's sketches. In spite of his contempt for naturalistic art, the old visionary knew a good thing when he saw it – except, of course, when it was by Rubens. 'This is not drawing,' he cried, 'this is inspiration!' 'I had meant it to be drawing,' was Constable's characteristic answer. Both men were right. It was drawing, precise and veracious, and at the same time it was inspiration – inspiration of an order at least as high as Blake's. The pine trees on the Heath had actually been seen as identical with the Dharma-Body. The sketch was a rendering, necessarily imperfect but still profoundly impressive, of what a cleansed perception had revealed to the open eyes of a great painter. From a contemplation, in the tradition of Wordsworth and Whitman, of the Dharma-Body as hedge, and from visions, such as Blake's, of the 'wonderful originals' within the mind, contemporary poets have retreated into an investigation of the personal, as opposed to the more than personal, subconscious and to a rendering, in highly abstract terms, not of the given, objective fact, but of mere scientific and theological notions. And something similar has happened in the field of painting. Here we have witnessed a general retreat from landscape, the predominant art form of the nineteenth century. This retreat from landscape has not been into that other, inner divine Datum, with which most of the traditional schools of the past were concerned, that Archetypal World, where men have always found the raw materials of myth and religion. No, it has been a retreat from the outward Datum into the personal subconscious, into a mental world more squalid and more tightly closed than even the world of conscious personality. These contraptions of tin and highly coloured plastic – where had I seen them before? In every picture gallery that exhibits the latest in non-representational art.

And now someone produced a phonograph and put a record on the turntable. I listened with pleasure, but experienced nothing comparable to my seen apocalypses of flowers or flannel. Would a naturally gifted musician hear the revelations which, for me, had been exclusively visual? It would be interesting to make the experiment. Meanwhile, though not transfigured, though retaining its normal quality and intensity, the music contributed not a little to my understanding of what had happened to me and of the wider problems which those happenings had raised.

Instrumental music, oddly enough, left me rather cold. Mozart's C-minor Piano Concerto was interrupted after the first movement, and a recording of some madrigals by Gesualdo took its place.

'These voices,' I said appreciatively, 'these voices – they're a kind of bridge back to the human world.'

And a bridge they remained even while singing the most startlingly chromatic of the mad prince's compositions. Through the uneven phrases of the madrigals, the music pursued its course, never sticking to the same key for two bars together. In Gesualdo, that fantastic character out of a Webster melodrama, psychological disintegration had exaggerated, had pushed, to the extreme limit, a tendency inherent in modal as opposed

to fully tonal music. The resulting works sounded as though they might have been written by the later Schoenberg.

‘And yet,’ I felt myself constrained to say, as I listened to these strange products of a Counter-Reformation psychosis working upon a late mediaeval art form, ‘and yet it does not matter that he’s all in bits. The whole is disorganized. But each individual fragment is in order, is a representative of a Higher Order. The Higher Order prevails even in the disintegration. The totality is present even in the broken pieces. More clearly present, perhaps, than in a completely coherent work. At least you aren’t lulled into a sense of false security by some merely human, merely fabricated order. You have to rely on your immediate perception of the ultimate order. So in a certain sense disintegration may have its advantages. But of course it’s dangerous, horribly dangerous. Suppose you couldn’t get back, out of the chaos...’

From Gesualdo’s madrigals we jumped, across a gulf of three centuries, to Alban Berg and the Lyric Suite.

‘This,’ I announced in advance, ‘is going to be hell.’

But, as it turned out, I was wrong. Actually the music sounded rather funny. Dredged up from the personal subconscious, agony succeeded twelve-tone agony; but what struck me was only the essential incongruity between a psychological disintegration even completer than Gesualdo’s and the prodigious resources, in talent and technique, employed in its expression.

‘Isn’t he sorry for himself?’ I commented with a derisive lack of sympathy. And then, ‘Katzenmusik – learned Katzenmusik.’ And finally, after a few more minutes of the anguish, ‘Who cares what his feelings are? Why can’t he pay attention to something else?’

As a criticism of what is undoubtedly a very remarkable work, it was unfair and inadequate – but not, I think, irrelevant. I cite it for what it is worth and because that is how, in a state of pure contemplation, I reacted to the Lyric Suite.

When it was over, the investigator suggested a walk in the garden. I was willing; and though my body seemed to have dissociated itself almost completely from my mind – or, to be more accurate, though my awareness of the transfigured outer world was no longer accompanied by an awareness of my physical organism – found myself able to get up, open the French-window and walk out with only a minimum of hesitation. It was odd, of course, to feel that ‘I’ was not the same as these arms and legs ‘out there,’ as this wholly objective trunk and neck and even head. It was odd; but one soon got used to it. And anyhow the body seemed perfectly well able to look after itself. In reality, of course, it always does look after itself. All that the conscious ego can do is to formulate wishes, which are then carried out by forces which it controls very little and understands not at all. When it does anything more – when it tries too hard, for example, when it worries, when it becomes apprehensive about the future – it lowers the effectiveness of those forces and may even cause the devitalized body to fall ill. In my present state, awareness was not referred to an ego; it was, so to speak, on its own. This meant that the physiological intelligence controlling the body was also on its own.

For the moment that interfering neurotic who, in waking hours, tries to run the show was blessedly out of the way.

From the French-window I walked out under a kind of pergola covered in part by a climbing rose tree, in part by laths, one inch wide with half an inch of space between them. The sun was shining and the shadows of the laths made a zebra-like pattern on the ground and across the seat and back of a garden chair, which was standing at this end of the pergola. That chair – shall I ever forget it? Where the shadows fell on the canvas upholstery, stripes of a deep but glowing indigo alternated with stripes of an incandescence so intensely bright that it was hard to believe that they could be made of anything but blue fire. For what seemed an immensely long time I gazed without knowing, even without wishing to know, what it was that confronted me. At any other time I would have seen a chair barred with alternate light and shade. Today the percept had swallowed up the concept. I was so completely absorbed in looking, so thunderstruck by what I actually saw, that I could not be aware of anything else. Garden furniture, laths, sunlight, shadow – these were no more than names and notions, mere verbalizations, for utilitarian or scientific purposes, after the event. The event was this succession of azure furnace-doors separated by gulfs of unfathomable gentian. It was inexpressibly wonderful, wonderful to the point, almost, of being terrifying. And suddenly I had an inkling of what it must feel like to be mad. Schizophrenia has its heavens as well as its hells and purgatories, I remember what an old friend, dead these many years, told me about his mad wife. One day in the early stages of the disease, when she still had her lucid intervals, he had gone to the hospital to talk to her about their children. She listened for a time, then cut him short. How could he bear to waste his time on a couple of absent children, when all that really mattered, here and now, was the unspeakable beauty of the patterns he made, in this brown tweed jacket, every time he moved his arms? Alas, this paradise of cleansed perception, of pure, one-sided contemplation, was not to endure. The blissful intermissions became rarer, became briefer, until finally there were no more of them; there was only horror.

Most takers of mescaline experience only the heavenly part of schizophrenia. The drug brings hell and purgatory only to those who have had a recent case of jaundice, or who suffer from periodical depressions or a chronic anxiety. If, like the other drugs of remotely comparable power, mescaline were notoriously toxic, the taking of it would be enough, of itself, to cause anxiety. But the reasonably healthy person knows in advance that, so far as he is concerned, mescaline is completely innocuous, that its effects will pass off after eight or ten hours, leaving no hangover and consequently no craving for a renewal of the dose. Fortified by this knowledge, he embarks upon the experiment without fear – in other words, without any pre-disposition to convert an unprecedentedly strange and other than human experience into something appalling, something actually diabolical.

Confronted by a chair which looked like the Last Judgment – or, to be more accurate, by a Last Judgment which, after a long time and with considerable difficulty, I recognized as a chair – I found myself all at once on the brink of panic. This, I sud-

denly felt, was going too far. Too far, even though the going was into intenser beauty, deeper significance. The fear, as I analyse it in retrospect, was of being overwhelmed, of disintegrating under a pressure of reality greater than a mind, accustomed to living most of the time in a cosy world of symbols, could possibly bear. The literature of religious experience abounds in references to the pains and terrors overwhelming those who have come, too suddenly, face to face with some manifestation of the *Mysterium tremendum*. In theological language, this fear is due to the incompatibility between man's egotism and the divine purity, between man's self-aggravated separateness and the infinity of God. Following Boehme and William Law, we may say that, by unregenerate souls, the divine Light at its full blaze can be apprehended only as a burning, purgatorial fire. An almost identical doctrine is to be found in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, where the departed soul is described as shrinking in agony from the Clear Light of the Void, and even from the lesser, tempered Lights, in order to rush headlong into the comforting darkness of self-hood as a reborn human being, or even as a beast, an unhappy ghost, a denizen of hell. Anything rather than the burning brightness of unmitigated Reality – anything!

The schizophrenic is a soul not merely unregenerate, but desperately sick into the bargain. His sickness consists in the inability to take refuge from inner and outer reality (as the sane person habitually does) in the homemade universe of common sense – the strictly human world of useful notions, shared symbols and socially acceptable conventions. The schizophrenic is like a man permanently under the influence of mescaline, and therefore unable to shut off the experience of a reality which he is not holy enough to live with, which he cannot explain away because it is the most stubborn of primary facts, and which, because it never permits him to look at the world with merely human eyes, scares him into interpreting its unremitting strangeness, its burning intensity of significance, as the manifestations of human or even cosmic malevolence, calling for the most desperate counter-measures, from murderous violence at one end of the scale to catatonia, or psychological suicide, at the other. And once embarked upon the downward, the infernal road, one would never be able to stop. That, now, was only too obvious.

'If you started in the wrong way,' I said in answer to the investigator's questions, 'everything that happened would be a proof of the conspiracy against you. It would all be self-validating. You couldn't draw a breath without knowing it was part of the plot.'

'So you think you know where madness lies?'

My answer was a convinced and heartfelt, 'Yes.'

'And you couldn't control it?'

'No, I couldn't control it. If one began with fear and hate as the major premiss, one would have to go on to the conclusion.'

'Would you be able,' my wife asked, 'to fix your attention on what *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* calls the Clear Light?'

I was doubtful.

‘Would it keep the evil away, if you could hold it? Or would you not be able to hold it?’

I considered the question for some time.

‘Perhaps,’ I answered at last, ‘perhaps I could – but only if there were somebody there to tell me about the Clear Light. One couldn’t do it by oneself. That’s the point, I suppose, of the Tibetan ritual – someone sitting there all the time and telling you what’s what.’

After listening to the record of this part of the experiment, I took down my copy of Evans-Wentz’s edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and opened at random. ‘O nobly born, let not thy mind be distracted.’ That was the problem – to remain undistracted. Undistracted by the memory of past sins, by imagined pleasure, by the bitter aftertaste of old wrongs and humiliations, by all the fears and hates and cravings that ordinarily eclipse the Light. What those Buddhist monks did for the dying and the dead, might not the modern psychiatrist do for the insane? Let there be a voice to assure them, by day and even while they are asleep, that in spite of all the terror, all the bewilderment and confusion, the ultimate Reality remains unshakably itself and is of the same substance as the inner light of even the most cruelly tormented mind. By means of such devices as recorders, clock-controlled switches, public address systems and pillow speakers it should be very easy to keep the inmates of even an understaffed institution constantly reminded of this primordial fact. Perhaps a few of the lost souls might in this way be helped to win some measure of control over the universe – at once beautiful and appalling, but always other than human, always totally incomprehensible – in which they find themselves condemned to live.

None too soon, I was steered away from the disquieting splendours of my garden chair. Drooping in green parabolas from the hedge, the ivy fronds shone with a kind of glassy, jade-like radiance. A moment later a clump of Red Hot Pokers, in full bloom, had exploded into my field of vision. So passionately alive that they seemed to be standing on the very brink of utterance, the flowers strained upwards into the blue. Like the chair under the laths, they protested too much. I looked down at the leaves and discovered a cavernous intricacy of the most delicate green lights and shadows, pulsing with undecipherable mystery.

Roses:

The flowers are easy to paint,

The leaves difficult.

Shiki’s haiku (which I quote in F. H. Blyth’s translation) expresses, by indirection, exactly what I then felt – the excessive, the too obvious glory of the flowers, as contrasted with the subtler miracle of their foliage.

We walked out into the street. A large pale blue automobile was standing at the kerb. At the sight of it, I was suddenly overcome by enormous merriment. What complacency, what an absurd self-satisfaction beamed from those bulging surfaces of glossiest enamel! Man had created the thing in his own image – or rather in the image of his favourite character in fiction. I laughed till the tears ran down my cheeks.

We re-entered the house. A meal had been prepared. Somebody, who was not yet identical with myself, fell to with ravenous appetite. From a considerable distance and without much interest, I looked on.

When the meal had been eaten, we got into the car and went for a drive. The effects of the mescaline were already on the decline: but the flowers in the gardens still trembled on the brink of being supernatural, the pepper trees and carobs along the side streets still manifestly belonged to some sacred grove. Eden alternated with Dodona, Yggdrasil with the mystic Rose. And then, abruptly, we were at an intersection, waiting to cross Sunset Boulevard. Before us the cars were rolling by in a steady stream – thousands of them, all bright and shiny like an advertiser's dream and each more ludicrous than the last. Once again I was convulsed with laughter.

The Red Sea of traffic parted at last, and we crossed into another oasis of trees and lawns and roses. In a few minutes we had climbed to a vantage point in the hills, and there was the city spread out beneath us. Rather disappointingly, it looked very like the city I had seen on other occasions. So far as I was concerned, transfiguration was proportional to distance. The nearer, the more divinely other. This vast, dim panorama was hardly different from itself.

We drove on, and so long as we remained in the hills, with view succeeding distant view, significance was at its everyday level, well below transfiguration point. The magic began to work again only when we turned down into a new suburb and were gliding between two rows of houses. Here, in spite of the peculiar hideousness of the architecture, there were renewals of transcendental otherness, hints of the morning's heaven. Brick chimneys and green composition roofs glowed in the sunshine, like fragments of the New Jerusalem. And all at once I saw what Guardi had seen and (with what incomparable skill!) had so often rendered in his paintings – a stucco wall with a shadow slanting across it, blank but unforgettably beautiful, empty but charged with all the meaning and the mystery of existence. The Revelation dawned and was gone again within a fraction of a second. The car had moved on; time was uncovering another manifestation of the eternal Suchness. 'Within sameness there is difference. But that difference should be different from sameness is in no wise the intention of all the Buddhas. Their intention is both totality and differentiation.' This bank of red and white geraniums, for example – it was entirely different from that stucco wall a hundred yards up the road. But the 'is-ness' of both was the same, the eternal quality of their transience was the same.

An hour later, with ten more miles and the visit to the World's Biggest Drug Store safely behind us, we were back at home, and I had returned to that reassuring but profoundly unsatisfactory state known as 'being in one's right mind.'

That humanity at large will ever be able to dispense with Artificial Paradises seems very unlikely. Most men and women lead lives at the worst so painful, at the best so monotonous, poor and limited that the urge to escape, the longing to transcend themselves if only for a few moments, is and has always been one of the principal appetites of the soul. Art and religion, carnivals and saturnalia, dancing and listening

to oratory – all these have served, in H. G. Wells' phrase, as Doors in the Wall. And for private, for everyday use there have always been chemical intoxicants. All the vegetable sedatives and narcotics, all the euphorics that grow on trees, the hallucinogens that ripen in berries or can be squeezed from roots – all, without exception, have been known and systematically used by human beings from time immemorial. And to these natural modifiers of consciousness modern science has added its quota of synthetics – chloral, for example, and benzedrine, the bromides and the barbiturates.

Most of these modifiers of consciousness cannot now be taken except under doctor's orders, or else illegally and at considerable risk. For unrestricted use the West has permitted only alcohol and tobacco. All the other chemical Doors in the Wall are labelled Dope, and their unauthorized takers are Fiends.

We now spend a good deal more on drink and smoke than we spend on education. This, of course, is not surprising. The urge to escape from selfhood and the environment is in almost everyone almost all the time. The urge to do something for the young is strong only in parents, and in them only for the few years during which their children go to school. Equally unsurprising is the current attitude towards drink and smoke. In spite of the growing army of hopeless alcoholics, in spite of the hundreds of thousands of persons annually maimed or killed by drunken drivers, popular comedians still crack jokes about alcohol and its addicts. And in spite of the evidence linking cigarettes with lung cancer, practically everybody regards tobacco smoking as being hardly less normal and natural than eating. From the point of view of the rationalist utilitarian this may seem odd. For the historian, it is exactly what you would expect. A firm conviction of the material reality of Hell never prevented mediaeval Christians from doing what their ambition, lust or covetousness suggested. Lung cancer, traffic accidents and the millions of miserable and misery-creating alcoholics are facts even more certain than was, in Dante's day, the fact of the Inferno. But all such facts are remote and unsubstantial compared with the near, felt fact of a craving, here and now, for release or sedation, for a drink or a smoke.

Ours is the age, among other things, of the automobile and of rocketing population. Alcohol is incompatible with safety on the roads, and its production, like that of tobacco, condemns to virtual sterility many millions of acres of the most fertile soil. The problems raised by alcohol and tobacco cannot, it goes without saying, be solved by prohibition. The universal and ever-present urge to self-transcendence is not to be abolished by slamming the currently popular Doors in the Wall. The only reasonable policy is to open other, better doors in the hope of inducing men and women to exchange their old bad habits for new and less harmful ones. Some of these other, better doors will be social and technological in nature, others religious or psychological, others dietetic, educational, athletic. But the need for frequent chemical vacations from intolerable selfhood and repulsive surroundings will undoubtedly remain. What is needed is a new drug which will relieve and console our suffering species without doing more harm in the long run than it does good in the short. Such a drug must be potent in minute doses and synthesizable. If it does not possess these qualities, its

production, like that of wine, beer, spirits and tobacco will interfere with the raising of indispensable food and fibres. It must be less toxic than opium or cocaine, less likely to produce undesirable social consequences than alcohol or the barbiturates, less inimical to heart and lungs than the tars and nicotine of cigarettes. And, on the positive side, it should produce changes in consciousness more interesting, more intrinsically valuable than mere sedation or dreaminess, delusions of omnipotence or release from inhibition.

To most people, mescaline is almost completely innocuous. Unlike alcohol, it does not drive the taker into the kind of uninhibited action which results in brawls, crimes of violence and traffic accidents. A man under the influence of mescaline quietly minds his own business. Moreover, the business he minds is an experience of the most enlightening kind, which does not have to be paid for (and this is surely important) by a compensatory hangover. Of the long-range consequences of regular mescaline taking we know very little. The Indians who consume peyote buttons do not seem to be physically or morally degraded by the habit. However, the available evidence is still scarce and sketchy.

Although obviously superior to cocaine, opium, alcohol and tobacco, mescaline is not yet the ideal drug. Along with the happily transfigured majority of mescaline takers there is a minority that finds in the drug only hell or purgatory. Moreover, for a drug that is to be used, like alcohol, for general consumption, its effects last for an inconveniently long time. But chemistry and physiology are capable nowadays of practically anything. If the psychologists and sociologists will define the ideal, the neurologists and pharmacologists can be relied upon to discover the means whereby that ideal can be realized or at least (for perhaps this kind of ideal can never, in the very nature of things, be fully realized) more nearly approached than in the wine-bibbing past, the whisky-drinking, marijuana-smoking and barbiturate-swallowing present.

The urge to transcend self-conscious selfhood is, as I have said, a principal appetite of the soul. When, for whatever reason, men and women fail to transcend themselves by means of worship, good works and spiritual exercises, they are apt to resort to religion's chemical surrogates – alcohol and 'goof-pills' in the modern West, alcohol and opium in the East, hashish in the Mohammedan world, alcohol and marijuana in Central America, alcohol and coca in the Andes, alcohol and the barbiturates in the more up-to-date regions of South America. In *Poisons Sacrés, Ivresses Divines* Philippe de Félice has written at length and with a wealth of documentation on the immemorial connection between religion and the taking of drugs. Here, in summary or in direct quotation, are his conclusions. The employment for religious purposes of toxic substances is 'extraordinarily widespread ... The practices studied in this volume can be observed in every region of the earth, among primitives no less than among those who have reached a high pitch of civilization. We are therefore dealing not with exceptional facts, which might justifiably be overlooked, but with a general and, in the widest sense of the word, a human phenomenon, the kind of phenomenon which cannot be disregarded by anyone who is trying to discover what religion is, and what are the deep needs which it must satisfy.'

Ideally, everyone should be able to find self-transcendence in some form of pure or applied religion. In practice it seems very unlikely that this hoped for consummation will ever be realized. There are, and doubtless there always will be, good churchmen and good churchwomen for whom, unfortunately, piety is not enough. The late G.K. Chesterton, who wrote at least as lyrically of drink as of devotion, may serve as their eloquent spokesman.

The modern Churches, with some exceptions among the Protestant denominations, tolerate alcohol; but even the most tolerant have made no attempt to convert the drug to Christianity, or to sacramentalize its use. The pious drinker is forced to take his religion in one compartment, his religion-surrogate in another. And perhaps this is inevitable. Drinking cannot be sacramentalized except in religions which set no store on decorum. The worship of Dionysos or the Celtic god of beer was a loud and disorderly affair. The rites of Christianity are incompatible with even religious drunkenness. This does no harm to the distillers, but is very bad for Christianity. Countless persons desire self-transcendence and would be glad to find it in church. But, alas, 'the hungry sheep look up and are not fed.' They take part in rites, they listen to sermons, they repeat prayers; but their thirst remains unassuaged. Disappointed, they turn to the bottle. For a time at least and in a kind of way, it works. Church may still be attended; but it is no more than the Musical Bank of Butler's Erewhon. God may still be acknowledged; but He is God only on the verbal level, only in a strictly Pickwickian sense. The effective object of worship is the bottle and the sole religious experience is that state of uninhibited and belligerent euphoria which follows the ingestion of the third cocktail.

We see, then, that Christianity and alcohol do not and cannot mix. Christianity and mescaline seem to be much more compatible. This has been demonstrated by many tribes of Indians, from Texas to as far north as Wisconsin. Among these tribes are to be found groups affiliated with the Native American Church, a sect whose principal rite is a kind of Early Christian Agape, or Love-Feast, where slices of peyote take the place of the sacramental bread and wine. These Native Americans regard the cactus as God's special gift to the Indians, and equate its effects with the workings of the divine Spirit.

Professor J. S. Slotkin – one of the very few white men ever to have participated in the rites of a Peyotist congregation – says of his fellow worshippers that they are 'certainly not stupefied or drunk ... They never get out of rhythm or fumble their words, as a drunken or stupefied man would do ... They are all quiet, courteous and considerate of one another. I have never been in any white man's house of worship where there is either so much religious feeling or decorum.' And what, we may ask, are these devout and well-behaved Peyotists experiencing? Not the mild sense of virtue which sustains the average Sunday churchgoer through ninety minutes of boredom. Not even those high feelings, inspired by thoughts of the Creator and the Redeemer, the Judge and the Comforter, which animate the pious. For these Native Americans, religious experience is something more direct and illuminating, more spontaneous, less the home-made product of the superficial, self-conscious mind. Sometimes (according

to the reports collected by Dr Slotkin) they see visions, which may be of Christ Himself. Sometimes they hear the voice of the Great Spirit. Sometimes they become aware of the presence of God and of those personal shortcomings which must be corrected if they are to do His will. The practical consequences of these chemical openings of doors into the Other World seem to be wholly good. Dr Slotkin reports that habitual Peyotists are on the whole more industrious, more temperate (many of them abstain altogether from alcohol), more peaceable than non-Peyotists. A tree with such satisfactory fruits cannot be condemned out of hand as evil.

In sacramentalizing the use of peyote, the Indians of the Native American Church have done something which is at once psychologically sound and historically respectable. In the early centuries of Christianity many pagan rites and festivals were baptized, so to say, and made to serve the purposes of the Church. These jollifications were not particularly edifying; but they assuaged a certain psychological hunger and, instead of trying to suppress them, the earlier missionaries had the sense to accept them for what they were, soul-satisfying expressions of fundamental urges, and to incorporate them into the fabric of the new religion. What the Native Americans have done is essentially similar. They have taken a pagan custom (a custom, incidentally, far more elevating and enlightening than most of the rather brutish carousals and mummeries adopted from European paganism) and given it a Christian significance.

Though but recently introduced into the northern United States, peyote-eating and the religion based upon it have become important symbols of the Red Man's right to spiritual independence. Some Indians have reacted to white supremacy by becoming Americanized, others by retreating into traditional Indianism. But some have tried to make the best of both worlds, indeed of all the worlds – the best of Indianism, the best of Christianity, and the best of those Other Worlds of transcendental experience, where the soul knows itself as unconditioned and of like nature with the divine. Hence the Native American Church. In it two great appetites of the soul – the urge to independence and self-determination and the urge to self-transcendence – were fused with, and interpreted in the light of, a third – the urge to worship, to justify the ways of God to man, to explain the universe by means of a coherent theology.

Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind

Clothes him in front, but leaves him bare behind.

But actually it is we, the rich and highly educated whites, who have left ourselves bare behind. We cover our anterior nakedness with some philosophy – Christian, Marxian, Freudo-Physicalist – but abaft we remain uncovered, at the mercy of all the winds of circumstance. The poor Indian, on the other hand, has had the wit to protect his rear by supplementing the fig-leaf of a theology with the breech-clout of transcendental experience.

I am not so foolish as to equate what happens under the influence of mescaline or of any other drug, prepared or in the future preparable, with the realization of the end and ultimate purpose of human life: Enlightenment, the Beatific Vision. All I am suggesting is that the mescaline experience is what Catholic theologians call 'a

gratuitous grace,' not necessary to salvation but potentially helpful and to be accepted thankfully, if made available. To be shaken out of the ruts of ordinary perception, to be shown for a few timeless hours the outer and the inner world, not as they appear to an animal obsessed with survival or to a human being obsessed with words and notions, but as they are apprehended, directly and unconditionally, by Mind at Large – thus an experience of inestimable value to everyone and especially to the intellectual. For the intellectual is by definition the man for whom, in Goethe's phrase, 'the word is essentially fruitful.' He is the man who feels that 'what we perceive by the eye is foreign to us as such and need not impress us deeply.' And yet, though himself an intellectual and one of the supreme masters of language, Goethe did not always agree with his own evaluation of the word. 'We talk,' he wrote in middle life, 'far too much. We should talk less and draw more. I personally should like to renounce speech altogether and, like organic Nature, communicate everything I have to say in sketches. That fig tree, this little snake, the cocoon on my window sill quietly awaiting its future – all these are momentous signatures. A person able to decipher their meaning properly would soon be able to dispense with the written or the spoken word altogether. The more I think of it, there is something futile, mediocre, even (I am tempted to say) foppish about speech. By contrast, how the gravity of Nature and her silence startle you, when you stand face to face with her, undistracted, before a barren ridge or in the desolation of the ancient hills.' We can never dispense with language and the other symbol systems; for it is by means of them, and only by their means, that we have raised ourselves above the brutes, to the level of human beings. But we can easily become the victims as well as the beneficiaries of these systems. We must learn how to handle words effectively; but at the same time we must preserve and, if necessary, intensify our ability to look at the world directly and not through that half-opaque medium of concepts, which distorts every given fact into the all too familiar likeness of some generic label or explanatory abstraction.

Literary or scientific, liberal or specialist, all our education is predominantly verbal and therefore fails to accomplish what it is supposed to do. Instead of transforming children into fully developed adults, it turns out students of the natural sciences who are completely unaware of Nature as the primary fact of experience, it inflicts upon the world students of the Humanities who know nothing of humanity, their own or anyone else's.

Gestalt psychologists, such as Samuel Renshaw, have devised methods for widening the range and increasing the acuity of human perceptions. But do our educators apply them? The answer is, No.

Teachers in every field of psycho-physical skill, from seeing to tennis, from tightrope walking to prayer, have discovered, by trial and error, the conditions of optimum functioning within their special fields. But have any of the great Foundations financed a project for co-ordinating these empirical findings into a general theory and practice of heightened creativeness? Again, so far as I am aware, the answer is, No.

All sorts of cultists and queer fish teach all kinds of techniques for achieving health, contentment, peace of mind; and for many of their hearers many of these techniques are demonstrably effective. But do we see respectable psychologists, philosophers and clergymen boldly descending into those odd and sometimes malodorous wells, at the bottom of which poor Truth is so often condemned to sit? Yet once more the answer is, No.

And now look at the history of mescaline research. Seventy years ago men of first-rate ability described the transcendental experiences which come to those who, in good health, under proper conditions and in the right spirit, take the drug. How many philosophers, how many theologians, how many professional educators have had the curiosity to open this Door in the Wall? The answer, for all practical purposes, is, None.

In a world where education is predominantly verbal, highly educated people find it all but impossible to pay serious attention to anything but words and notions. There is always money for, there are always doctorates in, the learned foolery of research into what, for scholars, is the all-important problem: Who influenced whom to say what when? Even in this age of technology the verbal Humanities are honoured. The non-verbal Humanities, the arts of being directly aware of the given facts of our existence, are almost completely ignored. A catalogue, a bibliography, a definitive edition of a third-rate versifier's *ipsissima verba*, a stupendous index to end all indexes – any genuinely Alexandrian project is sure of approval and financial support. But when it comes to finding out how you and I, our children and grandchildren, may become more perceptive, more intensely aware of inward and outward reality, more open to the Spirit, less apt, by psychological malpractices, to make ourselves physically ill, and more capable of controlling our own autonomic nervous system – when it comes to any form of non-verbal education more fundamental (and more likely to be of some practical use) than Swedish Drill, no really respectable person in any really respectable university or church will do anything about it. Verbalists are suspicious of the non-verbal; rationalists fear the given, non-rational fact; intellectuals feel that 'what we perceive by the eye (or in any other way) is foreign to us as such and need not impress us deeply.' Besides, this matter of education in the non-verbal Humanities will not fit into any of the established pigeon-holes. It is not religion, not neurology, not gymnastics, not morality or civics, not even experimental psychology. This being so, the subject is, for academic and ecclesiastical purposes, non-existent and may safely be ignored altogether or left, with a patronizing smile, to those whom the Pharisees of verbal orthodoxy call cranks, quacks, charlatans and unqualified amateurs.

'I have always found,' Blake wrote rather bitterly, 'that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise. This they do with a confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning.'

Systematic reasoning is something we could not, as a species or as individuals, possibly do without. But neither, if we are to remain sane, can we possibly do without direct perception, the more unsystematic the better, of the inner and outer worlds

into which we have been born. This given reality is an infinite which passes all understanding and yet admits of being directly and in some sort totally apprehended. It is a transcendence belonging to another order than the human, and yet it may be present to us as a felt immanence, an experienced participation. To be enlightened is to be aware, always, of total reality in its immanent otherness – to be aware of it and yet to remain in a condition to survive as an animal, to think and feel as a human being, to resort whenever expedient to systematic reasoning. Our goal is to discover that we have always been where we ought to be. Unhappily we make the task exceedingly difficult for ourselves. Meanwhile, however, there are gratuitous graces in the form of partial and fleeting realizations. Under a more realistic, a less exclusively verbal system of education than ours, every Angel (in Blake's sense of that word) would be permitted as a sabbatical treat, would be urged and even, if necessary, compelled to take an occasional trip through some chemical Door in the Wall into the world of transcendental experience. If it terrified him, it would be unfortunate but probably salutary. If it brought him a brief but timeless illumination, so much the better. In either case the Angel might lose a little of the confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning and the consciousness of having read all the books.

Near the end of his life Aquinas experienced Infused Contemplation. Thereafter he refused to go back to work on his unfinished book. Compared with this everything he had read and argued about and written – Aristotle and the Sentences, the Questions, the Propositions, the majestic Summas – was no better than chaff or straw. For most intellectuals such a sit-down strike would be inadvisable, even morally wrong. But the Angelic Doctor had done more systematic reasoning than any twelve ordinary Angels, and was already ripe for death. He had earned the right, in those last months of his mortality, to turn from merely symbolic straw and chaff to the bread of actual and substantial Fact. For Angels of a lower order and with better prospects of longevity, there must be a return to the straw. But the man who comes back through the Door in the Wall will never be quite the same as the man who went out. He will be wiser but less cocksure, happier but less self-satisfied, humbler in acknowledging his ignorance yet better equipped to understand the relationship of words to things, of systematic reasoning to the unfathomable Mystery which it tries, forever vainly, to comprehend.

Heaven and Hell

Heaven and Hell was first published in 1956 by Chatto & Windus in Britain and Harper & Brothers in America. The title of the essay is taken from William Blake's 1790-93 book, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, which also served as the inspiration for Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*. Blake's work describes a tour of hell, depicted as a place of uninhibited existence rather than a pit of torture and perpetual pain. Blake believed that it was necessary to recognise the physical and material as divine and to embrace both the good and the bad of human nature, as 'Without Contraries is no progression'. The work was highly controversial and was written during a febrile political climate, when the British ruling-class became increasingly concerned about the effects of the French Revolution.

In the Foreword to *Heaven and Hell*, Huxley describes the work as a sequel to *The Doors of Perception* and states that in this new essay he has 'tried to set down' the 'results of this new understanding' on how 'other minds think and feel and perceive', gained from his experience on mescaline. The text explores the nature of visionary experience via what Huxley describes as 'antipodes': parts of the mind and mental states that remain inaccessible for many people. He states that there are only two 'sufficiently reliable' methods for people to discover their antipodes and 'the world of Visionary Experience' and they are psychedelic drugs and hypnosis. He goes on to describe how this special visionary experience has permeated the greatest works of art throughout history, but has not always been 'blissful'. It has also been 'negative' or 'infernal', as is exemplified in Franz Kafka's literature or van Gogh's later landscape paintings.

William Blake's 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell'

Contents

- FOREWORD
- HEAVEN AND HELL
- APPENDIX I
- APPENDIX II
- APPENDIX III
- APPENDIX IV
- APPENDIX V
- APPENDIX VI
- APPENDIX VII
- APPENDIX VIII

The first edition

Foreword

THIS LITTLE BOOK is a sequel to *The Doors of Perception*. For a person in whom 'the candle of vision' never burns spontaneously, the mescaline experience is doubly illuminating. It throws light on the hitherto unknown regions of his own mind; and at the same time it throws light, indirectly, on other minds, more richly gifted in respect to vision than his own. Reflecting on his experience, he comes to a new and better understanding of the ways in which those other minds perceive and feel and think, of the cosmological notions which seem to them self-evident, and of the works of art through which they feel impelled to express themselves. In what follows I have tried to set down, more or less systematically, the results of this new understanding.

A. H.

Introduction

IN THE HISTORY of science the collector of specimens preceded the zoologist and followed the exponents of natural theology and magic. He had ceased to study animals in the spirit of the authors of the Bestiaries, for whom the ant was incarnate industry, the panther an emblem, surprisingly enough, of Christ, the polecat a shocking example of uninhibited lasciviousness. But, except in a rudimentary way, he was not yet a physiologist, ecologist or student of animal behaviour. His primary concern was to make a census, to catch, kill, stuff and describe as many kinds of beasts as he could lay his hands on.

Like the earth of a hundred years ago, our mind still has its darkest Africas, its unmapped Borneos and Amazonian basins. In relation to the fauna of these regions we are not yet zoologists, we are mere naturalists and collectors of specimens. The fact is unfortunate; but we have to accept it, we have to make the best of it. However lowly, the work of the collector must be done, before we can proceed to the higher scientific tasks of classification, analysis, experiment and theory making.

Like the giraffe and the duck-billed platypus, the creatures inhabiting these remoter regions of the mind are exceedingly improbable. Nevertheless they exist, they are facts of observation; and as such, they cannot be ignored by anyone who is honestly trying to understand the world in which he lives.

It is difficult, it is all but impossible, to speak of mental events except in similes drawn from the more familiar universe of material things. If I have made use of geographical and zoological metaphors, it is not wantonly, out of a mere addiction to picturesque language. It is because such metaphors express very forcibly the essential otherness of the mind's far continents, the complete autonomy and self-sufficiency of their inhabitants. A man consists of what I may call an Old World of personal consciousness and, beyond a dividing sea, a series of New Worlds – the not too distant Virginias and Carolinas of the personal subconscious and the vegetative soul; the Far West of the collective unconscious, with its flora of symbols, its tribes of aboriginal archetypes; and, across another, vaster ocean, at the antipodes of everyday consciousness, the world of Visionary Experience.

If you go to New South Wales, you will see marsupials hopping about the countryside. And if you go to the antipodes of the self-conscious mind, you will encounter all sorts of creatures at least as odd as kangaroos. You do not invent these creatures any more than you invent marsupials. They live their own lives in complete independence. A man cannot control them. All he can do is to go to the mental equivalent of Australia and look around him.

Some people never consciously discover their antipodes. Others make an occasional landing. Yet others (but they are few) find it easy to go and come as they please. For the naturalist of the mind, the collector of psychological specimens, the primary need is some safe, easy and reliable method of transporting himself and others from the Old World to the New, from the continent of familiar cows and horses to the continent of the wallaby and the platypus.

Two such methods exist. Neither of them is perfect; but both are sufficiently reliable, sufficiently easy and sufficiently safe to justify their employment by those who know what they are doing. In the first case the soul is transported to its far-off destination by the aid of a chemical – either mescaline or lysergic acid. In the second case, the vehicle is psychological in nature, and the passage to the mind's antipodes is accomplished by hypnosis. The two vehicles carry the consciousness to the same region; but the drug has the longer range and takes its passengers further into the terra incognita.

How and why does hypnosis produce its observed effects? We do not know. For our present purposes, however, we do not have to know. All that is necessary, in this context, is to record the fact that some hypnotic subjects are transported, in the trance state, to a region in the mind's antipodes, where they find the equivalent of marsupials – strange psychological creatures leading an autonomous existence according to the law of their own being.

About the physiological effects of mescaline we know a little. Probably (for we are not yet certain) it interferes with the enzyme system that regulates cerebral functioning. By doing so it lowers the efficiency of the brain as an instrument for focusing mind on the problems of life on the surface of our planet. This lowering of what may be called the biological efficiency of the brain seems to permit the entry into consciousness of certain classes of mental events, which are normally excluded, because they possess no survival value. Similar intrusions of biologically useless, but aesthetically and sometimes spiritually valuable material may occur as the result of illness or fatigue; or they may be induced by fasting, or a period of confinement in a place of darkness and complete silence.

A person under the influence of mescaline or lysergic acid will stop seeing visions when given a large dose of nicotinic acid. This helps to explain the effectiveness of fasting as an inducer of visionary experience. By reducing the amount of available sugar, fasting lowers the brain's biological efficiency and so makes possible the entry into consciousness of material possessing no survival value. Moreover, by causing a vitamin deficiency, it removes from the blood that known inhibitor of visions, nicotinic acid. Another inhibitor of visionary experience is ordinary, everyday, perceptual experience. Experimental psychologists have found that, if you confine a man to a 'restricted environment,' where there is no light, no sound, nothing to smell and, if you put him in a tepid bath with only one, almost imperceptible thing to touch, the victim will very soon start 'seeing things,' 'hearing things' and having strange bodily sensations.

Milarepa, in his Himalayan cavern, and the anchorites of the Thebaid followed essentially the same procedure and got essentially the same results. A thousand pictures

of the Temptations of St Anthony bear witness to the effectiveness of restricted diet and restricted environment. Asceticism, it is evident, has a double motivation. If men and women torment their bodies, it is not only because they hope in this way to atone for past sins and avoid future punishments; it is also because they long to visit the mind's antipodes and do some visionary sightseeing. Empirically and from the reports of other ascetics, they know that fasting and a restricted environment will transport them where they long to go. Their self-inflicted punishment may be the door to paradise. (It may also – and this is a point which will be discussed in a later paragraph – be a door into the infernal regions.)

From the point of view of an inhabitant of the Old World, marsupials are exceedingly odd. But oddity is not the same as randomness. Kangaroos and wallabies may lack verisimilitude; but their improbability repeats itself and obeys recognizable laws. The same is true of the psychological creatures inhabiting the remoter regions of our minds. The experiences encountered under the influence of mescaline or deep hypnosis are certainly strange; but they are strange with a certain regularity, strange according to a pattern.

What are the common features which this pattern imposes upon our visionary experiences? First and most important is the experience of light. Everything seen by those who visit the mind's antipodes is brilliantly illuminated and seems to shine from within. All colours are intensified to a pitch far beyond anything seen in the normal state, and at the same time the mind's capacity for recognizing fine distinctions of tone and hue is notably heightened.

In this respect there is a marked difference between these visionary experiences and ordinary dreams. Most dreams are without colour, or else are only partially or feebly coloured. On the other hand, the visions met with under the influence of mescaline or hypnosis are always intensely and, one might say, praeternaturally brilliant in colour. Professor Calvin Hall, who has collected records of many thousands of dreams, tells us that about two-thirds of all dreams are in black and white. 'Only one dream in three is coloured, or has sonic colour in it.' A few people dream entirely in colour; a few never experience colour in their dreams; the majority sometimes dream in colour, but more often do not.

'We have come to the conclusion,' writes Dr Hall, 'that colour in dreams yields no information about the personality of the dreamer.' I agree with this conclusion. Colour in dreams and visions tells us no more about the personality of the beholder than does colour in the external world. A garden in July is perceived as brightly coloured. The perception tells us something about sunshine, flowers and butterflies, but little or nothing about our own selves. In the same way the fact that we see brilliant colours in our visions and in some of our dreams tells us something about the fauna of the mind's antipodes, but nothing whatever about the personality who inhabits what I have called the Old World of the mind.

Most dreams are concerned with the dreamer's private wishes and instinctive urges, and with the conflicts which arise when these wishes and urges are thwarted by a

disapproving conscience or a fear of public opinion. The story of these drives and conflicts is told in terms of dramatic symbols, and in most dreams the symbols are uncoloured. Why should this be the case? The answer, I presume, is that, to be effective, symbols do not require to be coloured. The letters in which we write about roses need not be red, and we can describe the rainbow by means of ink marks on white paper. Textbooks are illustrated by line engravings and half-tone plates; and these uncoloured images and diagrams effectively convey information.

What is good enough for the waking consciousness is evidently good enough for the personal subconscious, which finds it possible to express its meanings through uncoloured symbols. Colour turns out to be a kind of touchstone of reality. That which is given is coloured; that which our symbol-creating intellect and fancy put together is uncoloured. Thus the external world is perceived as coloured. Dreams, which are not given but fabricated by the personal subconscious, are generally in black and white. (It is worth remarking that, in most people's experience, the most brightly coloured dreams are those of landscapes, in which there is no drama, no symbolic reference to conflict, merely the presentation to consciousness of a given, non-human fact.)

The images of the archetypal world are symbolic; but since we, as individuals, do not fabricate them, but find them 'out there' in the collective unconscious, they exhibit some at least of the characteristics of given reality and are coloured. The non-symbolic inhabitants of the mind's antipodes exist in their own right, and like the given facts of the external world are coloured. Indeed, they are far more intensely coloured than external data. This may be explained, at least in part, by the fact that our perceptions of the external world are habitually clouded by the verbal notions in terms of which we do our thinking. We are for ever attempting to convert things into signs for the more intelligible abstractions of our own invention. But in doing so, we rob these things of a great deal of their native thinghood.

At the antipodes of the mind, we are more or less completely free of language, outside the system of conceptual thought. Consequently our perception of visionary objects possesses all the freshness, all the naked intensity, of experiences which have never been verbalized, never assimilated to lifeless abstractions. Their colour (that hallmark of givenness) shines forth with a brilliance which seems to us praeternatural, because it is in fact entirely natural – entirely natural in the sense of being entirely unsophisticated by language or the scientific, philosophical and utilitarian notions, by means of which we ordinarily re-create the given world in our own drearily human image.

In his *Candle of Vision*, the Irish poet A. E. (George Russell) has analysed his visionary experiences with remarkable acuity. 'When I meditate,' he writes, 'I feel in the thoughts and images that throng about me the reflections of personality; but there are also windows in the soul, through which can be seen images created not by human but by the divine imagination.'

Our linguistic habits lead us into error. For example, we are apt to say, 'I imagine,' when what we should have said is, 'The curtain was lifted that I might see.' Sponta-

neous or induced, visions are never our personal property. Memories belonging to the ordinary self have no place in them. The things seen are wholly unfamiliar. 'There is no reference or resemblance,' in Sir William Herschel's phrase, 'to any objects recently seen or even thought of.' When faces appear, they are never the faces of friends or acquaintances. We are out of the Old World, and exploring the antipodes.

For most of us most of the time, the world of everyday experience seems rather dim and drab. But for a few people often, and for a fair number occasionally, some of the brightness of visionary experience spills over, as it were, into common seeing, and the everyday universe is transfigured. Though still recognizably itself the Old World takes on the quality of the mind's antipodes. Here is an entirely characteristic description of this transfiguration of the everyday world.

'I was sitting on the seashore, half listening to a friend arguing violently about something which merely bored me. Unconsciously to myself, I looked at a film of sand I had picked up on my hand, when I suddenly saw the exquisite beauty of every little grain of it; instead of being dull, I saw that each particle was made up on a perfect geometrical pattern, with sharp angles, from each of which a brilliant shaft of light was reflected, while each tiny crystal shone like a rainbow... The rays crossed and recrossed, making exquisite patterns of such beauty that they left me breathless... Then, suddenly, my consciousness was lighted up from within and I saw in a vivid way how the whole universe was made up of particles of material which, no matter how dull and lifeless they might seem, were nevertheless filled with this intense and vital beauty. For a second or two the whole world appeared as a blaze of glory. When it died down, it left me with something I have never forgotten and which constantly reminds me of the beauty locked up in every minute speck of material around us.'

Similarly George Russell writes of seeing the world illumined by 'an intolerable lustre of light'; of finding himself looking at 'landscapes as lovely as a lost Eden'; of beholding a world where the 'colours were brighter and purer, and yet made a softer harmony.' Again, 'the winds were sparkling and diamond clear, and yet full of colour as an opal, as they glittered through the valley, and I knew the Golden Age was all about me, and it was we who had been blind to it, but that it had never passed away from the world.'

Many similar descriptions are to be found in the poets and in the literature of religious mysticism. One thinks, for example, of Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Early Childhood*; of certain lyrics by George Herbert and Henry Vaughan; of Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations*; of the passage in his autobiography, where Father Surin describes the miraculous transformation of an enclosed convent garden into a fragment of heaven.

Praeternatural light and colour are common to all visionary experiences. And along with light and colour there goes, in every case, a recognition of heightened significance. The self-luminous objects which we see in the mind's antipodes possess a meaning, and this meaning is, in some sort, as intense as their colour. Significance here is identical with being; for, at the mind's antipodes, objects do not stand for anything but them-

selves. The images which appear in the nearer reaches of the collective subconscious have meaning in relation to the basic facts of human experience; but here, at the limits of the visionary world, we are confronted by facts which, like the facts of external nature, are independent of man, both individually and collectively, and exist in their own right. And their meaning consists precisely in this, that they are intensely themselves and, being intensely themselves, are manifestations of the essential givenness, the non-human otherness of the universe.

Light, colour and significance do not exist in isolation. They modify, or are manifested by, objects. Are there any special classes of objects common to most visionary experiences? The answer is: Yes, there are. Under mescaline and hypnosis, as well as in spontaneous visions, certain classes of perceptual experiences turn up again and again.

The typical mescaline or lysergic acid experience begins with perceptions of coloured, moving, living geometrical forms. In time, pure geometry becomes concrete, and the visionary perceives, not patterns, but patterned things, such as carpets, carvings, mosaics. These give place to vast and complicated buildings, in the midst of landscapes, which change continuously, passing from richness to more intensely coloured richness, from grandeur to deepening grandeur. Heroic figures, of the kind that Blake called 'The Seraphim,' may make their appearance, alone or in multitudes. Fabulous animals move across the scene. Everything is novel and amazing. Almost never does the visionary see anything that reminds him of his own past. He is not remembering scenes, persons or objects, and he is not inventing them; he is looking on at a new creation.

The raw material for this creation is provided by the visual experiences of ordinary life; but the moulding of this material into forms is the work of someone who is most certainly not the self; who originally had the experiences, or who later recalled and reflected upon them. They are (to quote the words used by Dr J. R. Smythies in a recent paper in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*) 'the work of a highly differentiated mental compartment, without any apparent connection, emotional or volitional, with the aims, interests, or feelings of the person concerned.'

Here, in quotation or condensed paraphrase, is Weir Mitchell's account of the visionary world to which he was transported by peyote, the cactus which is the natural source of mescaline.

At his entry into that world he saw a host of 'star points' and what looked like 'fragments of stained glass.' Then came 'delicate floating films of colour.' These were displaced by an 'abrupt rush of countless points of white light,' sweeping across the field of vision. Next there were zigzag lines of very bright colours, which somehow turned into swelling clouds of still more brilliant hues. Buildings now made their appearance, and then landscapes. There was a Gothic tower of elaborate design with worn statues in the doorways or on stone brackets. 'As I gazed, every projecting angle, cornice and even the faces of the stones at their joinings were by degrees covered or hung with clusters of what seemed to be huge precious stones, but uncut stones, some being more like masses of transparent fruit... All seemed to possess an interior light.' The Gothic tower gave place to a mountain, a cliff of inconceivable height, a colossal birdclaw carved in

stone and projecting over the abyss, an endless unfurling of coloured draperies, and an efflorescence of more precious stones. Finally there was a view of green and purple waves breaking on a beach 'with myriads of lights of the same tint as the waves.'

Every mescaline experience, every vision arising under hypnosis, is unique; but all recognizably belong to the same species. The landscapes, the architectures, the clustering gems, the brilliant and intricate patterns – these, in their atmosphere of praeternatural light, praeternatural colour and praeternatural significance, are the stuff of which the mind's antipodes are made. Why this should be so, we have no idea. It is a brute fact of experience which, whether we like it or not, we have to accept – just as we have to accept the fact of kangaroos.

From these facts of visionary experience let us now pass to the accounts preserved in all the cultural traditions, of Other Worlds – the worlds inhabited by the gods, by the spirits of the dead, by man in his primal state of innocence.

Reading these accounts, we are immediately struck by the close similarity between induced or spontaneous visionary experience and the heavens and fairylands of folklore and religion. Praeternatural light, praeternatural intensity of colouring, praeternatural significance – these are characteristic of all the Other Worlds and Golden Ages. And in virtually every case this praeternaturally significant light shines on, or shines out of, a landscape of such surpassing beauty that words cannot express it.

Thus in the Graeco-Roman tradition we find the lovely Garden of the Hesperides, the Elysian Plain, and the fair Island of Leuke, to which Achilles was translated. Memnon went to another luminous island, somewhere in the East. Odysseus and Penelope travelled in the opposite direction and enjoyed their immortality with Circe in Italy. Still further to the West were the Islands of the Blest, first mentioned by Hesiod and so firmly believed in that, as late as the first century B.C., Sertorius planned to send a squadron from Spain to discover them.

Magically lovely islands reappear in the folklore of the Celts and, at the opposite side of the world, in that of the Japanese. And between Avalon in the extreme West and Horaisan in the Far East, there is the land of Uttarakuru, the Other World of the Hindus. 'The land,' we read in the Ramayana, 'is watered by lakes with golden lotuses. There are rivers by thousands, full of leaves of the colour of sapphire and lapis lazuli; and the lakes, resplendent like the morning sun, are adorned by golden beds of red lotus. The country all around is covered by jewels and precious stones, with gay beds of blue lotus, golden-petalled. Instead of sand, pearls, gems and gold form the banks of the rivers, which are over-hung with trees of fire-bright gold. These trees perpetually bear flowers and fruit, give forth a sweet fragrance and abound with birds.'

Uttarakuru, we see, resembles the landscapes of the mescaline experience in being rich with precious stones. And this characteristic is common to virtually all the Other Worlds of religious tradition. Every paradise abounds in gems, or at least in gem-like objects resembling, as Weir Mitchell puts it, 'transparent fruit.' Here, for example, is Ezekiel's version of the Garden of Eden. 'Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz and the diamond, the beryl,

the onyx and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald and the carbuncle, and gold... Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth ... thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.' The Buddhist paradises are adorned with similar 'stones of fire.' Thus, the Western Paradise of the Pure Land Sect is walled with silver, gold and beryl; has lakes with jewelled banks and a profusion of glowing lotuses, within which the Bodhisattvas sit enthroned.

In describing their Other Worlds, the Celts and Teutons speak very little of precious stones, but have much to say of another and, for them, equally wonderful substance – glass. The Welsh had a blessed land called Ynisvitrin, the Isle of Glass; and one of the names of the Germanic kingdom of the dead was Glasberg. One is reminded of the Sea of Glass in the Apocalypse.

Most paradises are adorned with buildings, and, like the trees, the waters, the hills and fields, these buildings are bright with gems. We are all familiar with the New Jerusalem, 'And the building of the wall of it was of jasper, and the city was of pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.'

Similar descriptions are to be found in the eschatological literature of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Heaven is always a place of gems. Why should this be the case? Those who think of all human activities in terms of a social and economic frame of reference will give some such answer as this: Gems are very rare on earth. Few people possess them. To compensate themselves for these facts, the spokesmen for the poverty-stricken majority have filled their imaginary heavens with precious stones. This 'pie in the sky' hypothesis contains, no doubt, some element of truth; but it fails to explain why precious stones should have come to be regarded as precious in the first place.

Men have spent enormous amounts of time, energy and money on the finding, mining and cutting of coloured pebbles. Why? The utilitarian can offer no explanation for such fantastic behaviour. But as soon as we take into account the facts of visionary experience, everything becomes clear. In vision, men perceive a profusion of what Ezekiel calls 'stones of fire,' of what Weir Mitchell describes as 'transparent fruit.' These things are self-luminous, exhibit a praeternatural brilliance of colour and possess a praeternatural significance. The material objects which most nearly resemble these sources of visionary illumination are gem-stones. To acquire such a stone is to acquire something whose preciousness is guaranteed by the fact that it exists in the Other World.

Hence man's otherwise inexplicable passion for gems and hence his attribution to precious stones of therapeutic and magical virtue. The causal chain, I am convinced, begins in the psychological Other World of visionary experience, descends to earth and mounts again to the theological Other World of heaven. In this context the words of Socrates, in the *Phaedo*, take on a new significance. There exists, he tells us, an ideal world above and beyond the world of matter. 'In this other earth the colours are much purer and much more brilliant than they are down here... The very mountains, the very stones have a richer gloss, a lovelier transparency and intensity of hue. The

precious stones of this lower world, our highly prized cornelians, jaspers, emeralds and all the rest, are but the tiny fragments of these stones above. In the other earth there is no stone but is precious and exceeds in beauty every gem of ours.'

In other words, precious stones are precious because they bear a faint resemblance to the glowing marvels seen with the inner eye of the visionary. 'The view of that world,' says Plato, 'is a vision of blessed beholders'; for to see things 'as they are in themselves' is bliss unalloyed and inexpressible.

Among people who have no knowledge of precious stones or of glass, heaven is adorned not with minerals, but flowers. Praeternaturally brilliant flowers bloom in most of the Other Worlds described by primitive eschatologists, and even in the begemmed and glassy paradises of the more advanced religions they have their place. One remembers the lotus of Hindu and Buddhist tradition, the roses and lilies of the West.

'God first planted a garden.' The statement expresses a deep psychological truth. Horticulture has its source – or at any rate one of its sources – in the Other World of the mind's antipodes. When worshippers offer flowers at the altar, they are returning to the gods things which they know, or (if they are not visionaries) obscurely feel, to be indigenous to heaven.

And this return to the source is not merely symbolical; it is also a matter of immediate experience. For the traffic between our Old World and its antipodes, between Here and Beyond, travels along a two-way street. Gems, for example, come from the soul's visionary heaven; but they also lead the soul back to that heaven. Contemplating them, men find themselves (as the phrase goes) transported – carried away towards that Other Earth of the Platonic dialogue, the magical place where every pebble is a precious stone. And the same effects may be produced by artifacts of glass and metal, by tapers burning in the dark, by brilliantly coloured images and ornaments, by flowers, shells and feathers, by landscapes seen, as Shelley from the Euganean Hills saw Venice, in the transfiguring light of dawn or sunset.

Indeed, we may risk a generalization and say that whatever, in nature or in a work of art, resembles one of those intensely significant, inwardly glowing objects encountered at the mind's antipodes, is capable of inducing, if only in a partial and attenuated form, the visionary experience. At this point a hypnotist will remind us that, if he can be induced to stare intently at a shiny object, a patient may go into trance; and that if he goes into trance, or if he goes only into reverie, he may very well see visions within and a transfigured world without.

But how, precisely, and why does the view of a shiny object induce a trance or a state of reverie? Is it, as the Victorians maintained, a simple matter of eye strain resulting in general nervous exhaustion? Or shall we explain the phenomenon in purely psychological terms – as concentration pushed to the point of monoideism and leading to dissociation?

But there is a third possibility. Shiny objects may remind our unconscious of what it enjoys at the mind's antipodes, and these obscure intimations of life in the Other

World are so fascinating that we pay less attention to this world and so become capable of experiencing consciously something of that which, unconsciously, is always with us.

We see then that there are in nature certain scenes, certain classes of objects, certain materials, possessed of the power to transport the beholder's mind in the direction of its antipodes, out of the everyday Here and towards the Other World of Vision. Similarly, in the realm of art, we find certain works, even certain classes of works, in which the same transporting power is manifest. These vision-inducing works may be executed in vision-inducing materials, such as glass, metal, gems or gemlike pigments. In other cases their power is due to the fact that they render, in some peculiarly expressive way, some transporting scene or object.

The best vision-inducing art is produced by men and women who have themselves had the visionary experience; but it is also possible for any reasonably good artist, simply by following an approved recipe, to create works which shall have at least some transporting power.

Of all the vision-inducing arts that which depends most completely on its raw materials is, of course, the art of the goldsmith and jeweller. Polished metals and precious stones are so intrinsically transporting that even a Victorian, even an Art Nouveau jewel is a thing of power. And when to this natural magic of glinting metal and self-luminous stone is added the other magic of noble forms and colours artfully blended, we find ourselves in the presence of a genuine talisman.

Religious art has always and everywhere made use of these vision-inducing materials. The shrine of gold, the chryselephantine statue, the jewelled symbol or image, the glittering furniture of the altar – we find these things in contemporary Europe as in ancient Egypt, in India and China as among the Greeks, the Incas, the Aztecs.

The products of the goldsmith's art are intrinsically numinous. They have their place at the very heart of every Mystery, in every holy of holies. This sacred jewellery has always been associated with the light of lamps and candles. For Ezekiel, a gem was a stone of fire. Conversely, a flame is a living gem, endowed with all the transporting power that belongs to the precious stone and, to a lesser degree, to polished metal. This transporting power of flame increases in proportion to the depth and extent of the surrounding darkness. The most impressively numinous temples are caverns of twilight, in which a few tapers give life to the transporting, other-worldly treasures on the altar.

Glass is hardly less effective as an inducer of visions than are the natural gems. In certain respects, indeed, it is more effective, for the simple reason that there is more of it. Thanks to glass, a whole building – the Sainte-Chapelle, for example, the cathedrals of Chartres and Sens – could be turned into something magical and transporting. Thanks to glass, Paolo Uccello could design a circular jewel thirteen feet in diameter – his great window of the Resurrection, perhaps the most extraordinary single work of vision-inducing art ever produced.

For the men of the Middle Ages, it is evident, visionary experience was supremely valuable. So valuable, indeed, that they were ready to pay for it in hard-earned cash.

In the twelfth century collecting-boxes were placed in the churches for the upkeep and installation of stained-glass windows. Suger, the Abbot of St Denis, tells us that they were always full.

But self-respecting artists cannot be expected to go on doing what their fathers have already done supremely well. In the fourteenth century colour gave place to grisaille, and windows ceased to be vision-inducing. When, in the later fifteenth century, colour came into fashion again, the glass painters felt the desire, and found themselves, at the same time, technically equipped, to imitate Renaissance painting in transparency. The results were often interesting; but they were not transporting.

Then came the Reformation. The Protestants disapproved of visionary experience and attributed a magical virtue to the printed word. In a church with clear windows the worshippers could read their Bibles and prayer books and were not tempted to escape from the sermon into the Other World. On the Catholic side the men of the Counter-Reformation found themselves in two minds. They thought visionary experience was a good thing, but they also believed in the supreme value of print.

In the new churches stained glass was rarely installed, and in many of the older churches it was wholly or partially replaced by clear glass. The unobscured light permitted the faithful to follow the service in their books, and at the same time to see the vision-inducing works created by the new generations of baroque sculptors and architects. These transporting works were executed in metal and polished stone. Wherever the worshipper turned, he found the glint of bronze, the rich radiance of coloured marble, the unearthly whiteness of statuary.

On the rare occasions when the Counter-Reformers made use of glass, it was as a surrogate for diamonds, not for rubies or sapphires. Faceted prisms entered religious art in the seventeenth century, and in Catholic churches they dangle to this day from innumerable chandeliers. (These charming and slightly ridiculous ornaments are among the very few vision-inducing devices permitted in Islam. Mosques have no images or reliquaries; but in the Near East, at any rate, their austerity is sometimes mitigated by the transporting glitter of rococo crystal.)

From glass, stained or cut, we pass to marble and the other stones that take a high polish and can be used in mass. The fascination exercised by such stones may be gauged by the amount of time and trouble spent in obtaining them. At Baalbek, for example, and, two or three hundred miles further inland, at Palmyra, we find among the ruins columns of pink granite from Aswan. These great monoliths were quarried in Upper Egypt, were floated in barges down the Nile, were towed across the Mediterranean to Byblos or Tripolis and from thence were hauled, by oxen, mules and men, uphill to Homs, and from Homs southward to Baalbek, or east, across the desert, to Palmyra.

What a labour of giants! And, from the utilitarian point of view, how marvellously pointless! But in fact, of course, there was a point – a point that existed in a region beyond mere utility. Polished to a visionary glow, the rosy shafts proclaimed their manifest kinship with the Other World. At the cost of enormous efforts men had transported these stones from their quarry on the Tropic of Cancer; and now, by way

of recompense, the stones were transporting their transporters halfway to the mind's visionary antipodes.

The question of utility and of the motives that lie beyond utility arises once more in relation to ceramics. Few things are more useful, more absolutely indispensable, than pots and plates and jugs. But at the same time few human beings concern themselves less with utility than do the collectors of porcelain and glazed earthenware. To say that these people have an appetite for beauty is not a sufficient explanation. The commonplace ugliness of the surroundings in which fine ceramics are so often displayed is proof enough that what their owners crave is not beauty in all its manifestations, but only a special kind of beauty – the beauty of curved reflections, of softly lustrous glazes, of sleek and smooth surfaces. In a word, the beauty that transports the beholder, because it reminds him, obscurely or explicitly, of the praeternatural lights and colours of the Other World. In the main the art of the potter has been a secular art – but a secular art which its innumerable devotees have treated with an almost idolatrous reverence. From time to time, however, this secular art has been placed at the service of religion. Glazed tiles have found their way into mosques and, here and there, into Christian churches. From China come shining ceramic images of gods and saints. In Italy Luca della Robbia created a heaven of blue glaze, for his lustrous white madonnas and Christ children. Baked clay is cheaper than marble and, suitably treated, almost as transporting.

Plato and, during a later flowering of religious art, St Thomas Aquinas maintained that pure, bright colours were of the very essence of artistic beauty. A Matisse, in that case, could be intrinsically superior to a Goya or a Rembrandt. One has only to translate the philosophers' abstractions into concrete terms to see that this equation of beauty in general with bright, pure colours is absurd. But though untenable as it stands, the venerable doctrine is not altogether devoid of truth.

Bright, pure colours are characteristic of the Other World. Consequently works of art painted in bright, pure colours are capable, in suitable circumstances, of transporting the beholder's mind in the direction of its antipodes. Bright pure colours are of the essence, not of beauty in general, but only of a special kind of beauty, the visionary. Gothic churches and Greek temples, the statues of the thirteenth century after Christ and of the fifth century before Christ – all were brilliantly coloured.

For the Greeks and the men of the Middle Ages, this art of the merry-go-round and the wax-work show was evidently transporting. To us it seems deplorable. We prefer our Praxiteleses plain, our marble and our limestone *au naturel*. Why should our modern taste be so different, in this respect, from that of our ancestors? The reason, I presume, is that we have become too familiar with bright pure pigments to be greatly moved by them. We admire them, of course, when we see them in some grand or subtle composition; but in themselves and as such, they leave us untransported.

Sentimental lovers of the past complain of the drabness of our age and contrast it unfavourably with the gay brilliance of earlier times. In actual fact, of course, there is a far greater profusion of colour in the modern than in the ancient world. Lapis

lazuli and Tyrian purple were costly rarities; the rich velvets and brocades of princely wardrobes, the woven or painted hangings of mediaeval and early modern houses, were reserved for a privileged minority.

Even the great ones of the earth possessed very few of these vision-inducing treasures. As late as the seventeenth century, monarchs owned so little furniture that they had to travel from palace to palace with wagon-loads of plate and bedspreads, of carpets and tapestries. For the great mass of the people there were only homespun and a few vegetable dyes; and, for interior decoration, there were at best the earth colours, at worst (and in most cases) 'the floor of plaster and the walls of dung.'

At the antipodes of every mind lay the Other World of praeternatural light and praeternatural colour, of ideal gems and visionary gold. But before every pair of eyes was only the dark squalor of the family hovel, the dust or mud of the village street, the dirty whites, the duns and goose-turd greens of ragged clothing. Hence a passionate, an almost desperate, thirst for bright, pure colours; and hence the overpowering effect produced by such colours whenever, in church or at court, they were displayed. Today the chemical industry turns out paints, inks and dyes in endless variety and enormous quantities. In our modern world there is enough bright colour to guarantee the production of billions of flags and comic strips, millions of stop signs and tail lights, fire engines and Coca-Cola containers by the hundred thousand, carpets, wallpapers and non-representational art by the square mile.

Familiarity breeds indifference. We have seen too much pure, bright colour at Woolworth's to find it intrinsically transporting. And here we may note that, by its amazing capacity to give us too much of the best things, modern technology has tended to devalue the traditional vision-inducing materials. The illumination of a city, for example, was once a rare event, reserved for victories and national holidays, for the canonization of saints and the crowning of kings. Now it occurs nightly and celebrates the virtues of gin, cigarettes and toothpaste.

In London, fifty years ago, electric sky signs were a novelty and so rare that they shone out of the misty darkness 'like captain jewels in the carcanet.' Across the Thames, on the old Shot Tower, the gold and ruby letters were magically lovely – *une féerie*. Today the fairies are gone. Neon is everywhere and, being everywhere, has no effect upon us, except perhaps to make us pine nostalgically for primeval night.

Only in floodlighting do we recapture the unearthly significance which used, in the age of oil and wax, even in the age of gas and the carbon filament, to shine forth from practically any island of brightness in the boundless dark. Under the searchlights Notre-Dame de Paris and the Roman Forum are visionary objects, having power to transport the beholder's mind towards the Other World.

Modern technology has had the same devaluating effect on glass and polished metal as it has had on fairy lamps and pure, bright colours. By John of Patmos and his contemporaries walls of glass were conceivable only in the New Jerusalem. Today they are a feature of every up-to-date office building and bungalow. And this glut of glass has been paralleled by a glut of chrome and nickel, of stainless steel and aluminium

and a host of alloys old and new. Metal surfaces wink at us in the bathroom, shine from the kitchen sink, go glittering across country in cars and trains.

Those rich convex reflections, which so fascinated Rembrandt that he never tired of rendering them in paint, are now the commonplaces of home and street and factory. The fine point of seldom pleasure has been blunted. What was once a needle of visionary delight has now become a piece of disregarded linoleum.

I have spoken so far only of vision-inducing materials and their psychological devaluation by modern technology. It is time now to consider the purely artistic devices, by means of which vision-inducing works have been created.

Light and colour tend to take on a praeternatural quality when seen in the midst of environing darkness. Fra Angelico's Crucifixion at the Louvre has a black background. So have the frescoes of the Passion painted by Andrea del Castagno for the nuns of Santa Apollonia at Florence. Hence the visionary intensity, the strange transporting power of these extraordinary works. In an entirely different artistic and psychological context the same device was often used by Goya in his etchings. Those flying men, that horse on a tightrope, the huge and ghastly incarnation of Fear – all of them stand out, as though floodlit, against a background of impenetrable night.

With the development of chiaroscuro, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, night came out of the background and installed itself within the picture, which became the scene of a kind of Manichean struggle between Light and Darkness. At the time they were painted these works must have possessed a real transporting power. To us, who have seen altogether too much of this kind of thing, most of them seem merely theatrical. But a few still retain their magic. There is Caravaggio's Entombment, for example; there are a dozen magical paintings by Georges de Latour; there are all those visionary Rembrandts where the lights have the intensity and significance of light at the mind's antipodes, where the darks are full of rich potentialities waiting their turn to become actual, to make themselves glowingly present to our consciousness.

In most cases the ostensible subject-matter of Rembrandt's pictures is taken from real life or the Bible – a boy at his lessons or Bathsheba bathing; a woman wading in a pond or Christ before His judges. Occasionally, however, these messages from the Other World are transmitted by means of a subject drawn, not from real life or history, but from the realm of archetypal symbols. There hangs in the Louvre a *Méditation du Philosophe*, whose symbolical subject-matter is nothing more or less than the human mind, with its teeming darknesses, its moments of intellectual and visionary illumination, its mysterious stairways winding downwards and upwards into the unknown. The meditating philosopher sits there in his island of inner illumination; and at the opposite end of the symbolic chamber, in another, rosier island, an old woman crouches before the hearth. The firelight touches and transfigures her face, and we see, concretely illustrated, the impossible paradox and supreme truth – that perception is (or at least can be, ought to be) the same as Revelation, that Reality shines out of every appearance, that the One is totally, infinitely present in all particulars.

Along with the praeternatural lights and colours, the gems and the ever-changing patterns, visitors to the mind's antipodes discover a world of sublimely beautiful landscapes, of living architecture and of heroic figures. The transporting power of many works of art is attributable to the fact that their creators have painted scenes, persons and objects which remind the beholder of what, consciously or unconsciously, he knows about the Other World at the back of his mind.

Let us begin with the human or, rather, the more than human inhabitants of these far-off regions. Blake called them the Cherubim. And in effect that is what, no doubt, they are – the psychological originals of those beings who, in the theology of every religion, serve as intermediaries between man and the Clear Light. The more than human personages of visionary experience never 'do anything.' (Similarly the blessed never 'do anything' in heaven.) They are content merely to exist.

Under many names and attired in an endless variety of costumes, these heroic figures of man's visionary experience have appeared in the religious art of every culture. Sometimes they are shown at rest, sometimes in historical or mythological action. But action, as we have seen, does not come naturally to the inhabitants of the mind's antipodes. To be busy is the law of our being. The law of theirs is to do nothing. When we force these serene strangers to play a part in one of our all too human dramas, we are being false to visionary truth. That is why the most transporting (though not necessarily the most beautiful) representation of 'the Cherubim' are those which show them as they are in their native habitat – doing nothing in particular.

And that accounts for the overwhelming, the more than merely aesthetic, impression made upon the beholder by the great static masterpieces of religious art. The sculptured figures of Egyptian gods and god-kings, the Madonnas and Pantocrators of the Byzantine mosaics, the Bodhisattvas and Lohans of China, the seated Buddhas of Khmer, the steles and statues of Copan, the wooden idols of tropical Africa – these have one characteristic in common: a profound stillness. And it is precisely this which gives them their numinous quality, their power to transport the beholder out of the Old World of his everyday experience, far away, towards the visionary antipodes of the human psyche.

There is, of course, nothing intrinsically excellent about static art. Static or dynamic, a bad piece of work is always a bad piece of work. All I mean to imply is that, other things being equal, a heroic figure at rest has a greater transporting power than one which is shown in action.

The Cherubim live in Paradise and the New Jerusalem – in other words, among prodigious buildings set in rich, bright gardens with distant prospects of plain and mountain, of rivers and the sea. This is a matter of immediate experience, a psychological fact which has been recorded in folklore and the religious literature of every age and country. It has not, however, been recorded in pictorial art.

Reviewing the succession of human cultures, we find that landscape painting is either non-existent, or rudimentary, or of very recent development. In Europe a full-

blown art of landscape painting has existed for only four or five centuries, in China for not more than a thousand years, in India, for all practical purposes, never.

This is a curious fact that demands an explanation. Why should landscapes have found their way into the visionary literature of a given epoch and a given culture, but not into the painting? Posed in this way, the question provides its own best answer. People may be content with the merely verbal expression of this aspect of their visionary experience and feel no need for its translation into pictorial terms.

That this often happens in the case of individuals is certain. Blake, for example, saw visionary landscapes, 'articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce' and 'infinitely more perfect and minutely organized than anything seen by the mortal eye.' Here is the description of such a visionary landscape, which Blake gave at one of Mrs Aders' evening parties: 'The other evening, taking a walk, I came to a meadow and at the further corner of it I saw a fold of lambs. Coming nearer, the ground blushed with flowers, and the wattled cote and its woolly tenants were of an exquisite pastoral beauty. But I looked again, and it proved to be no living flock, but beautiful sculpture.'

Rendered in pigments, this vision would look, I suppose, like some impossibly beautiful blending of one of Constable's freshest oil sketches with an animal painting in the magically realistic style of Zurbaran's haloed lamb now in the San Diego Museum. But Blake never produced anything remotely resembling such a picture. He was content to talk and write about his landscape visions, and to concentrate in his painting upon 'the Cherubim.'

What is true of an individual artist may be true of a whole school. There are plenty of things which men experience, but do not choose to express; or they may try to express what they have experienced, but in only one of their arts. In yet other cases they will express themselves in ways having no immediately recognizable affinity to the original experience. In this last context Dr A. K. Coomaraswamy has some interesting things to say about the mystical art of the Far East – the art where 'denotation and connotation cannot be divided' and 'no distinction is felt between what a thing "is" and what it "signifies."'

The supreme example of such mystical art is the Zen-inspired landscape painting, which arose in China during the Sung period and came to new birth in Japan four centuries later. India and the Near East have no mystical landscape painting; but they have its equivalents – 'Vaisnava painting, poetry and music in India, where the theme is sexual love; and Sufi poetry and music in Persia, devoted to praises of intoxication.'

'Bed,' as the Italian proverb succinctly puts it, 'is the poor man's opera.' Analogously, sex is the Hindu's Sung; wine, the Persian's Impressionism. The reason being, of course, that the experiences of sexual union and intoxication partake of that essential otherness characteristic of all vision, including that of landscapes.

If, at any time, men have found satisfaction in a certain kind of activity, it is to be presumed that, at periods when this satisfying activity was not manifested, there must have been some kind of equivalent for it. In the Middle Ages, for example, men

were preoccupied in an obsessive, an almost maniacal way with words and symbols. Everything in nature was instantly recognized as the concrete illustration of some notion formulated in one of the books or legends currently regarded as sacred.

And yet, at other periods of history men have found a deep satisfaction in recognizing the autonomous otherness of nature, including many aspects of human nature. The experience of this otherness was expressed in terms of art, religion or science. What were the mediaeval equivalents of Constable and ecology, of bird watching and Eleusis, of microscopy and the rites of Dionysos and the Japanese Haiku? They were to be found, I suspect, in Saturnalian orgies at one end of the scale and in mystical experience at the other. Shrovetides, May Days, Carnivals – these permitted a direct experience of the animal otherness underlying personal and social identity. Infused contemplation revealed the yet otherer otherness of the divine Not-Self. And somewhere between the two extremes were the experiences of the visionaries and the vision-inducing arts, by means of which it was sought to recapture and re-create those experiences – the art of the jeweller, of the maker of stained glass, of the weaver of tapestries, of the painter, poet and musician.

In spite of a Natural History that was nothing but a set of drearily moralistic symbols, in the teeth of a theology which, instead of regarding words as the signs of things, treated things and events as the signs of biblical or Aristotelian words, our ancestors remained relatively sane. And they achieved this feat by periodically escaping from the stifling prison of their bumptiously rationalistic philosophy, their anthropomorphic, authoritarian and non-experimental science, their all too articulate religion, into non-verbal, other than human worlds inhabited by their instincts, by the visionary fauna of their mind's antipodes and, beyond and yet within all the rest, by the indwelling Spirit.

From this wide-ranging but necessary digression, let us return to the particular case from which we set out. Landscapes, as we have seen, are a regular feature of the visionary experience. Descriptions of visionary landscapes occur in the ancient literature of folklore and religion; but paintings of landscapes do not make their appearance until comparatively recent times. To what has been said, by way of explanation about psychological equivalents, I will add a few brief notes on the nature of landscape paintings as a vision-inducing art.

Let us begin by asking a question. What landscapes – or, more generally, what representations of natural objects – are most transporting, most intrinsically vision-inducing? In the light of my own experiences and of what I have heard other people say about their reactions to works of art, I will risk an answer. Other things being equal (for nothing can make up for lack of talent), the most transporting landscapes are, first, those which represent natural objects a very long way off, and, second, those which represent them at close range.

Distance lends enchantment to the view; but so does propinquity. A Sung painting of far away mountains, clouds and torrents is transporting; but so are the closeups of tropical leaves in the Douanier Rousseau's jungles. When I look at the Sung landscape,

I am reminded (or one of my not-I's is reminded) of the crags, the boundless expanses of plain, the luminous skies and seas of the mind's antipodes. And those disappearances into mist and cloud, those sudden emergences of some strange, intensely definite form, a weathered rock, for example, an ancient pine tree twisted by years of struggle with the wind – these too, are transporting. For they remind me, consciously or unconsciously, of the Other World's essential alienness and unaccountability.

It is the same with the close-up. I look at those leaves with their architecture of veins, their stripes and mottlings, I peer into the depths of interlacing greenery, and something in me is reminded of those living patterns, so characteristic of the visionary world, of those endless births and proliferations of geometrical forms that turn into objects, of things that are forever being transmuted into other things.

This painted close-up of a jungle is what, on one of its aspects, the Other World is like, and so it transports me, it makes me see with eyes that transfigure a work of art into something else, something beyond art.

I remember – very vividly, though it took place many years ago – a conversation with Roger Fry. We were talking about Monet's 'Water Lilies.' They had no right, Roger kept insisting, to be so shockingly unorganized, so totally without a proper compositional skeleton. They were all wrong, artistically speaking. And yet, he had to admit, and yet... And yet, as I should now say, they were transporting. An artist of astounding virtuosity had chosen to paint a close-up of natural objects seen in their own context and without reference to merely human notions of what's what, or what ought to be what. Man, we like to say, is the measure of all things. For Monet, on this occasion, water lilies were the measure of water lilies; and so he painted them.

The same non-human point of view must be adopted by any artist who tries to render the distant scene. How tiny, in the Chinese painting, are the travellers who make their way along the valley! How frail the bamboo hut on the slope above them! And all the rest of the vast landscape is emptiness and silence. This revelation of the wilderness, living its own life according to the laws of its own being, transports the mind towards its antipodes; for primeval Nature bears a strange resemblance to that inner world where no account is taken of our personal wishes or even of the enduring concerns of man in general.

Only the middle distance and what may be called the remoter foreground are strictly human. When we look very near or very far, man either vanishes altogether or loses his primacy. The astronomer looks even further afield than the Sung painter and sees even less of human life. At the other end of the scale the physicist, the chemist, the physiologist pursue the close-up – the cellular close-up, the molecular, the atomic and subatomic. Of that which, at twenty feet, even at arm's length, looked and sounded like a human being no trace remains.

Something analogous happens to the myopic artist and the happy lover. In the nuptial embrace personality is melted down; the individual (it is the recurrent theme of Lawrence's poems and novels) ceases to be himself and becomes a part of the vast impersonal universe.

And so it is with the artist who chooses to use his eyes at the near point. In his work humanity loses its importance, even disappears completely. Instead of men and women playing their fantastic tricks before high heaven, we are asked to consider the lilies, to meditate on the unearthly beauty of 'mere things,' when isolated from their utilitarian context and rendered as they are, in and for themselves. Alternatively (or, at an earlier stage of artistic development, exclusively), the nonhuman world of the near-point is rendered in patterns. These patterns are abstracted for the most part from leaves and flowers – the rose, the lotus, the acanthus, palm, papyrus – and are elaborated, with recurrences and variations, into something transportingly reminiscent of the living geometries of the Other World.

Freer and more realistic treatments of Nature at the near-point make their appearance at a relatively recent date – but far earlier than those treatments of the distant scene, to which alone (and mistakenly) we give the name of landscape painting. Rome, for example, had its close-up landscapes. The fresco of a garden, which once adorned a room in Livia's villa, is a magnificent example of this form of art.

For theological reasons, Islam had to be content, for the most part, with 'arabesques' – luxuriant and (as in visions) continually varying patterns, based upon natural objects seen at the near-point. But even in Islam the genuine close-up landscape was not unknown. Nothing can exceed in beauty and in vision-inducing power the mosaics of gardens and buildings in the great Omayyad mosque at Damascus.

In mediaeval Europe, despite the prevailing mania for turning every datum into a concept, every immediate experience into a mere symbol of something in a book, realistic close-ups of foliage and flowers were fairly common. We find them carved on the capitals of Gothic pillars, as in the Chapter House of Southwell Minster. We find them in paintings of the chase – paintings whose subject was that ever present fact of mediaeval life, the forest, seen as the hunter or the strayed traveller sees it, in all its bewildering intricacy of leafy detail.

The frescoes in the papal palace at Avignon are almost the sole survivors of what, even in the time of Chaucer, was a widely practised form of secular art. A century later this art of the forest close-up came to its self-conscious perfection in such magnificent and magical works as Pisanello's St Hubert and Paolo Uccello's Hunt in a Wood, now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. Closely related to the wall paintings of forest close-ups were the tapestries, with which the rich men of northern Europe adorned their houses. The best of these are vision-inducing works of the highest order. In their own way they are as heavenly, as powerfully reminiscent of what goes on at the mind's antipodes, as are the great masterpieces of landscape painting at the furthest point – Sung mountains in their enormous solitude, Ming rivers interminably lovely, the blue sub-Alpine world of Titian's distances, the England of Constable; the Italies of Turner and Corot; the Provinces of Cézanne and Van Gogh; the Île de France of Sisley and the Île de France of Vuillard.

Vuillard, incidentally, was a supreme master both of the transporting close-up and of the transporting distant view. His bourgeois interiors are masterpieces of vision-

inducing art, compared with which the works of such conscious and so to say professional visionaries as Blake and Odilon Redon seem feeble in the extreme. In Vuillard's interiors every detail however trivial, however hideous even – the pattern of the late Victorian wallpaper, the Art Nouveau bibelot, the Brussels carpet – is seen and rendered as a living jewel; and all these jewels are harmoniously combined into a whole which is a jewel of a yet higher order of visionary intensity. And when the upper middle-class inhabitants of Vuillard's New Jerusalem go for a walk, they find themselves not, as they had supposed, in the department of Seine et Oise, but in the Garden of Eden, in an Other World which is yet essentially the same as this world, but transfigured and therefore transporting.

I have spoken so far only of the blissful visionary experience and of its interpretation in terms of theology, its translation into art. But visionary experience is not always blissful. It is sometimes terrible. There is hell as well as heaven.

Like heaven, the visionary hell has its praeternatural light and its praeternatural significance. But the significance is intrinsically appalling and the light is 'the smoky light' of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, the 'darkness visible' of Milton. In the *Journal d'une Schizophrène*, the autobiographical record of a young girl's passage through madness, the world of the schizophrenic is called *le Pays d'Éclairement* – 'the country of lit-upness.' It is a name which a mystic might have used to denote his heaven.

But for poor Renée, the schizophrenic, the illumination is infernal – an intense electric glare without a shadow, ubiquitous and implacable. Everything that, for healthy visionaries, is a source of bliss, brings to Renée only fear and a nightmarish sense of unreality. The summer sunshine is malignant; the gleam of polished surfaces is suggestive, not of gems, but of machinery and enamelled tin; the intensity of existence which animates every object, when seen at close range and out of its utilitarian context, is felt as a menace.

And then there is the horror of infinity. For the healthy visionary, the perception of the infinite in a finite particular is a revelation of divine immanence; for Renée, it was a revelation of what she calls 'the System,' the vast cosmic mechanism which exists only to grind out guilt and punishment, solitude and unreality.'

Sanity is a matter of degree, and there are plenty of visionaries who see the world as Renée saw it, but contrive, none the less, to live outside the asylum. For them, as for the positive visionary, the universe is transfigured – but for the worse. Everything in it, from the stars in the sky to the dust under their feet, is unspeakably sinister or disgusting; every event is charged with a hateful significance; every object manifests the presence of an Indwelling Horror, infinite, all-powerful, eternal.

This negatively transfigured world has found its way, from time to time, into literature and the arts. It writhed and threatened in Van Gogh's later landscapes; it was the setting and the theme of all Kafka's stories; it was Géricault's spiritual home; it was inhabited by Goya during the years of his deafness and solitude; it was glimpsed by Browning when he wrote *Childe Roland*; it had its place, over against the theophanies, in the novels of Charles Williams.

The negative visionary experience is often accompanied by bodily sensations of a very special and characteristic kind. Blissful visions are generally associated with a sense of separation from the body, a feeling of deindividualization. (It is, no doubt, this feeling of deindividualization which makes it possible for the Indians who practise the peyote cult to use the drug not merely as a short cut to the visionary world, but also as an instrument for creating a loving solidarity within the participating group.) When the visionary experience is terrible and the world is transfigured for the worse, individualization is intensified and the negative visionary finds himself associated with a body that seems to grow progressively more dense, more tightly packed, until he finds himself at last reduced to being the agonized consciousness of an inspissated lump of matter, no bigger than a stone that can be held between the hands.

It is worth remarking, that many of the punishments described in the various accounts of hell are punishments of pressure and constriction. Dante's sinners are buried in mud, shut up in the trunks of trees, frozen solid in blocks of ice, crushed beneath stones. The *Inferno* is psychologically true. Many of its pains are experienced by schizophrenics, and by those who have taken mescaline or lysergic acid under unfavourable conditions.

What is the nature of these unfavourable conditions? How and why is heaven turned into hell? In certain cases the negative visionary experience is the result of predominantly physical causes. Mescaline tends, after ingestion, to accumulate in the liver. If the liver is diseased, the associated mind may find itself in hell. But what is more important for our present purposes is the fact that negative visionary experience may be induced by purely psychological means. Fear and anger bar the way to the heavenly Other World and plunge the mescaline taker into hell.

And what is true of the mescaline taker is also true of the person who sees visions spontaneously or under hypnosis. Upon this psychological foundation has been reared the theological doctrine of saving faith – a doctrine to be met with in all the great religious traditions of the world. Eschatologists have always found it difficult to reconcile their rationality and their morality with the brute facts of psychological experience. As rationalists and moralists, they feel that good behaviour should be rewarded and that the virtuous deserve to go to heaven. But as psychologists they know that virtue is not the sole or sufficient condition of blissful visionary experience. They know that works alone are powerless and that it is faith, or loving confidence, which guarantees that visionary experience shall be blissful.

Negative emotions – the fear which is the absence of confidence, the hatred, anger or malice which exclude love – are the guarantee that visionary experience, if and when it comes, shall be appalling. The Pharisee is a virtuous man; but his virtue is of the kind which is compatible with negative emotion. His visionary experiences are therefore likely to be infernal rather than blissful.

The nature of the mind is such that the sinner who repents and makes an act of faith in a higher power is more likely to have a blissful visionary experience than is the self-satisfied pillar of society with his righteous indignations, his anxiety about possessions

and pretensions, his ingrained habits of blaming, despising and condemning. Hence the enormous importance attached, in all the great religious traditions, to the state of mind at the moment of death.

Visionary experience is not the same as mystical experience. Mystical experience is beyond the realm of opposites. Visionary experience is still within that realm. Heaven entails hell, and 'going to heaven' is no more liberation than is the descent into horror. Heaven is merely a vantage point from which the divine Ground can be more clearly seen than on the level of ordinary individualized existence.

If consciousness survives bodily death, it survives, presumably, on every mental level – on the level of mystical experience, on the level of blissful visionary experience, on the level of infernal visionary experience, and on the level of everyday individual existence.

In life, even the blissful visionary experience tends to change its sign if it persists too long. Many schizophrenics have their times of heavenly happiness; but the fact that (unlike the mescaline taker) they do not know when, if ever, they will be permitted to return to the reassuring banality of everyday experience causes even heaven to seem appalling. But for those who, for whatever reason, are appalled, heaven turns into hell, bliss into horror, the Clear Light into the hateful glare of the land of lit-upness.

Something of the same kind may happen in the posthumous state. After having had a glimpse of the unbearable splendour of ultimate Reality, and after having shuttled back and forth between heaven and hell, most souls find it possible to retreat into that more reassuring region of the mind, where they can use their own and other people's wishes, memories and fancies to construct a world very like that in which they lived on earth.

Of those who die an infinitesimal minority are capable of immediate union with the divine Ground, a few are capable of supporting the visionary bliss of heaven, a few find themselves in the visionary horrors of hell and are unable to escape; the great majority end up in the kind of world described by Swedenborg and the mediums. From this world it is doubtless possible to pass, when the necessary conditions have been fulfilled, to worlds of visionary bliss or the final enlightenment.

My own guess is that modern spiritualism and ancient tradition are both correct. There is a posthumous state of the kind described in Sir Oliver Lodge's book, *Raymond*; but there is also a heaven of blissful visionary experience; there is also a hell of the same kind of appalling visionary experience as is suffered here by schizophrenics and some of those who take mescaline and there is also an experience, beyond time, of union with the divine Ground.

Appendix I

TWO OTHER, LESS effective aids to visionary experience deserve mention – carbon dioxide and the stroboscopic lamp. A mixture (completely non-toxic) of seven

parts of oxygen and three of carbon dioxide produces, in those who inhale it, certain physical and psychological changes, which have been exhaustively described by Meduna. Among these changes the most important, in our present context, is a marked enhancement of the ability to 'see things,' when the eyes are closed. In some cases only swirls of patterned colour are seen. In others there may be vivid recalls of past experiences. (Hence the value of CO₂ as a therapeutic agent.) In yet other cases carbon dioxide transports the subject to the Other World at the antipodes of his everyday consciousness, and he enjoys very briefly visionary experiences entirely unconnected with his own personal history or with the problems of the human race in general.

In the light of these facts it becomes easy to understand the rationale of yogic breathing exercises. Practised systematically, these exercises result, after a time, in prolonged suspensions of breath. Long suspensions of breath lead to a high concentration of carbon dioxide in the lungs and blood, and this increase in the concentration of CO₂ lowers the efficiency of the brain as a reducing valve and permits the entry into consciousness of experiences, visionary or mystical, from 'out there.'

Prolonged and continuous shouting or singing may produce similar, but less strongly marked, results. Unless they are highly trained, singers tend to breathe out more than they breathe in. Consequently the concentration of carbon dioxide in the alveolar air and the blood is increased and, the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve being lowered, visionary experience becomes possible. Hence the interminable 'vain repetitions' of magic and religion. The chanting of the curandero, the medicine-man, the shaman; the endless psalm-singing and sutra-intoning of Christian and Buddhist monks; the shouting and howling, hour after hour, of revivalists – under all the diversities of theological belief and aesthetic convention, the psychochemico-physiological intention remains constant. To increase the concentration of CO₂ in the lungs and blood and so to lower the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve, until it will admit biologically useless material from Mind-at-Large – this, though the shouters, singers and mutterers did not know it, has been at all times the real purpose and point of magic spells, of mantrams, litanies, psalms and sutras. 'The heart,' said Pascal, 'has its reasons.' Still more cogent and much harder to unravel are the reasons of the lungs, the blood and the enzymes, of neurones and synapses. The way to the superconscious is through the subconscious, and the way, or at least one of the ways, to the subconscious is through the chemistry of individual cells.

With the stroboscopic lamp we descend from chemistry to the still more elementary realm of physics. Its rhythmically flashing light seems to act directly, through the optic nerves, on the electrical manifestations of the brain's activity. (For this reason there is always a slight danger involved in the use of the stroboscopic lamp. Some persons suffer from petit mal without being made aware of the fact by any clear-cut and unmistakable symptoms. Exposed to a stroboscopic lamp, such persons may go into a full-blown epileptic fit. The risk is not very great; but it must always be recognized. One case in eighty may turn out badly.

To sit, with eyes closed, in front of a stroboscopic lamp is a very curious and fascinating experience. No sooner is the lamp turned on than the most brilliantly coloured patterns make themselves visible. These patterns are not static, but change incessantly. Their prevailing colour is a function of the stroboscope's rate of discharge. When the lamp is flashing at any speed between ten to fourteen or fifteen times a second, the patterns are prevailingly orange and red. Green and blue make their appearance when the rate exceeds fifteen flashes a second. After eighteen or nineteen, the patterns become white and grey. Precisely why we should see such patterns under the stroboscope is not known. The most obvious explanation would be in terms of the interference of two or more rhythms – the rhythm of the lamp and the various rhythms of the brain's electrical activity. Such interferences may be translated by the visual centre and optic nerves into something, of which the mind becomes conscious as a coloured, moving pattern. Far more difficult to explain is the fact, independently observed by several experimenters, that the stroboscope tends to enrich and intensify the visions induced by mescaline or lysergic acid. Here, for example, is a case communicated to me by a medical friend. He had taken lysergic acid and was seeing, with his eyes shut, only coloured, moving patterns. Then he sat down in front of a stroboscope. The lamp was turned on and, immediately, abstract geometry was transformed into what my friend described as 'Japanese landscapes' of surpassing beauty. But how on earth can the interference of two rhythms produce an arrangement of electrical impulses interpretable as a living, self-modulating Japanese landscape unlike anything the subject has ever seen, suffused with praeternatural light and colour, and charged with praeternatural significance?

This mystery is merely a particular case of a larger, more comprehensive mystery – the nature of the relations between visionary experience and events on the cellular, chemical and electrical levels. By touching certain areas of the brain with a very fine electrode, Penfield has been able to induce the recall of a long chain of memories relating to some past experience. This recall is not merely accurate on every perceptual detail; it is also accompanied by all the emotions which were aroused by the events when they originally occurred. The patient, who is under a local anaesthetic, finds himself simultaneously in two times and places – in the operating room, now, and in his childhood home, hundreds of miles away and thousands of days in the past. Is there, one wonders, some area in the brain from which the probing electrode could elicit Blake's Cherubim, or Weir Mitchell's self-transforming Gothic tower encrusted with living gems, or my friend's unspeakably lovely Japanese landscapes? And if as I myself believe, visionary experiences enter our consciousness from somewhere 'out there' in the infinity of Mind-at-Large, what sort of an ad hoc neurological pattern is created for them by the receiving and transmitting brain? And what happens to this ad hoc pattern, when the vision is over? Why do all visionaries insist on the impossibility of recalling, in anything even faintly resembling its original form and intensity, their transfiguring experiences? How many questions – and, as yet, how few answers!

Appendix II

IN THE WESTERN world visionaries and mystics are a good deal less common than they used to be. There are two principal reasons for this state of affairs – a philosophical reason and a chemical reason. In the currently fashionable picture of the universe there is no place for valid transcendental experience. Consequently those who have had what they regard as valid transcendental experiences are looked upon with suspicion, as being either lunatics or swindlers. To be a mystic or a visionary is no longer creditable.

But it is not only our mental climate that is unfavourable to the visionary and the mystic; it is also our chemical environment – an environment profoundly different from that in which our forefathers passed their lives.

The brain is chemically controlled, and experience has shown that it can be made permeable to the (biologically speaking) superfluous aspects of Mind-at-Large by modifying the (biologically speaking) normal chemistry of the body.

For almost half of every year our ancestors ate no fruit, no green vegetables and (since it was impossible for them to feed more than a few oxen, cows, swine and poultry during the winter months) very little butter or fresh meat, and very few eggs. By the beginning of each successive spring, most of them were suffering, mildly or acutely, from scurvy, due to lack of vitamin C, and pellagra, caused by a shortage in their diet of the B complex. The distressing physical symptoms of these diseases are associated with no less distressing psychological symptoms.

The nervous system is more vulnerable than the other tissues of the body; consequently vitamin deficiencies tend to affect the state of mind before they affect, at least in any very obvious way, the skin, bones, mucous membranes, muscles and viscera. The first result of an inadequate diet is a lowering of the efficiency of the brain as an instrument for biological survival. The undernourished person tends to be afflicted by anxiety, depression, hypochondria and feelings of anxiety. He is also liable to see visions; for when the cerebral reducing valve has its efficiency reduced, much (biologically speaking) useless material flows into consciousness from ‘out there,’ in Mind-at-Large.

Much of what the earlier visionaries experienced was terrifying. To use the language of Christian theology, the Devil revealed himself in their visions and ecstasies a good deal more frequently than did God. In an age when vitamins were deficient and a belief in Satan universal, this was not surprising. The mental distress, associated with even mild cases of pellagra and scurvy, was deepened by fears of damnation and a conviction that the powers of evil were omnipresent. This distress was apt to tinge with its own dark colouring the visionary material, admitted to consciousness through a cerebral valve whose efficiency had been impaired by underfeeding. But in spite of their preoccupations with eternal punishment and in spite of their deficiency disease, spiritually minded ascetics often saw heaven and might even be aware, occasionally, of that divinely impartial One, in which the polar opposites are reconciled. For a glimpse of beatitude, for a foretaste of unitive knowledge, no price seemed too high.

Mortification of the body may produce a host of undesirable mental symptoms; but it may also open a door into a transcendental world of Being, Knowledge and Bliss. That is why, in spite of its obvious disadvantages, almost all aspirants to the spiritual life have, in the past, undertaken regular courses of bodily mortification.

So far as vitamins were concerned, every mediaeval winter was a long involuntary fast, and this involuntary fast was followed, during Lent, by forty days of voluntary abstinence. Holy Week found the faithful marvellously well prepared, so far as their body chemistry was concerned, for its tremendous incitements to grief and joy, for seasonable remorse of conscience and a self-transcending identification with the risen Christ. At this season of the highest religious excitement and the lowest vitamin intake, ecstasies and visions were almost a commonplace. It was only to be expected.

For cloistered contemplatives, there were several Lents in every year. And even between fasts their diet was meagre in the extreme. Hence those agonies of depression and scrupulosity described by so many spiritual writers; hence their frightful temptations to despair and self-slaughter. But hence too those 'gratuitous graces,' in the form of heavenly visions and locutions, of prophetic insights, of telepathic 'discernments of spirits.' And hence, finally, their 'infused contemplation,' their 'obscure knowledge' of the One in all.

Fasting was not the only form of physical mortification resorted to by the earlier aspirants to spirituality. Most of them regularly used upon themselves the whip of knotted leather or even of iron wire. These beatings were the equivalent of fairly extensive surgery without anaesthetics, and their effects on the body chemistry of the penitent were considerable. Large quantities of histamine and adrenalin were released while the whip was actually being plied; and when the resulting wounds began to fester (as wounds practically always did before the age of soap), various toxic substances, produced by the decomposition of protein, found their way into the bloodstream. But histamine produces shock, and shock affects the mind no less profoundly than the body. Moreover, large quantities of adrenalin may cause hallucinations, and some of the products of its decomposition are known to induce symptoms resembling those of schizophrenia. As for toxins from wounds – these upset the enzyme systems regulating the brain, and lower its efficiency as an instrument for getting on in a world where the biologically fittest survive. This may explain why the Curé d'Ars used to say that, in the days when he was free to flagellate himself without mercy, God would refuse him nothing. In other words, when remorse, self-loathing and the fear of hell release adrenalin, when self-inflicted surgery releases adrenalin and histamine and when infected wounds release decomposed protein into the blood, the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve is lowered and unfamiliar aspects of Mind-at-Large (including psi phenomena, visions and, if he is philosophically and ethically prepared for it, mystical experiences) will flow into the ascetic's consciousness.

Lent, as we have seen, followed a long period of involuntary fasting. Analogously, the effects of self-flagellation were supplemented, in earlier times, by much involuntary absorption of decomposed protein. Dentistry was non-existent, surgeons were execu-

tioners and there were no safe antiseptics. Most people, therefore, must have lived out their lives with focal infections; and focal infections, though out of fashion as the cause of all the ills that flesh is heir to, can certainly lower the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve.

And the moral of all this is – what? Exponents of a Nothing-But philosophy will answer that, since changes in body chemistry can create the conditions favourable to visionary and mystical experience, visionary and mystical experience cannot be what they claim to be – what, for those who have had them, they self-evidently are. But this, of course, is a non sequitur.

A similar conclusion will be reached by those whose philosophy is unduly ‘spiritual.’ God, they will insist, is a spirit and is to be worshipped in spirit. Therefore an experience which is chemically conditioned cannot be an experience of the divine. But, in one way or another, all our experiences are chemically conditioned, and if we imagine that some of them are purely ‘spiritual,’ purely ‘intellectual,’ purely ‘aesthetic,’ it is merely because we have never troubled to investigate the internal chemical environment at the moment of their occurrence. Furthermore, it is a matter of historical record that most contemplatives worked systematically to modify their body chemistry, with a view to creating the internal conditions favourable to spiritual insight. When they were not starving themselves into low blood sugar and a vitamin deficiency, or beating themselves into intoxication by histamine, adrenalin and decomposed protein, they were cultivating insomnia and praying for long periods in uncomfortable positions, in order to create the psycho-physical symptoms of stress. In the intervals they sang interminable psalms, thus increasing the amount of carbon dioxide in the lungs and the blood-stream, or, if they were Orientals, they did breathing exercises to accomplish the same purpose. Today we know how to lower the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve by direct chemical action, and without the risk of inflicting serious damage on the psycho-physical organism. For an aspiring mystic to revert, in the present state of knowledge, to prolonged fasting and violent self-flagellation would be as senseless as it would be for an aspiring cook to behave like Charles Lamb’s Chinaman, who burned down the house in order to roast a pig. Knowing as he does (or at least as he can know, if he so desires) what are the chemical conditions of transcendental experience, the aspiring mystic should turn for technical help to the specialists – in pharmacology, in biochemistry, in physiology and neurology, in psychology and psychiatry and parapsychology. And on their part, of course, the specialists (if any of them aspire to be genuine men of science and complete human beings) should turn, out of their respective pigeon-holes, to the artist, the sibyl, the visionary, the mystic – all those, in a word, who have had experience of the Other World and who know, in their different ways, what to do with that experience.

Appendix III

VISION-LIKE EFFECTS AND vision-inducing devices have played a greater part in popular entertainment than in the fine arts. Fireworks, pageantry, theatrical spectacle – these are essentially visionary arts. Unfortunately they are also ephemeral arts, whose earlier masterpieces are known to us only by report. Nothing remains of all the Roman triumphs, the mediaeval tournaments, the Jacobean masques, the long succession of state entries and coronations, of royal marriages and solemn decapitations, of canonizations and the funerals of Popes. The best that can be hoped for such magnificences is that they may ‘live in Settle’s numbers one day more.’

An interesting feature of these popular visionary arts is their close dependence upon contemporary technology. Fireworks, for example, were once no more than bonfires (and to this day, I may add, a good bonfire on a dark night remains one of the most magical and transporting of spectacles. Looking at it, one can understand the mentality of the Mexican peasant, who sets out to burn an acre of woodland in order to plant his maize, but is delighted when, by a happy accident, a square mile or two goes up in bright, apocalyptic flame). True pyrotechny began (in Europe at least, if not in China) with the use of combustibles in sieges and naval battles. From war it passed, in due course, to entertainment. Imperial Rome had its firework displays, some of which, even in its decline, were elaborate in the extreme. Here is Claudian’s description of the show put on by Manlius Theodorus in A.D. 399.

Mobile ponderibus descendat pegma reductis
inque chori speciem spargentes ardua flammas
scaena rotet varios, et fingat Mulciber orbis
per tabulas impune vagos pictaeque citato
ludant igne trabes, et non permissa morari
fida per innocuas errent incendia turre.

‘Let the counterweights be removed,’ Mr Platnauer translates with a straightforwardness of language that does less than justice to the syntactical extravagances of the original, ‘and let the mobile crane descend, lowering on to the lofty stage men who, wheeling chorus-wise, scatter flames. Let Vulcan forge balls of fire to roll innocuously across the boards. Let the flames appear to play about the sham beams of the scenery and a tame conflagration, never allowed to rest, wander among the untouched towers.’

After the fall of Rome, pyrotechny became, once more, exclusively a military art. Its greatest triumph was the invention by Callinicus, about A.D. 650, of the famous Greek Fire – the secret weapon which enabled a dwindling Byzantine Empire to hold out for so long against its enemies.

During the Renaissance fireworks re-entered the world of popular entertainment. With every advance in the science of chemistry, they became more and more brilliant. By the middle of the nineteenth century pyrotechny had reached a peak of technical perfection and was capable of transporting vast multitudes of spectators towards the visionary antipodes of minds which, consciously, were respectable Methodist, Puseyites,

Utilitarians, disciples of Mill or Marx, of Newman, or Bradlaugh, or Samuel Smiles. In the Piazza del Popolo, at Ranelagh and the Crystal Palace, on every Fourth and Fourteenth of July, the popular subconscious was reminded by the crimson glare of strontium, by copper blue and barium green and sodium yellow, of that Other World, down under, in the psychological equivalent of Australia.

Pageantry is a visionary art which has been used, from time immemorial, as a political instrument. The gorgeous fancy dress worn by Kings, Popes and their respective retainers, military and ecclesiastical, has a very practical purpose – to impress the lower classes with a lively sense of their masters' superhuman greatness. By means of fine clothes and solemn ceremonies, *de facto* domination is transformed into a rule not merely *de jure*, but positively, *de jure divino*. The crowns and tiaras, the assorted jewellery, the satins, silks and velvets, the gaudy uniforms and vestments, the crosses and medals, the sword hilts and the croziers, the plumes in the cocked hats and their clerical equivalents, those huge feather fans which make every papal function look like a tableau from *Aida* – all these are vision-inducing properties, designed to make all too human gentlemen and ladies look like heroes, demigoddesses and seraphs, and giving, in the process, a great deal of innocent pleasure to all concerned, actors and spectators alike.

In the course of the last two hundred years the technology of artificial lighting has made enormous progress, and this progress has contributed very greatly to the effectiveness of pageantry and the closely related art of theatrical spectacle. The first notable advance was made in the eighteenth century, with the introduction of moulded spermaceti candles in place of the older tallow dip and poured wax taper. Next came the invention of Argand's tubular wick, with an air supply on the inner as well as the outer surface of the flame. Glass chimneys speedily followed, and it became possible, for the first time in history, to burn oil with a bright and completely smokeless light. Coal gas was first employed as an illuminant in the early years of the nineteenth century, and in 1825 Thomas Drummond found a practical way of heating lime to incandescence by means of an oxygen-hydrogen or oxygen-coal gas flame. Meanwhile parabolic reflectors for concentrating light into a narrow beam had come into use. (The first English lighthouse equipped with such a reflector was built in 1790.)

The influence on pageantry and theatrical spectacle of these inventions was profound. In earlier times civic and religious ceremonies could only take place during the day (and days were as often cloudy as fine), or by the light, after sunset, of smoky lamps and torches or the feeble twinkling of candles. Argand and Drummond, gas, limelight and, forty years later, electricity made it possible to evoke, from the boundless chaos of night, rich island universes, in which the glitter of metal and gems, the sumptuous glow of velvets and brocades were intensified to the highest pitch of what may be called intrinsic significance. A recent example of ancient pageantry, raised by twentieth-century lighting to a higher magical power, was the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. In the motion picture of the event, a ritual of transporting splendour was saved from the oblivion which, up till now, has always been the fate of such solemnities, and

preserved it, blazing praeternaturally under the floodlights, for the delight of a vast contemporary and future audience.

Two distinct and separate arts are practised in the theatre – the human art of the drama, and the visionary, other-world art of spectacle. Elements of the two arts may be combined in a single evening's entertainment – the drama being interrupted (as so often happens in elaborate productions of Shakespeare) to permit the audience to enjoy a tableau vivant, in which the actors either remain still or, if they move, move only in a non-dramatic way, ceremonially, processionally or in a formal dance. Our concern here is not with drama; it is with theatrical spectacle, which is simply pageantry without its political or religious overtones.

In the minor visionary arts of the costumier and the designer of stage jewellery our ancestors were consummate masters. Nor, for all their dependence on unassisted muscle power, were they far behind us in the building and working of stage machinery, the contrivance of 'special effects.' In the masques of Elizabethan and early Stuart times, divine descents and irruptions of demons from the cellars were a commonplace; so were apocalypses, so were the most amazing metamorphoses. Enormous sums of money were lavished on these spectacles. The Inns of Court, for example, put on a show for Charles I which cost more than twenty thousand pounds – at a date when the purchasing power of the pound was six or seven times what it is to-day.

'Carpentry,' said Ben Jonson sarcastically, 'is the soul of masque.' His contempt was motivated by resentment. Inigo Jones was paid as much for designing the scenery as was Ben for writing the libretto. The outraged laureate had evidently failed to grasp the fact that masque is a visionary art, and that visionary experience is beyond words (at any rate beyond all but the most Shakespearean words) and is to be evoked by direct, unmediated perceptions of things that remind the beholder of what is going on at the unexplored antipodes of his own personal consciousness. The soul of masque could never, in the very nature of things, be a Jonsonian libretto; it had to be carpentry. But even carpentry could not be the masque's whole soul. When it comes to us from within, visionary experience is always praeternaturally brilliant. But the early set designers possessed no manageable illuminant brighter than a candle. At close range a candle can create the most magical lights and contrasting shadows. The visionary paintings of Rembrandt and Georges de Latour are of things and persons seen by candlelight. Unfortunately light obeys the law of the inverse squares. At a safe distance from an actor in inflammable fancy dress, candles are hopelessly inadequate. At ten feet, for example, it would take one hundred of the best wax tapers to produce an effective illumination of one foot-candle. With such miserable lighting only a fraction of the masque's visionary potentialities could be made actual. Indeed, its visionary potentialities were not fully realized until long after it had ceased, in its original form, to exist. It was only in the nineteenth century, when advancing technology had equipped the theatre with limelight and parabolic reflectors, that the masque came fully into its own. Victoria's reign was the heroic age of the so called Christmas pantomime and the fantastic spectacle. 'Ali Baba,' 'The King of the Peacocks,' 'The

Golden Branch,' 'The Island of Jewels' – their very names are magical. The soul of that theatrical magic was carpentry and dressmaking; its indwelling spirit, its *scintilla animae*, was gas and limelight and, after the 'eighties, electricity. For the first time in the history of the stage, beams of brightest incandescence transfigured the painted backdrops, the costumes, the glass and pinchbeck of jewellery, so that they became capable of transporting the spectators towards that Other World which lies at the back of every mind, however perfect its adaptation to the exigencies of social life – even the social life of Mid-Victorian England. Today we are in the fortunate position of being able to squander half a million horsepower on the nightly illumination of a metropolis. And yet, in spite of this devaluation of artificial light, theatrical spectacle still retains its old compelling magic. Embodied in ballets, revues and musical comedies, the soul of masque goes marching along. Thousand-watt lamps and parabolic reflectors project beams of praeternatural light, and praeternatural light evokes, in everything it touches, praeternatural colour and praeternatural significance. Even the silliest spectacle can be rather wonderful. It is a case of a New World having been called in to redress the balance of the old – of visionary art making up for the deficiencies of all too human drama.

Athanasius Kircher's invention – if his, indeed, it was – was christened from the first *Laterna Magica*. The name was everywhere adopted as perfectly appropriate to a machine, whose raw material was light, and whose finished product was a coloured image emerging from the darkness. To make the original magic lantern show yet more magical, Kircher's successors devised a number of methods for imparting life and movement to the projected image. There were 'chromatropic' slides, in which two painted glass discs could be made to revolve in opposite directions, producing a crude but still effective imitation of those perpetually changing three-dimensional patterns, which have been seen by virtually everyone who has had a vision, whether spontaneous or induced by drugs, fasting or the stroboscopic lamp. Then there were those 'dissolving views,' which reminded the spectator of the metamorphoses going on incessantly at the antipodes of his everyday consciousness. To make one scene turn imperceptibly into another, two magic lanterns were used, projecting coincident images on the screen. Each lantern was fitted with a shutter, so arranged that the light of one could be progressively dimmed, while the light of the other (originally completely obscured) was progressively brightened. In this way the view projected by the first lantern was insensibly replaced by the view by the second – to the delight and astonishment of all beholders. Another device was the mobile magic lantern, projecting its image on a semi-transparent screen, on the further side of which sat the audience. When the lantern was wheeled close to the screen, the projected image was very small. As it was withdrawn, the image became progressively larger. An automatic focussing device kept the changing images sharp and unblurred at all distances. The word 'phantasmagoria' was coined in 1802 by the inventors of this new kind of peepshow.

All these improvements in the technology of magic lanterns were contemporary with the poets and painters of the Romantic Revival, and may perhaps have exercised a

certain influence on their choice of subject-matter and their methods of treating it. *Queen Mab* and *The Revolt of Islam*, for example, are full of Dissolving Views and Phantasmagorias. Keats's descriptions of scenes and persons, of interiors and furniture and effects of light, have the intense beamy quality of coloured images on a white sheet in a darkened room. John Martin's representations of Satan and Belshazzar, of Hell and Babylon and the Deluge, are manifestly inspired by lantern slides and tableaux vivants dramatically illuminated by limelight.

The twentieth-century equivalent of the magic lantern show is the coloured movie. In the huge, expensive 'spectaculars,' the soul of masque goes marching along – with a vengeance sometimes, but sometimes also with taste and a real feeling for vision-inducing phantasy. Moreover, thanks to advancing technology, the coloured documentary has proved itself, in skilful hands, a notable new form of popular visionary art. The immensely magnified cactus blossoms, into which, at the end of Disney's *The Living Desert*, the spectator finds himself sinking, come straight from the Other World. And then what transporting visions, in the best of the nature films, of foliage in the wind, of the textures of rock and sand, of the shadows and emerald lights in grass or among the reeds, of birds and insects and four-footed creatures going about their business in the underbrush or among the branches of forest trees! Here are the magical close-up landscapes which fascinated the makers of mille-feuille tapestries, the mediaeval painters of gardens and hunting scenes. Here are the enlarged and isolated details of living nature out of which the artists of the Far East made some of the most beautiful of their paintings.

And then there is what may be called the Distorted Documentary – a strange new form of visionary art, admirably exemplified by Mr Francis Thompson's film, 'NY, NY.' In this very strange and beautiful picture we see the city of New York as it appears when photographed through multiplying prisms, or reflected in the backs of spoons, polished hub caps, spherical and parabolic mirrors. We still recognize houses, people, shop fronts, taxi cabs, but recognize them as elements in one of those living geometries which are so characteristic of the visionary experience. The invention of this new cinematographic art seems to presage (thank heaven!) the supersession and early demise of non-representational painting. It is used to be said by the non-representationalists that coloured photography had reduced the old-fashioned portrait and the old-fashioned landscape to the rank of otiose absurdities. This, of course, is completely untrue. Coloured photography merely records and preserves, in an easily reproducible form, the raw materials with which portraitists and landscape painters work. Used as Mr Thompson has used it, coloured cinematography does much more than merely record and preserve the raw materials of non-representational art; it actually turns out the finished product. Looking at 'NY, NY,' I was amazed to see that virtually every pictorial device invented by the Old Masters of non-representational art and reproduced ad nauseam by the academicians and mannerists of the school, for the last forty years or more, makes its appearance, alive, glowing, intensely significant, in the sequences of Mr Thompson's film.

Our ability to project a powerful beam of light has not only enabled us to create new forms of visionary art; it has also endowed one of the most ancient arts, the art of sculpture, with a new visionary quality which it did not previously possess. I have spoken in an earlier paragraph of the magical effects produced by the floodlighting of ancient monuments and natural objects. Analogous effects are seen when we turn the spotlights on to sculptured stone. Fuseli got the inspiration from some of his best and wildest pictorial ideas by studying the statues on Monte Cavallo by the light of the setting sun, or, better still, when illuminated by lightning flashes at midnight. Today we dispose of artificial sunsets and synthetic lightning. We can illuminate our statues from whatever angle we choose, and with practically any desired degree of intensity. Sculpture, in consequence, has revealed fresh meanings and unsuspected beauties. Visit the Louvre one night, when the Greek and Egyptian antiquities are floodlit. You will meet with new gods, nymphs and Pharaohs, you will make the acquaintance, as one spotlight goes out and another, in a different quarter of space, is lit up, of a whole family of unfamiliar Victories of Samothrace.

The past is not something fixed and unalterable. Its facts are re-discovered by every succeeding generation, its values re-assessed, its meanings re-defined in the context of present tastes and preoccupations. Out of the same documents and monuments and works of art, every epoch invents its own Middle Ages, its private China, its patented and copyrighted Hellas. Today, thanks to recent advances in the technology of lighting, we can go one further than our predecessors. Not only have we reinterpreted the great works of sculpture bequeathed to us by the past; we have actually succeeded in altering the physical appearance of these works. Greek statues, as we see them illuminated by a light that never was on land or sea, and then photographed in a series of fragmentary close-ups from the oddest angles, bear almost no resemblance to the Greek statues seen by art critics and the general public in the dim galleries and decorous engravings of the past. The aim of the classical artist, in whatever period he may happen to live, is to impart order to the chaos of experience, to present a comprehensible, rational picture of reality in which all the parts are clearly seen and coherently related, so that the beholder knows (or, to be more accurate, imagines that he knows) precisely what's what. To us this ideal of rational orderliness makes no appeal. Consequently, when we are confronted by works of classical art, we use all the means in our power to make them look like something which they are not, and were never meant to be. From a work, whose whole point is its unity of conception, we select a single feature, focus our searchlights upon it and so force it, out of all context, upon the observer's consciousness. Where a contour seems to us too continuous, too obviously comprehensible, we break it up by alternating impenetrable shadows with patches of glaring brightness. When we photograph a sculptured figure or group, we use the camera to isolate a part which we then exhibit in enigmatic independence from the whole. By such means we can de-classicize the severest classic. Subjected to the light treatment and photographed by an expert cameraman, a Pheidias becomes a piece of Gothic expressionism, a Praxiteles

is turned into a fascinating *surréaliste* object dredged up from the ooziest depths of the subconscious. This may be bad art history, but it is certainly enormous fun.

Appendix IV

PAINTER IN ORDINARY first to the Duke of his native Lorraine and later to the King of France, Georges de Latour was treated, during his lifetime, as the great artist he so manifestly was. With the accession of Louis XIV and the rise, the deliberate cultivation, of a new Art of Versailles, aristocratic in subject-matter and lucidly classical in style, the reputation of this once famous man suffered an eclipse so complete that, within a couple of generations, his very name had been forgotten, and his surviving paintings came to be attributed to the Le Nains, to Honthorst, to Zurbaran, to Murillo, even to Velasquez. The rediscovery of Latour began in 1915 and was virtually complete by 1934, when the Louvre organized a notable exhibition of 'The Painters of Reality.' Ignored for nearly three hundred years, one of the greatest of French painters had come back to claim his rights.

Georges de Latour was one of those extroverted visionaries, whose art faithfully reflects certain aspects of the outer world, but reflects them in a state of transfiguration, so that every meanest particular becomes intrinsically significant, a manifestation of the absolute. Most of his compositions are of figures seen by the light of a single candle. A single candle, as Caravaggio and the Spaniards had shown, can give rise to the most enormous theatrical effects. But Latour took no interest in theatrical effects. There is nothing dramatic in his pictures, nothing tragic or pathetic or grotesque, no representation of action, no appeal to the sort of emotions which people go to the theatre to have excited and then appeased. His personages are essentially static. They never do anything; they are simply there in the same way in which a granite Pharaoh is there, or a Bodhisattva from Khmer, or one of Piero's flat-footed angels. And the single candle is used, in every case, to stress this intense but unexcited, impersonal thereness. By exhibiting common things in an uncommon light, its flame makes manifest the living mystery and inexplicable marvel of mere existence. There is so little religiosity in the paintings that in many cases it is impossible to decide whether we are confronted by an illustration to the Bible or a study of models by candlelight. Is the 'Nativity' at Rennes the nativity, or merely a nativity? Is the picture of an old man asleep under the eyes of a young girl merely that? Or is it of St Peter in prison being visited by the delivering angel? There is no way of telling. But though Latour's art is wholly without religiosity, it remains profoundly religious, in the sense that it reveals, with unexampled intensity, the divine omnipresence.

It must be added that, as a man, this great painter of God's immanence seems to have been proud, hard, intolerably overbearing and avaricious. Which goes to show, yet once more, that there is never a one-to-one correspondence between an artist's work and his character.

Appendix V

AT THE NEAR-POINT Vuillard painted interiors for the most part, but sometimes also gardens. In a few compositions he managed to combine the magic of propinquity with the magic of remoteness by representing a corner of a room, in which there stands or hangs one of his own, or someone else's, representation of a distant view of trees, hills and sky. It is an invitation to make the best of both worlds, the telescopic and the microscopic, at a single glance.

For the rest, I can think of only a very few close-up landscapes by modern European artists. There is a strange 'Thicket' by Van Gogh at the Metropolitan. There is Constable's wonderful 'Dell in Helmingham Park' at the Tate. There is a bad picture, Millais' 'Ophelia,' made magical, in spite of everything, by its intricacies of summer greenery seen from the point of view, very nearly, of a water rat. And I remember a Delacroix, glimpsed long ago at some Loan Exhibition, of bark and leaves and blossom at the closest range. There must, of course, be others; but either I have forgotten, or have never seen them. In any case there is nothing in the West comparable to the Chinese and Japanese renderings of nature at the near-point. A spray of blossoming plum, eighteen inches of bamboo stem with its leaves, tits or finches seen at hardly more than arm's length among the bushes, all kinds of flowers and foliage, of birds and fish and small mammals. Each small life is represented as the centre of its own universe, the purpose, in its own estimation, for which this world and all that is in it were created; each issues its own specific and individual declaration of independence from human imperialism; each, by ironic implication, derides our absurd pretensions to lay down merely human rules for the conduct of the cosmic game; each mutely repeats the divine tautology: I am that I am.

Nature at the middle distance is familiar – so familiar that we are deluded into believing that we really know what it is all about. Seen very close at hand, or at a great distance, or from an odd angle, it seems disquietingly strange, wonderful beyond all comprehension. The close-up landscapes of China and Japan are so many illustrations of the theme that Samsara and Nirvana are one, that the Absolute is manifest in every appearance. These great metaphysical, and yet pragmatic, truths were rendered by the Zen-inspired artists of the Far East in yet another way. All the objects of their near-point scrutiny were represented in a state of unrelatedness, against a blank of virgin silk or paper. Thus isolated, these transient appearances take on a kind of absolute Thing-in-Itselfhood. Western artists have used this device when painting sacred figures, portraits and, sometimes, natural objects at a distance. Rembrandt's 'Mill' and Van Gogh's 'Cypresses' are examples of long-range landscapes, in which a single feature has been absolutized by isolation. The magical power of many of Goya's etchings, drawings and paintings can be accounted for by the fact that his compositions almost always take the form of a few silhouettes, or even a single silhouette, seen against a blank. These silhouetted shapes possess the visionary quality of intrinsic significance, heightened by isolation and unrelatedness to praeternatural intensity.

In nature, as in a work of art, the isolation of an object tends to invest it with absoluteness, to endow it with that more-than-symbolic meaning which is identical with being.

But there's a tree – of many, one –

A single field which I have looked upon:

Both of them speak of something that is gone.

The something which Wordsworth could no longer see was 'the visionary gleam.' That gleam, I remember, and that intrinsic significance were the properties of a solitary oak that could be seen from the train, between Reading and Oxford, growing from the summit of a little knoll in a wide expanse of ploughland, and silhouetted against the pale northern sky.

The effects of isolation combined with proximity may be studied, in all their magical strangeness, in an extraordinary painting by a seventeenth-century Japanese artist, who was also a famous swordsman and a student of Zen. It represents a butcher bird, perched on the very tip of a naked branch, 'waiting without purpose, but in the state of highest tension.' Beneath, above and all around is nothing. The bird emerges from the Void, from that eternal namelessness and formlessness, which is yet the very substance of the manifold, concrete and transient universe. That shrike on its bare branch is first cousin to Hardy's wintry thrush. But whereas the Victorian thrush insists on teaching us some kind of a lesson, the Far Eastern butcher bird is content simply to exist, to be intensely and absolutely there.

Appendix VI

MANY SCHIZOPHRENICS PASS most of their time neither on earth, nor in heaven, nor even in hell, but in a grey, shadowy world of phantoms and unrealities. What is true of these psychotics is true, to a lesser extent, of certain neurotics afflicted by a milder form of mental illness. Recently it has been found possible to induce this state of ghostly existence by administering a small quantity of one of the derivatives of adrenalin. For the living, the doors of heaven, hell and limbo are opened, not by 'massy keys of metals twain,' but by the presence in the blood of one set of chemical compounds and the absence of another set. The shadow-world inhabited by some schizophrenics and neurotics closely resembles the world of the dead, as described in some of the earlier religious traditions. Like the wraiths in Sheol and in Homer's Hades, these mentally disturbed persons have lost touch with matter, language and their fellow beings. They have no purchase on life and are condemned to ineffectiveness, solitude and a silence broken only by the senseless squeak and gibber of ghosts.

The history of eschatological ideas marks a genuine progress – a progress which can be described in theological terms as the passage from Hades to Heaven, in chemical terms as the substitution of mescaline and lysergic acid for adrenolutin, and in psy-

chological terms as the advance from catatonia and feelings of unreality to a sense of heightened reality in vision and, finally, in mystical experience.

Appendix VII

GERICAULT WAS A negative visionary; for though his art was almost obsessively true to nature, it was true to a nature that had been magically transfigured, in his perceiving and rendering of it, for the worse. 'I start to paint a woman,' he once said, 'but it always ends up as a lion.' More often, indeed, it ended up as something a good deal less amiable than a lion – as a corpse, for example, or as a demon. His masterpiece, the prodigious 'Raft of the Medusa,' was painted not from life but from dissolution and decay – from bits of cadavers supplied by medical students, from the emaciated torso and jaundiced face of a friend who was suffering from a disease of the liver. Even the waves on which the raft is floating, even the overarching sky are corpse-coloured. It is as though the entire universe had become a dissecting room.

And then there are his demonic pictures. 'The Derby,' it is obvious, is being run in hell, against a background fairly blazing with darkness visible. 'The Horse startled by Lightning,' in the National Gallery, is the revelation, in a single frozen instant, of the strangeness, the sinister and even infernal otherness that hides in familiar things. In the Metropolitan Museum there is a portrait of a child. And what a child! In his luridly brilliant jacket the little darling is what Baudelaire liked to call 'a budding Satan,' un Satan en herbe. And the study of a naked man, also in the Metropolitan, is none other than the budding Satan grown up.

From the accounts which his friends have left of him it is evident that Géricault habitually saw the world about him as a succession of visionary apocalypses. The prancing horse of his early *Officier de Chasseurs* was seen one morning, on the road to Saint-Cloud, in a dusty glare of summer sunshine, rearing and plunging between the shafts of an omnibus. The personages in the 'Raft of the Medusa' were painted in finished detail, one by one, on the virgin canvas. There was no outline drawing of the whole composition, no gradual building up of an over-all harmony of tones and hues. Each particular revelation – of a body in decay, of a sick man in the ghastly extremity of hepatitis – was fully rendered as it was seen and artistically realized. By a miracle of genius, every successive apocalypse was made to fit, prophetically, into a harmonious composition which existed, when the first of the appalling visions was transferred to canvas, only in the artist's imagination.

Appendix VIII

IN SARTOR RESARTUS Carlyle has left what (in Mr Carlyle, my Patient) his psycho-somatic biographer, Dr James Halliday, calls 'an amazing description of a psychotic state of mind, largely depressive, but partly schizophrenic.'

'The men and women around me,' writes Carlyle, even speaking with me, were but Figures; I had practically forgotten that they were alive, that they were not merely automata. Friendship was but an incredible tradition. In the midst of their crowded streets and assemblages I walked solitary; and (except that it was my own heart, not another's, that I kept devouring) savage also as the tiger in the jungle... To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility; it was one huge, dead immeasurable steam-engine, rolling on in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb... Having no hope, neither had I any definite fear, were it of Man or of Devil. And yet, strangely enough, I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear, tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what; it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath, would hurt me; as if the Heavens and the Earth were but the boundless jaws of a devouring Monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited to be devoured.' Renée and the idolater of heroes are evidently describing the same experience. Infinity is apprehended by both, but in the form of 'the System,' the 'immeasurable Steam-Engine.' To both, again, all is significant, but negatively significant, so that every event is utterly pointless, every object intensely unreal, every self-styled human being a clockwork dummy, grotesquely going through the motions of work and play, of loving, hating, thinking, of being eloquent, heroic, saintly, what you will – the robots are nothing if not versatile.

Brave New World Revisited

This 1958 essay, written almost thirty years after the novel *Brave New World*, considers whether the world has moved toward or away from Huxley's initial vision of the future. He states when he wrote the original novel that it was a reasonable guess as to where the world might go in the future. In fact, Huxley concludes that the world is becoming like *Brave New World* much faster than he had originally thought.

Huxley analyses the causes of this, including overpopulation, as well as all the means by which populations can be controlled. Once again, he is particularly interested in the effects of drugs and subliminal suggestion. This essay is distinctly different in tone from the earlier text, partly due to his conversion to Hindu Vedanta in the interim between the two works. The last chapter proposes action that could be taken to prevent a democracy from turning into the totalitarian world described in *Brave New World*.

The first edition

Contents

- Foreword
- I. Over-Population
- II. Quantity, Quality, Morality
- III. Over-Organization
- IV. Propaganda in a Democratic Society
- V. Propaganda Under a Dictatorship
- VI. The Arts of Selling
- VII. Brainwashing
- VIII. Chemical Persuasion
- IX. Subconscious Persuasion
- X. Hypnopaedia
- XI. Education for Freedom
- XII. What Can Be Done?

Foreword

THE SOUL OF wit may become the very body of untruth. However elegant and memorable, brevity can never, in the nature of things, do justice to all the facts of a complex situation. On such a theme one can be brief only by omission and simplification. Omission and simplification help us to understand — but help us, in many cases, to understand the wrong thing; for our comprehension may be only of the abbreviator's neatly formulated notions, not of the vast, ramifying reality from which these notions have been so arbitrarily abstracted.

But life is short and information endless: nobody has time for everything. In practice we are generally forced to choose between an unduly brief exposition and no exposition at all. Abbreviation is a necessary evil and the abbreviator's business is to make the best of a job which, though intrinsically bad, is still better than nothing. He must learn to simplify, but not to the point of falsification. He must learn to concentrate upon the essentials of a situation, but without ignoring too many of reality's qualifying side issues. In this way he may be able to tell, not indeed the whole truth (for the whole truth about almost any important subject is incompatible with brevity), but considerably more than the dangerous quarter-truths and half-truths which have always been the current coin of thought.

The subject of freedom and its enemies is enormous, and what I have written is certainly too short to do it full justice; but at least I have touched on many aspects of the problem. Each aspect may have been somewhat oversimplified in the exposition; but these successive over-simplifications add up to a picture that, I hope, gives some hint of the vastness and complexity of the original.

Omitted from the picture (not as being unimportant, but merely for convenience and because I have discussed them on earlier occasions) are the mechanical and military enemies of freedom — the weapons and “hardware” which have so powerfully strengthened the hands of the world's rulers against their subjects, and the ever more ruinously costly preparations for ever more senseless and suicidal wars. The chapters that follow should be read against a background of thoughts about the Hungarian uprising and its repression, about H-bombs, about the cost of what every nation refers to as “defense,” and about those endless columns of uniformed boys, white, black, brown, yellow, marching obediently toward the common grave.

BRAVE NEW WORLD REVISITED

I. Over-Population

IN 1931, WHEN *Brave New World* was being written, I was convinced that there was still plenty of time. The completely organized society, the scientific caste system, the abolition of free will by methodical conditioning, the servitude made acceptable by regular doses of chemically induced happiness, the orthodoxies drummed in by nightly courses of sleep-teaching — these things were coming all right, but not in my time, not even in the time of my grandchildren. I forget the exact date of the events recorded in *Brave New World*; but it was somewhere in the sixth, or seventh century A.F. (After Ford). We who were living in the second quarter of the twentieth century A.D. were the inhabitants, admittedly, of a gruesome kind of universe; but the nightmare of those depression years was radically different from the nightmare of the future, described in *Brave New World*. Ours was a nightmare of too little order; theirs, in the seventh century A.F., of too much. In the process of passing from one extreme to the other, there would be a long interval, so I imagined, during which the more fortunate third of the human race would make the best of both worlds — the disorderly world of liberalism and the much too orderly *Brave New World* where perfect efficiency left no room for freedom or personal initiative.

Twenty-seven years later, in this third quarter of the twentieth century A.D., and long before the end of the first century A.F., I feel a good deal less optimistic than I did when I was writing *Brave New World*. The prophecies made in 1931 are coming true much sooner than I thought they would. The blessed interval between too little order and the nightmare of too much has not begun and shows no sign of beginning. In the West, it is true, individual men and women still enjoy a large measure of freedom. But even in those countries that have a tradition of democratic government, this freedom and even the desire for this freedom seem to be on the wane. In the rest of the world freedom for individuals has already gone, or is manifestly about to go. The nightmare of total organization, which I had situated in the seventh century After Ford, has emerged from the safe, remote future and is now awaiting us, just around the next corner.

George Orwell's 1984 was a magnified projection into the future of a present that contained Stalinism and an immediate past that had witnessed the flowering of Nazism. *Brave New World* was written before the rise of Hitler to supreme power in Germany and when the Russian tyrant had not yet got into his stride. In 1931 systematic terrorism was not the obsessive contemporary fact which it had become in 1948, and the future dictatorship of my imaginary world was a good deal less brutal than the future dictatorship so brilliantly portrayed by Orwell. In the context of 1948, 1984 seemed dreadfully convincing. But tyrants, after all, are mortal and circumstances change. Recent developments in Russia and recent advances in science and technology have robbed Orwell's book of some of its gruesome verisimilitude. A nuclear war will, of course, make nonsense of everybody's predictions. But, assuming for the moment that the Great Powers can somehow refrain from destroying us, we can say that it now

looks as though the odds were more in favor of something like *Brave New World* than of something like 1984.

In the light of what we have recently learned about animal behavior in general, and human behavior in particular, it has become clear that control through the punishment of undesirable behavior is less effective, in the long run, than control through the reinforcement of desirable behavior by rewards, and that government through terror works on the whole less well than government through the non-violent manipulation of the environment and of the thoughts and feelings of individual men, women and children. Punishment temporarily puts a stop to undesirable behavior, but does not permanently reduce the victim's tendency to indulge in it. Moreover, the psycho-physical by-products of punishment may be just as undesirable as the behavior for which an individual has been punished. Psychotherapy is largely concerned with the debilitating or anti-social consequences of past punishments.

The society described in 1984 is a society controlled almost exclusively by punishment and the fear of punishment. In the imaginary world of my own fable punishment is infrequent and generally mild. The nearly perfect control exercised by the government is achieved by systematic reinforcement of desirable behavior, by many kinds of nearly non-violent manipulation, both physical and psychological, and by genetic standardization. Babies in bottles and the centralized control of reproduction are not perhaps impossible; but it is quite clear that for a long time to come we shall remain a viviparous species breeding at random. For practical purposes genetic standardization may be ruled out. Societies will continue to be controlled postnatally — by punishment, as in the past, and to an ever increasing extent by the more effective methods of reward and scientific manipulation.

In Russia the old-fashioned, 1984-style dictatorship of Stalin has begun to give way to a more up-to-date form of tyranny. In the upper levels of the Soviets' hierarchical society the reinforcement of desirable behavior has begun to replace the older methods of control through the punishment of undesirable behavior. Engineers and scientists, teachers and administrators, are handsomely paid for good work and so moderately taxed that they are under a constant incentive to do better and so be more highly rewarded. In certain areas they are at liberty to think and do more or less what they like. Punishment awaits them only when they stray beyond their prescribed limits into the realms of ideology and politics. It is because they have been granted a measure of professional freedom that Russian teachers, scientists and technicians have achieved such remarkable successes. Those who live near the base of the Soviet pyramid enjoy none of the privileges accorded to the lucky or specially gifted minority. Their wages are meager and they pay, in the form of high prices, a disproportionately large share of the taxes. The area in which they can do as they please is extremely restricted, and their rulers control them more by punishment and the threat of punishment than through non-violent manipulation or the reinforcement of desirable behavior by reward. The Soviet system combines elements of 1984 with elements that are prophetic of what went on among the higher castes in *Brave New World*.

Meanwhile impersonal forces over which we have almost no control seem to be pushing us all in the direction of the Brave New Worldian nightmare; and this impersonal pushing is being consciously accelerated by representatives of commercial and political organizations who have developed a number of new techniques for manipulating, in the interest of some minority, the thoughts and feelings of the masses. The techniques of manipulation will be discussed in later chapters. For the moment let us confine our attention to those impersonal forces which are now making the world so extremely unsafe for democracy, so very inhospitable to individual freedom. What are these forces? And why has the nightmare, which I had projected into the seventh century A.F., made so swift an advance in our direction? The answer to these questions must begin where the life of even the most highly civilized society has its beginnings — on the level of biology.

On the first Christmas Day the population of our planet was about two hundred and fifty millions — less than half the population of modern China. Sixteen centuries later, when the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock, human numbers had climbed to a little more than five hundred millions. By the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, world population had passed the seven hundred million mark. In 1931, when I was writing *Brave New World*, it stood at just under two billions. Today, only twenty-seven years later, there are two billion eight hundred thousand of us. And tomorrow — what? Penicillin, DDT and clean water are cheap commodities, whose effects on public health are out of all proportion to their cost. Even the poorest government is rich enough to provide its subjects with a substantial measure of death control. Birth control is a very different matter. Death control is something which can be provided for a whole people by a few technicians working in the pay of a benevolent government. Birth control depends on the co-operation of an entire people. It must be practiced by countless individuals, from whom it demands more intelligence and will power than most of the world's teeming illiterates possess, and (where chemical or mechanical methods of contraception are used) an expenditure of more money than most of these millions can now afford. Moreover, there are nowhere any religious traditions in favor of unrestricted death, whereas religious and social traditions in favor of unrestricted reproduction are widespread. For all these reasons, death control is achieved very easily, birth control is achieved with great difficulty. Death rates have therefore fallen in recent years with startling suddenness. But birth rates have either remained at their old high level or, if they have fallen, have fallen very little and at a very slow rate. In consequence, human numbers are now increasing more rapidly than at any time in the history of the species.

Moreover, the yearly increases are themselves increasing. They increase regularly, according to the rules of compound interest; and they also increase irregularly with every application, by a technologically backward society of the principles of Public Health. At the present time the annual increase in world population runs to about forty-three millions. This means that every four years mankind adds to its numbers the equivalent of the present population of the United States, every eight and a half

years the equivalent of the present population of India. At the rate of increase prevailing between the birth of Christ and the death of Queen Elizabeth I, it took sixteen centuries for the population of the earth to double. At the present rate it will double in less than half a century. And this fantastically rapid doubling of our numbers will be taking place on a planet whose most desirable and productive areas are already densely populated, whose soils are being eroded by the frantic efforts of bad farmers to raise more food, and whose easily available mineral capital is being squandered with the reckless extravagance of a drunken sailor getting rid of his accumulated pay.

In the Brave New World of my fable, the problem of human numbers in their relation to natural resources had been effectively solved. An optimum figure for world population had been calculated and numbers were maintained at this figure (a little under two billions, if I remember rightly) generation after generation. In the real contemporary world, the population problem has not been solved. On the contrary it is becoming graver and more formidable with every passing year. It is against this grim biological background that all the political, economic, cultural and psychological dramas of our time are being played out. As the twentieth century wears on, as the new billions are added to the existing billions (there will be more than five and a half billions of us by the time my granddaughter is fifty), this biological background will advance, ever more insistently, ever more menacingly, toward the front and center of the historical stage. The problem of rapidly increasing numbers in relation to natural resources, to social stability and to the well-being of individuals — this is now the central problem of mankind; and it will remain the central problem certainly for another century, and perhaps for several centuries thereafter. A new age is supposed to have begun on October 4, 1957. But actually, in the present context, all our exuberant post-Sputnik talk is irrelevant and even nonsensical. So far as the masses of mankind are concerned, the coming time will not be the Space Age; it will be the Age of Over-population. We can parody the words of the old song and ask,

Will the space that you're so rich in
Light a fire in the kitchen,
Or the little god of space turn the spit, spit, spit?

The answer, it is obvious, is in the negative. A settlement on the moon may be of some military advantage to the nation that does the settling. But it will do nothing whatever to make life more tolerable, during the fifty years that it will take our present population to double, for the earth's undernourished and proliferating billions. And even if, at some future date, emigration to Mars should become feasible, even if any considerable number of men and women were desperate enough to choose a new life under conditions comparable to those prevailing on a mountain twice as high as Mount Everest, what difference would that make? In the course of the last four centuries quite a number of people sailed from the Old World to the New. But neither their departure nor the returning flow of food and raw materials could solve the problems of the Old World. Similarly the shipping of a few surplus humans to Mars (at a cost, for transportation and development, of several million dollars a head) will do nothing to

solve the problem of mounting population pressures on our own planet. Unsolved, that problem will render insoluble all our other problems. Worse still, it will create conditions in which individual freedom and the social decencies of the democratic way of life will become impossible, almost unthinkable. Not all dictatorships arise in the same way. There are many roads to Brave New World; but perhaps the straightest and the broadest of them is the road we are traveling today, the road that leads through gigantic numbers and accelerating increases. Let us briefly review the reasons for this close correlation between too many people, too rapidly multiplying, and the formulation of authoritarian philosophies, the rise of totalitarian systems of government.

As large and increasing numbers press more heavily upon available resources, the economic position of the society undergoing this ordeal becomes ever more precarious. This is especially true of those underdeveloped regions, where a sudden lowering of the death rate by means of DDT, penicillin and clean water has not been accompanied by a corresponding fall in the birth rate. In parts of Asia and in most of Central and South America populations are increasing so fast that they will double themselves in little more than twenty years. If the production of food and manufactured articles, of houses, schools and teachers, could be increased at a greater rate than human numbers, it would be possible to improve the wretched lot of those who live in these underdeveloped and over-populated countries. But unfortunately these countries lack not merely agricultural machinery and an industrial plant capable of turning out this machinery, but also the capital required to create such a plant. Capital is what is left over after the primary needs of a population have been satisfied. But the primary needs of most of the people in underdeveloped countries are never fully satisfied. At the end of each year almost nothing is left over, and there is therefore almost no capital available for creating the industrial and agricultural plant, by means of which the people's needs might be satisfied. Moreover, there is, in all these underdeveloped countries, a serious shortage of the trained manpower without which a modern industrial and agricultural plant cannot be operated. The present educational facilities are inadequate; so are the resources, financial and cultural, for improving the existing facilities as fast as the situation demands. Meanwhile the population of some of these underdeveloped countries is increasing at the rate of 3 per cent per annum.

Their tragic situation is discussed in an important book, published in 1957 — *The Next Hundred Years*, by Professors Harrison Brown, James Bonner and John Weir of the California Institute of Technology. How is mankind coping with the problem of rapidly increasing numbers? Not very successfully. "The evidence suggests rather strongly that in most underdeveloped countries the lot of the average individual has worsened appreciably in the last half century. People have become more poorly fed. There are fewer available goods per person. And practically every attempt to improve the situation has been nullified by the relentless pressure of continued population growth."

Whenever the economic life of a nation becomes precarious, the central government is forced to assume additional responsibilities for the general welfare. It must work

out elaborate plans for dealing with a critical situation; it must impose ever greater restrictions upon the activities of its subjects; and if, as is very likely, worsening economic conditions result in political unrest, or open rebellion, the central government must intervene to preserve public order and its own authority. More and more power is thus concentrated in the hands of the executives and their bureaucratic managers. But the nature of power is such that even those who have not sought it, but have had it forced upon them, tend to acquire a taste for more. "Lead us not into temptation," we pray — and with good reason; for when human beings are tempted too enticingly or too long, they generally yield. A democratic constitution is a device for preventing the local rulers from yielding to those particularly dangerous temptations that arise when too much power is concentrated in too few hands. Such a constitution works pretty well where, as in Britain or the United States, there is a traditional respect for constitutional procedures. Where the republican or limited monarchical tradition is weak, the best of constitutions will not prevent ambitious politicians from succumbing with glee and gusto to the temptations of power. And in any country where numbers have begun to press heavily upon available resources, these temptations cannot fail to arise. Over-population leads to economic insecurity and social unrest. Unrest and insecurity lead to more control by central governments and an increase of their power. In the absence of a constitutional tradition, this increased power will probably be exercised in a dictatorial fashion. Even if Communism had never been invented, this would be likely to happen. But Communism has been invented. Given this fact, the probability of over-population leading through unrest to dictatorship becomes a virtual certainty. It is a pretty safe bet that, twenty years from now, all the world's over-populated and underdeveloped countries will be under some form of totalitarian rule — probably by the Communist party.

How will this development affect the over-populated, but highly industrialized and still democratic countries of Europe? If the newly formed dictatorships were hostile to them, and if the normal flow of raw materials from the underdeveloped countries were deliberately interrupted, the nations of the West would find themselves in a very bad way indeed. Their industrial system would break down, and the highly developed technology, which up till now has permitted them to sustain a population much greater than that which could be supported by locally available resources, would no longer protect them against the consequences of having too many people in too small a territory. If this should happen, the enormous powers forced by unfavorable conditions upon central governments may come to be used in the spirit of totalitarian dictatorship.

The United States is not at present an over-populated country. If, however, the population continues to increase at the present rate (which is higher than that of India's increase, though happily a good deal lower than the rate now current in Mexico or Guatemala), the problem of numbers in relation to available resources might well become troublesome by the beginning of the twenty-first century. For the moment over-population is not a direct threat to the personal freedom of Americans. It remains, however, an indirect threat, a menace at one remove. If over-population should drive the

underdeveloped countries into totalitarianism, and if these new dictatorships should ally themselves with Russia, then the military position of the United States would become less secure and the preparations for defense and retaliation would have to be intensified. But liberty, as we all know, cannot flourish in a country that is permanently on a war footing, or even a near-war footing. Permanent crisis justifies permanent control of everybody and everything by the agencies of the central government. And permanent crisis is what we have to expect in a world in which over-population is producing a state of things, in which dictatorship under Communist auspices becomes almost inevitable.

II. Quantity, Quality, Morality

IN THE BRAVE New World of my fantasy eugenics and dysgenics were practiced systematically. In one set of bottles biologically superior ova, fertilized by biologically superior sperm, were given the best possible prenatal treatment and were finally decanted as Betas, Alphas and even Alpha Pluses. In another, much more numerous set of bottles, biologically inferior ova, fertilized by biologically inferior sperm, were subjected to the Bokanovsky Process (ninety-six identical twins out of a single egg) and treated prenatally with alcohol and other protein poisons. The creatures finally decanted were almost subhuman; but they were capable of performing unskilled work and, when properly conditioned, detensioned by free and frequent access to the opposite sex, constantly distracted by gratuitous entertainment and reinforced in their good behavior patterns by daily doses of soma, could be counted on to give no trouble to their superiors.

In this second half of the twentieth century we do nothing systematic about our breeding; but in our random and unregulated way we are not only over-populating our planet, we are also, it would seem, making sure that these greater numbers shall be of biologically poorer quality. In the bad old days children with considerable, or even with slight, hereditary defects rarely survived. Today, thanks to sanitation, modern pharmacology and the social conscience, most of the children born with hereditary defects reach maturity and multiply their kind. Under the conditions now prevailing, every advance in medicine will tend to be offset by a corresponding advance in the survival rate of individuals cursed by some genetic insufficiency. In spite of new wonder drugs and better treatment (indeed, in a certain sense, precisely because of these things), the physical health of the general population will show no improvement, and may even deteriorate. And along with a decline of average healthiness there may well go a decline in average intelligence. Indeed, some competent authorities are convinced that such a decline has already taken place and is continuing. "Under conditions that are both soft and unregulated," writes Dr. W. H. Sheldon, "our best stock tends to be outbred by stock that is inferior to it in every respect... It is the fashion in some academic circles to assure students that the alarm over differential birth-rates is un-

founded; that these problems are merely economic, or merely educational, or merely religious, or merely cultural or something of the sort. This is Pollyanna optimism. Reproductive delinquency is biological and basic.” And he adds that “nobody knows just how far the average IQ in this country [the U.S.A.] has declined since 1916, when Terman attempted to standardize the meaning of IQ 100.”

In an underdeveloped and over-populated country, where four-fifths of the people get less than two thousand calories a day and one-fifth enjoys an adequate diet, can democratic institutions arise spontaneously? Or if they should be imposed from outside or from above, can they possibly survive?

And now let us consider the case of the rich, industrialized and democratic society, in which, owing to the random but effective practice of dysgenics, IQ's and physical vigor are on the decline. For how long can such a society maintain its traditions of individual liberty and democratic government? Fifty or a hundred years from now our children will learn the answer to this question.

Meanwhile we find ourselves confronted by a most disturbing moral problem. We know that the pursuit of good ends does not justify the employment of bad means. But what about those situations, now of such frequent occurrence, in which good means have end results which turn out to be bad?

For example, we go to a tropical island and with the aid of DDT we stamp out malaria and, in two or three years, save hundreds of thousands of lives. This is obviously good. But the hundreds of thousands of human beings thus saved, and the millions whom they beget and bring to birth, cannot be adequately clothed, housed, educated or even fed out of the island's available resources. Quick death by malaria has been abolished; but life made miserable by undernourishment and over-crowding is now the rule, and slow death by outright starvation threatens ever greater numbers.

And what about the congenitally insufficient organisms, whom our medicine and our social services now preserve so that they may propagate their kind? To help the unfortunate is obviously good. But the wholesale transmission to our descendants of the results of unfavorable mutations, and the progressive contamination of the genetic pool from which the members of our species will have to draw, are no less obviously bad. We are on the horns of an ethical dilemma, and to find the middle way will require all our intelligence and all our good will.

III. Over-Organization

THE SHORTEST AND broadest road to the nightmare of Brave New World leads, as I have pointed out, through over-population and the accelerating increase of human numbers — twenty-eight hundred millions today, fifty-five hundred millions by the turn of the century, with most of humanity facing the choice between anarchy and totalitarian control. But the increasing pressure of numbers upon available resources is not the only force propelling us in the direction of totalitarianism. This blind bi-

ological enemy of freedom is allied with immensely powerful forces generated by the very advances in technology of which we are most proud. Justifiably proud, it may be added; for these advances are the fruits of genius and persistent hard work, of logic, imagination and self-denial — in a word, of moral and intellectual virtues for which one can feel nothing but admiration. But the Nature of Things is such that nobody in this world ever gets anything for nothing. These amazing and admirable advances have had to be paid for. Indeed, like last year's washing machine, they are still being paid for — and each installment is higher than the last. Many historians, many sociologists and psychologists have written at length, and with a deep concern, about the price that Western man has had to pay and will go on paying for technological progress. They point out, for example, that democracy can hardly be expected to flourish in societies where political and economic power is being progressively concentrated and centralized. But the progress of technology has led and is still leading to just such a concentration and centralization of power. As the machinery of mass production is made more efficient it tends to become more complex and more expensive — and so less available to the enterpriser of limited means. Moreover, mass production cannot work without mass distribution; but mass distribution raises problems which only the largest producers can satisfactorily solve. In a world of mass production and mass distribution the Little Man, with his inadequate stock of working capital, is at a grave disadvantage. In competition with the Big Man, he loses his money and finally his very existence as an independent producer; the Big Man has gobbled him up. As the Little Men disappear, more and more economic power comes to be wielded by fewer and fewer people. Under a dictatorship the Big Business, made possible by advancing technology and the consequent ruin of Little Business, is controlled by the State — that is to say, by a small group of party leaders and the soldiers, policemen and civil servants who carry out their orders. In a capitalist democracy, such as the United States, it is controlled by what Professor C. Wright Mills has called the Power Elite. This Power Elite directly employs several millions of the country's working force in its factories, offices and stores, controls many millions more by lending them the money to buy its products, and, through its ownership of the media of mass communication, influences the thoughts, the feelings and the actions of virtually everybody. To parody the words of Winston Churchill, never have so many been manipulated so much by so few. We are far indeed from Jefferson's ideal of a genuinely free society composed of a hierarchy of self-governing units— “the elementary republics of the wards, the county republics, the State republics and the Republic of the Union, forming a gradation of authorities.”

We see, then, that modern technology has led to the concentration of economic and political power, and to the development of a society controlled (ruthlessly in the totalitarian states, politely and inconspicuously in the democracies) by Big Business and Big Government. But societies are composed of individuals and are good only insofar as they help individuals to realize their potentialities and to lead a happy and creative life. How have individuals been affected by the technological advances of

recent years? Here is the answer to this question given by a philosopher-psychiatrist, Dr. Erich Fromm:

Our contemporary Western society, in spite of its material, intellectual and political progress, is increasingly less conducive to mental health, and tends to undermine the inner security, happiness, reason and the capacity for love in the individual; it tends to turn him into an automaton who pays for his human failure with increasing mental sickness, and with despair hidden under a frantic drive for work and so-called pleasure.

Our “increasing mental sickness” may find expression in neurotic symptoms. These symptoms are conspicuous and extremely distressing. But “let us beware,” says Dr. Fromm, “of defining mental hygiene as the prevention of symptoms. Symptoms as such are not our enemy, but our friend; where there are symptoms there is conflict, and conflict always indicates that the forces of life which strive for integration and happiness are still fighting.” The really hopeless victims of mental illness are to be found among those who appear to be most normal. “Many of them are normal because they are so well adjusted to our mode of existence, because their human voice has been silenced so early in their lives, that they do not even struggle or suffer or develop symptoms as the neurotic does.” They are normal not in what may be called the absolute sense of the word; they are normal only in relation to a profoundly abnormal society. Their perfect adjustment to that abnormal society is a measure of their mental sickness. These millions of abnormally normal people, living without fuss in a society to which, if they were fully human beings, they ought not to be adjusted, still cherish “the illusion of individuality,” but in fact they have been to a great extent deindividualized. Their conformity is developing into something like uniformity. But “uniformity and freedom are incompatible. Uniformity and mental health are incompatible too... Man is not made to be an automaton, and if he becomes one, the basis for mental health is destroyed.”

In the course of evolution nature has gone to endless trouble to see that every individual is unlike every other individual. We reproduce our kind by bringing the father’s genes into contact with the mother’s. These hereditary factors may be combined in an almost infinite number of ways. Physically and mentally, each one of us is unique. Any culture which, in the interests of efficiency or in the name of some political or religious dogma, seeks to standardize the human individual, commits an outrage against man’s biological nature.

Science may be defined as the reduction of multiplicity to unity. It seeks to explain the endlessly diverse phenomena of nature by ignoring the uniqueness of particular events, concentrating on what they have in common and finally abstracting some kind of “law,” in terms of which they make sense and can be effectively dealt with. For examples, apples fall from the tree and the moon moves across the sky. People had been observing these facts from time immemorial. With Gertrude Stein they were convinced that an apple is an apple is an apple, whereas the moon is the moon is the moon. It remained for Isaac Newton to perceive what these very dissimilar phenomena had in common, and to formulate a theory of gravitation in terms of which certain aspects

of the behavior of apples, of the heavenly bodies and indeed of everything else in the physical universe could be explained and dealt with in terms of a single system of ideas. In the same spirit the artist takes the innumerable diversities and uniquenesses of the outer world and his own imagination and gives them meaning within an orderly system of plastic, literary or musical patterns. The wish to impose order upon confusion, to bring harmony out of dissonance and unity out of multiplicity is a kind of intellectual instinct, a primary and fundamental urge of the mind. Within the realms of science, art and philosophy the workings of what I may call this "Will to Order" are mainly beneficent. True, the Will to Order has produced many premature syntheses based upon insufficient evidence, many absurd systems of metaphysics and theology, much pedantic mistaking of notions for realities, of symbols and abstractions for the data of immediate experience. But these errors, however regrettable, do not do much harm, at any rate directly — though it sometimes happens that a bad philosophical system may do harm indirectly, by being used as a justification for senseless and inhuman actions. It is in the social sphere, in the realm of politics and economics, that the Will to Order becomes really dangerous.

Here the theoretical reduction of unmanageable multiplicity to comprehensible unity becomes the practical reduction of human diversity to subhuman uniformity, of freedom to servitude. In politics the equivalent of a fully developed scientific theory or philosophical system is a totalitarian dictatorship. In economics, the equivalent of a beautifully composed work of art is the smoothly running factory in which the workers are perfectly adjusted to the machines. The Will to Order can make tyrants out of those who merely aspire to clear up a mess. The beauty of tidiness is used as a justification for despotism.

Organization is indispensable; for liberty arises and has meaning only within a self-regulating community of freely co-operating individuals. But, though indispensable, organization can also be fatal. Too much organization transforms men and women into automata, suffocates the creative spirit and abolishes the very possibility of freedom. As usual, the only safe course is in the middle, between the extremes of laissez-faire at one end of the scale and of total control at the other.

During the past century the successive advances in technology have been accompanied by corresponding advances in organization. Complicated machinery has had to be matched by complicated social arrangements, designed to work as smoothly and efficiently as the new instruments of production. In order to fit into these organizations, individuals have had to deindividualize themselves, have had to deny their native diversity and conform to a standard pattern, have had to do their best to become automata.

The dehumanizing effects of over-organization are reinforced by the dehumanizing effects of over-population. Industry, as it expands, draws an ever greater proportion of humanity's increasing numbers into large cities. But life in large cities is not conducive to mental health (the highest incidence of schizophrenia, we are told, occurs among the swarming inhabitants of industrial slums); nor does it foster the kind of responsible freedom within small self-governing groups, which is the first condition of a genuine

democracy. City life is anonymous and, as it were, abstract. People are related to one another, not as total personalities, but as the embodiments of economic functions or, when they are not at work, as irresponsible seekers of entertainment. Subjected to this kind of life, individuals tend to feel lonely and insignificant. Their existence ceases to have any point or meaning.

Biologically speaking, man is a moderately gregarious, not a completely social animal — a creature more like a wolf, let us say, or an elephant, than like a bee or an ant. In their original form human societies bore no resemblance to the hive or the ant heap; they were merely packs. Civilization is, among other things, the process by which primitive packs are transformed into an analogue, crude and mechanical, of the social insects' organic communities. At the present time the pressures of over-population and technological change are accelerating this process. The termitary has come to seem a realizable and even, in some eyes, a desirable ideal. Needless to say, the ideal will never in fact be realized. A great gulf separates the social insect from the not too gregarious, big-brained mammal; and even though the mammal should do his best to imitate the insect, the gulf would remain. However hard they try, men cannot create a social organism, they can only create an organization. In the process of trying to create an organism they will merely create a totalitarian despotism.

Brave New World presents a fanciful and somewhat ribald picture of a society, in which the attempt to re-create human beings in the likeness of termites has been pushed almost to the limits of the possible. That we are being propelled in the direction of Brave New World is obvious. But no less obvious is the fact that we can, if we so desire, refuse to co-operate with the blind forces that are propelling us. For the moment, however, the wish to resist does not seem to be very strong or very widespread. As Mr. William Whyte has shown in his remarkable book, *The Organization Man*, a new Social Ethic is replacing our traditional ethical system — the system in which the individual is primary. The key words in this Social Ethic are "adjustment," "adaptation," "socially orientated behavior," "belongingness," "acquisition of social skills," "team work," "group living," "group loyalty," "group dynamics," "group thinking," "group creativity." Its basic assumption is that the social whole has greater worth and significance than its individual parts, that inborn biological differences should be sacrificed to cultural uniformity, that the rights of the collectivity take precedence over what the eighteenth century called the Rights of Man. According to the Social Ethic, Jesus was completely wrong in asserting that the Sabbath was made for man. On the contrary, man was made for the Sabbath, and must sacrifice his inherited idiosyncrasies and pretend to be the kind of standardized good mixer that organizers of group activity regard as ideal for their purposes. This ideal man is the man who displays "dynamic conformity" (delicious phrase!) and an intense loyalty to the group, an unflagging desire to subordinate himself, to belong. And the ideal man must have an ideal wife, highly gregarious, infinitely adaptable and not merely resigned to the fact that her husband's first loyalty is to the Corporation, but actively loyal on her own account. "He for God only," as Milton said of Adam and Eve, "she for God in him." And in one important respect the

wife of the ideal organization man is a good deal worse off than our First Mother. She and Adam were permitted by the Lord to be completely uninhibited in the matter of “youthful dalliance.”

Nor turned, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused

Today, according to a writer in the Harvard Business Review, the wife of the man who is trying to live up to the ideal proposed by the Social Ethic, “must not demand too much of her husband’s time and interest. Because of his single-minded concentration on his job, even his sexual activity must be relegated to a secondary place.” The monk makes vows of poverty, obedience and chastity. The organization man is allowed to be rich, but promises obedience (“he accepts authority without resentment, he looks up to his superiors” — Mussolini ha sempre ragione) and he must be prepared, for the greater glory of the organization that employs him, to forswear even conjugal love.

It is worth remarking that, in 1984, the members of the Party are compelled to conform to a sexual ethic of more than Puritan severity. In *Brave New World*, on the other hand, all are permitted to indulge their sexual impulses without let or hindrance. The society described in Orwell’s fable is a society permanently at war, and the aim of its rulers is first, of course, to exercise power for its own delightful sake and, second, to keep their subjects in that state of constant tension which a state of constant war demands of those who wage it. By crusading against sexuality the bosses are able to maintain the required tension in their followers and at the same time can satisfy their lust for power in a most gratifying way. The society described in *Brave New World* is a world-state, in which war has been eliminated and where the first aim of the rulers is at all costs to keep their subjects from making trouble. This they achieve by (among other methods) legalizing a degree of sexual freedom (made possible by the abolition of the family) that practically guarantees the *Brave New Worlders* against any form of destructive (or creative) emotional tension. In 1984 the lust for power is satisfied by inflicting pain; in *Brave New World*, by inflicting a hardly less humiliating pleasure.

The current Social Ethic, it is obvious, is merely a justification after the fact of the less desirable consequences of over-organization. It represents a pathetic attempt to make a virtue of necessity, to extract a positive value from an unpleasant datum. It is a very unrealistic, and therefore very dangerous, system of morality. The social whole, whose value is assumed to be greater than that of its component parts, is not an organism in the sense that a hive or a termitary may be thought of as an organism. It is merely an organization, a piece of social machinery. There can be no value except in relation to life and awareness. An organization is neither conscious nor alive. Its value is instrumental and derivative. It is not good in itself; it is good only to the extent that it promotes the good of the individuals who are the parts of the collective whole. To give organizations precedence over persons is to subordinate ends to means. What happens when ends are subordinated to means was clearly demonstrated by Hitler and Stalin. Under their hideous rule personal ends were subordinated to organizational

means by a mixture of violence and propaganda, systematic terror and the systematic manipulation of minds. In the more efficient dictatorships of tomorrow there will probably be much less violence than under Hitler and Stalin. The future dictator's subjects will be painlessly regimented by a corps of highly trained social engineers. "The challenge of social engineering in our time," writes an enthusiastic advocate of this new science, "is like the challenge of technical engineering fifty years ago. If the first half of the twentieth century was the era of the technical engineers, the second half may well be the era of the social engineers" — and the twenty-first century, I suppose, will be the era of World Controllers, the scientific caste system and Brave New World. To the question *quis cusodiet custodes?* — Who will mount guard over our guardians, who will engineer the engineers? — the answer is a bland denial that they need any supervision. There seems to be a touching belief among certain Ph.D.'s in sociology that Ph.D.'s in sociology will never be corrupted by power. Like Sir Galahad's, their strength is as the strength of ten because their heart is pure — and their heart is pure because they are scientists and have taken six thousand hours of social studies.

Alas, higher education is not necessarily a guarantee of higher virtue, or higher political wisdom. And to these misgivings on ethical and psychological grounds must be added misgivings of a purely scientific character. Can we accept the theories on which the social engineers base their practice, and in terms of which they justify their manipulations of human beings? For example, Professor Elton Mayo tells us categorically that "man's desire to be continuously associated in work with his fellows is a strong, if not the strongest human characteristic." This, I would say, is manifestly untrue. Some people have the kind of desire described by Mayo; others do not. It is a matter of temperament and inherited constitution. Any social organization based upon the assumption that "man" (whoever "man" may be) desires to be continuously associated with his fellows would be, for many individual men and women, a bed of Procrustes. Only by being amputated or stretched upon the rack could they be adjusted to it.

Again, how romantically misleading are the lyrical accounts of the Middle Ages with which many contemporary theorists of social relations adorn their works! "Membership in a guild, manorial estate or village protected medieval man throughout his life and gave him peace and serenity." Protected him from what, we may ask. Certainly not from remorseless bullying at the hands of his superiors. And along with all that "peace and serenity" there was, throughout the Middle Ages, an enormous amount of chronic frustration, acute unhappiness and a passionate resentment against the rigid, hierarchical system that permitted no vertical movement up the social ladder and, for those who were bound to the land, very little horizontal movement in space. The impersonal forces of over-population and over-organization, and the social engineers who are trying to direct these forces, are pushing us in the direction of a new medieval system. This revival will be made more acceptable than the original by such Brave-New-Worldian amenities as infant conditioning, sleep-teaching and drug-induced euphoria; but, for the majority of men and women, it will still be a kind of servitude.

IV. Propaganda in a Democratic Society

"THE DOCTRINES OF Europe," Jefferson wrote, "were that men in numerous associations cannot be restrained within the limits of order and justice, except by forces physical and moral wielded over them by authorities independent of their will... We (the founders of the new American democracy) believe that man was a rational animal, endowed by nature with rights, and with an innate sense of justice, and that he could be restrained from wrong, and protected in right, by moderate powers, confided to persons of his own choice and held to their duties by dependence on his own will." To post-Freudian ears, this kind of language seems touchingly quaint and ingenuous. Human beings are a good deal less rational and innately just than the optimists of the eighteenth century supposed. On the other hand they are neither so morally blind nor so hopelessly unreasonable as the pessimists of the twentieth would have us believe. In spite of the Id and the Unconscious, in spite of endemic neurosis and the prevalence of low IQ's, most men and women are probably decent enough and sensible enough to be trusted with the direction of their own destinies.

Democratic institutions are devices for reconciling social order with individual freedom and initiative, and for making the immediate power of a country's rulers subject to the ultimate power of the ruled. The fact that, in western Europe and America, these devices have worked, all things considered, not too badly is proof enough that the eighteenth-century optimists were not entirely wrong. Given a fair chance, human beings can govern themselves, and govern themselves better, though perhaps with less mechanical efficiency, than they can be governed by "authorities independent of their will." Given a fair chance, I repeat; for the fair chance is an indispensable prerequisite. No people that passes abruptly from a state of subservience under the rule of a despot to the completely unfamiliar state of political independence can be said to have a fair chance of making democratic institutions work. Again, no people in a precarious economic condition has a fair chance of being able to govern itself democratically. Liberalism flourishes in an atmosphere of prosperity and declines as declining prosperity makes it necessary for the government to intervene ever more frequently and drastically in the affairs of its subjects. Over-population and over-organization are two conditions which, as I have already pointed out, deprive a society of a fair chance of making democratic institutions work effectively. We see, then, that there are certain historical, economic, demographic and technological conditions which make it very hard for Jefferson's rational animals, endowed by nature with inalienable rights and an innate sense of justice, to exercise their reason, claim their rights and act justly within a democratically organized society. We in the West have been supremely fortunate in having been given our fair chance of making the great experiment in self-government. Unfortunately it now looks as though, owing to recent changes in our circumstances, this infinitely precious fair chance were being, little by little, taken away from us. And this, of course, is not the whole story. These blind impersonal forces are not the only enemies of individual liberty and democratic institutions. There are also forces of an-

other, less abstract character, forces that can be deliberately used by power-seeking individuals whose aim is to establish partial or complete control over their fellows. Fifty years ago, when I was a boy, it seemed completely self-evident that the bad old days were over, that torture and massacre, slavery, and the persecution of heretics, were things of the past. Among people who wore top hats, traveled in trains, and took a bath every morning such horrors were simply out of the question. After all, we were living in the twentieth century. A few years later these people who took daily baths and went to church in top hats were committing atrocities on a scale undreamed of by the benighted Africans and Asiatics. In the light of recent history it would be foolish to suppose that this sort of thing cannot happen again. It can and, no doubt, it will. But in the immediate future there is some reason to believe that the punitive methods of 1984 will give place to the reinforcements and manipulations of Brave New World.

There are two kinds of propaganda — rational propaganda in favor of action that is consonant with the enlightened self-interest of those who make it and those to whom it is addressed, and non-rational propaganda that is not consonant with anybody's enlightened self-interest, but is dictated by, and appeals to, passion. Where the actions of individuals are concerned there are motives more exalted than enlightened self-interest, but where collective action has to be taken in the fields of politics and economics, enlightened self-interest is probably the highest of effective motives. If politicians and their constituents always acted to promote their own or their country's long-range self-interest, this world would be an earthly paradise. As it is, they often act against their own interests, merely to gratify their least creditable passions; the world, in consequence, is a place of misery. Propaganda in favor of action that is consonant with enlightened self-interest appeals to reason by means of logical arguments based upon the best available evidence fully and honestly set forth. Propaganda in favor of action dictated by the impulses that are below self-interest offers false, garbled or incomplete evidence, avoids logical argument and seeks to influence its victims by the mere repetition of catchwords, by the furious denunciation of foreign or domestic scapegoats, and by cunningly associating the lowest passions with the highest ideals, so that atrocities come to be perpetrated in the name of God and the most cynical kind of Realpolitik is treated as a matter of religious principle and patriotic duty.

In John Dewey's words, "a renewal of faith in common human nature, in its potentialities in general, and in its power in particular to respond to reason and truth, is a surer bulwark against totalitarianism than a demonstration of material success or a devout worship of special legal and political forms." The power to respond to reason and truth exists in all of us. But so, unfortunately, does the tendency to respond to unreason and falsehood — particularly in those cases where the falsehood evokes some enjoyable emotion, or where the appeal to unreason strikes some answering chord in the primitive, subhuman depths of our being. In certain fields of activity men have learned to respond to reason and truth pretty consistently. The authors of learned articles do not appeal to the passions of their fellow scientists and technologists. They set forth what, to the best of their knowledge, is the truth about some particular aspect

of reality, they use reason to explain the facts they have observed and they support their point of view with arguments that appeal to reason in other people. All this is fairly easy in the fields of physical science and technology. It is much more difficult in the fields of politics and religion and ethics. Here the relevant facts often elude us. As for the meaning of the facts, that of course depends upon the particular system of ideas, in terms of which you choose to interpret them. And these are not the only difficulties that confront the rational truth-seeker. In public and in private life, it often happens that there is simply no time to collect the relevant facts or to weigh their significance. We are forced to act on insufficient evidence and by a light considerably less steady than that of logic. With the best will in the world, we cannot always be completely truthful or consistently rational. All that is in our power is to be as truthful and rational as circumstances permit us to be, and to respond as well as we can to the limited truth and imperfect reasonings offered for our consideration by others.

“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free,” said Jefferson, “it expects what never was and never will be... The people cannot be safe without information. Where the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe.” Across the Atlantic another passionate believer in reason was thinking about the same time, in almost precisely similar terms. Here is what John Stuart Mill wrote of his father, the utilitarian philosopher, James Mill: “So complete was his reliance upon the influence of reason over the minds of mankind, whenever it is allowed to reach them, that he felt as if all would be gained, if the whole population were able to read, and if all sorts of opinions were allowed to be addressed to them by word or in writing, and if by the suffrage they could nominate a legislature to give effect to the opinions they had adopted.” All is safe, all would be gained! Once more we hear the note of eighteenth-century optimism. Jefferson, it is true, was a realist as well as an optimist. He knew by bitter experience that the freedom of the press can be shamefully abused. “Nothing,” he declared, “can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper.” And yet, he insisted (and we can only agree with him), “within the pale of truth, the press is a noble institution, equally the friend of science and civil liberty.” Mass communication, in a word, is neither good nor bad; it is simply a force and, like any other force, it can be used either well or ill. Used in one way, the press, the radio and the cinema are indispensable to the survival of democracy. Used in another way, they are among the most powerful weapons in the dictator’s armory. In the field of mass communications as in almost every other field of enterprise, technological progress has hurt the Little Man and helped the Big Man. As lately as fifty years ago, every democratic country could boast of a great number of small journals and local newspapers. Thousands of country editors expressed thousands of independent opinions. Somewhere or other almost anybody could get almost anything printed. Today the press is still legally free; but most of the little papers have disappeared. The cost of woodpulp, of modern printing machinery and of syndicated news is too high for the Little Man. In the totalitarian East there is political censorship, and the media of mass communication are controlled by the State. In the democratic West there is economic censorship and the media of mass

communication are controlled by members of the Power Elite. Censorship by rising costs and the concentration of communication power in the hands of a few big concerns is less objectionable than State ownership and government propaganda; but certainly it is not something of which a Jeffersonian democrat could possibly approve.

In regard to propaganda the early advocates of universal literacy and a free press envisaged only two possibilities: the propaganda might be true, or it might be false. They did not foresee what in fact has happened, above all in our Western capitalist democracies — the development of a vast mass communications industry, concerned in the main neither with the true nor the false, but with the unreal, the more or less totally irrelevant. In a word, they failed to take into account man's almost infinite appetite for distractions.

In the past most people never got a chance of fully satisfying this appetite. They might long for distractions, but the distractions were not provided. Christmas came but once a year, feasts were "solemn and rare," there were few readers and very little to read, and the nearest approach to a neighborhood movie theater was the parish church, where the performances, though frequent, were somewhat monotonous. For conditions even remotely comparable to those now prevailing we must return to imperial Rome, where the populace was kept in good humor by frequent, gratuitous doses of many kinds of entertainment — from poetical dramas to gladiatorial fights, from recitations of Virgil to all-out boxing, from concerts to military reviews and public executions. But even in Rome there was nothing like the non-stop distraction now provided by newspapers and magazines, by radio, television and the cinema. In Brave New World non-stop distractions of the most fascinating nature (the feelies, orgy-porgy, centrifugal bumblepuppy) are deliberately used as instruments of policy, for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of the social and political situation. The other world of religion is different from the other world of entertainment; but they resemble one another in being most decidedly "not of this world." Both are distractions and, if lived in too continuously, both can become, in Marx's phrase, "the opium of the people" and so a threat to freedom. Only the vigilant can maintain their liberties, and only those who are constantly and intelligently on the spot can hope to govern themselves effectively by democratic procedures. A society, most of whose members spend a great part of their time, not on the spot, not here and now and in the calculable future, but somewhere else, in the irrelevant other worlds of sport and soap opera, of mythology and metaphysical fantasy, will find it hard to resist the encroachments of those who would manipulate and control it.

In their propaganda today's dictators rely for the most part on repetition, suppression and rationalization — the repetition of catchwords which they wish to be accepted as true, the suppression of facts which they wish to be ignored, the arousal and rationalization of passions which may be used in the interests of the Party or the State. As the art and science of manipulation come to be better understood, the dictators of the future will doubtless learn to combine these techniques with the non-stop distractions which, in the West, are now threatening to drown in a sea of irrelevance the ratio-

nal propaganda essential to the maintenance of individual liberty and the survival of democratic institutions.

V. Propaganda Under a Dictatorship

AT HIS TRIAL after the Second World War, Hitler's Minister for Armaments, Albert Speer, delivered a long speech in which, with remarkable acuteness, he described the Nazi tyranny and analyzed its methods. "Hitler's dictatorship," he said, "differed in one fundamental point from all its predecessors in history. It was the first dictatorship in the present period of modern technical development, a dictatorship which made complete use of all technical means for the domination of its own country. Through technical devices like the radio and the loud-speaker, eighty million people were deprived of independent thought. It was thereby possible to subject them to the will of one man... Earlier dictators needed highly qualified assistants even at the lowest level — men who could think and act independently. The totalitarian system in the period of modern technical development can dispense with such men; thanks to modern methods of communication, it is possible to mechanize the lower leadership. As a result of this there has arisen the new type of the uncritical recipient of orders."

In the Brave New World of my prophetic fable technology had advanced far beyond the point it had reached in Hitler's day; consequently the recipients of orders were far less critical than their Nazi counterparts, far more obedient to the order-giving elite. Moreover, they had been genetically standardized and postnatally conditioned to perform their subordinate functions, and could therefore be depended upon to behave almost as predictably as machines. As we shall see in a later chapter, this conditioning of "the lower leadership" is already going on under the Communist dictatorships. The Chinese and the Russians are not relying merely on the indirect effects of advancing technology; they are working directly on the psychophysical organisms of their lower leaders, subjecting minds and bodies to a system of ruthless and, from all accounts, highly effective conditioning. "Many a man," said Speer, "has been haunted by the nightmare that one day nations might be dominated by technical means. That nightmare was almost realized in Hitler's totalitarian system." Almost, but not quite. The Nazis did not have time — and perhaps did not have the intelligence and the necessary knowledge — to brainwash and condition their lower leadership. This, it may be, is one of the reasons why they failed.

Since Hitler's day the armory of technical devices at the disposal of the would-be dictator has been considerably enlarged. As well as the radio, the loudspeaker, the moving picture camera and the rotary press, the contemporary propagandist can make use of television to broadcast the image as well as the voice of his client, and can record both image and voice on spools of magnetic tape. Thanks to technological progress, Big Brother can now be almost as omnipresent as God. Nor is it only on the technical front that the hand of the would-be dictator has been strengthened.

Since Hitler's day a great deal of work has been carried out in those fields of applied psychology and neurology which are the special province of the propagandist, the indoctrinator and the brainwasher. In the past these specialists in the art of changing people's minds were empiricists. By a method of trial and error they had worked out a number of techniques and procedures, which they used very effectively without, however, knowing precisely why they were effective. Today the art of mind-control is in process of becoming a science. The practitioners of this science know what they are doing and why. They are guided in their work by theories and hypotheses solidly established on a massive foundation of experimental evidence. Thanks to the new insights and the new techniques made possible by these insights, the nightmare that was "all but realized in Hitler's totalitarian system" may soon be completely realizable.

But before we discuss these new insights and techniques let us take a look at the nightmare that so nearly came true in Nazi Germany. What were the methods used by Hitler and Goebbels for "depriving eighty million people of independent thought and subjecting them to the will of one man"? And what was the theory of human nature upon which those terrifyingly successful methods were based? These questions can be answered, for the most part, in Hitler's own words. And what remarkably clear and astute words they are! When he writes about such vast abstractions as Race and History and Providence, Hitler is strictly unreadable. But when he writes about the German masses and the methods he used for dominating and directing them, his style changes. Nonsense gives place to sense, bombast to a hard-boiled and cynical lucidity. In his philosophical lucubrations Hitler was either cloudily daydreaming or reproducing other people's half-baked notions. In his comments on crowds and propaganda he was writing of things he knew by firsthand experience. In the words of his ablest biographer, Mr. Alan Bullock, "Hitler was the greatest demagogue in history." Those who add, "only a demagogue," fail to appreciate the nature of political power in an age of mass politics. As he himself said, "To be a leader means to be able to move the masses." Hitler's aim was first to move the masses and then, having pried them loose from their traditional loyalties and moralities, to impose upon them (with the hypnotized consent of the majority) a new authoritarian order of his own devising. "Hitler," wrote Hermann Rauschning in 1939, "has a deep respect for the Catholic church and the Jesuit order; not because of their Christian doctrine, but because of the 'machinery' they have elaborated and controlled, their hierarchical system, their extremely clever tactics, their knowledge of human nature and their wise use of human weaknesses in ruling over believers." Ecclesiasticism without Christianity, the discipline of a monastic rule, not for God's sake or in order to achieve personal salvation, but for the sake of the State and for the greater glory and power of the demagogue turned Leader — this was the goal toward which the systematic moving of the masses was to lead.

Let us see what Hitler thought of the masses he moved and how he did the moving. The first principle from which he started was a value judgment: the masses are utterly contemptible. They are incapable of abstract thinking and uninterested in any fact outside the circle of their immediate experience. Their behavior is determined, not by

knowledge and reason, but by feelings and unconscious drives. It is in these drives and feelings that “the roots of their positive as well as their negative attitudes are implanted.” To be successful a propagandist must learn how to manipulate these instincts and emotions. “The driving force which has brought about the most tremendous revolutions on this earth has never been a body of scientific teaching which has gained power over the masses, but always a devotion which has inspired them, and often a kind of hysteria which has urged them into action. Whoever wishes to win over the masses must know the key that will open the door of their hearts.” ... In post-Freudian jargon, of their unconscious.

Hitler made his strongest appeal to those members of the lower middle classes who had been ruined by the inflation of 1923, and then ruined all over again by the depression of 1929 and the following years. “The masses” of whom he speaks were these bewildered, frustrated and chronically anxious millions. To make them more masslike, more homogeneously subhuman, he assembled them, by the thousands and the tens of thousands, in vast halls and arenas, where individuals could lose their personal identity, even their elementary humanity, and be merged with the crowd. A man or woman makes direct contact with society in two ways: as a member of some familial, professional or religious group, or as a member of a crowd. Groups are capable of being as moral and intelligent as the individuals who form them; a crowd is chaotic, has no purpose of its own and is capable of anything except intelligent action and realistic thinking. Assembled in a crowd, people lose their powers of reasoning and their capacity for moral choice. Their suggestibility is increased to the point where they cease to have any judgment or will of their own. They become very excitable, they lose all sense of individual or collective responsibility, they are subject to sudden accesses of rage, enthusiasm and panic. In a word, a man in a crowd behaves as though he had swallowed a large dose of some powerful intoxicant. He is a victim of what I have called “herd-poisoning.” Like alcohol, herd-poison is an active, extraverted drug. The crowd-intoxicated individual escapes from responsibility, intelligence and morality into a kind of frantic, animal mindlessness.

During his long career as an agitator, Hitler had studied the effects of herd-poison and had learned how to exploit them for his own purposes. He had discovered that the orator can appeal to those “hidden forces” which motivate men’s actions, much more effectively than can the writer. Reading is a private, not a collective activity. The writer speaks only to individuals, sitting by themselves in a state of normal sobriety. The orator speaks to masses of individuals, already well primed with herd-poison. They are at his mercy and, if he knows his business, he can do what he likes with them. As an orator, Hitler knew his business supremely well. He was able, in his own words, “to follow the lead of the great mass in such a way that from the living emotion of his hearers the apt word which he needed would be suggested to him and in its turn this would go straight to the heart of his hearers.” Otto Strasser called him “a loud-speaker, proclaiming the most secret desires, the least admissible instincts, the sufferings and personal revolts of a whole nation.” Twenty years before Madison Avenue embarked

upon "Motivational Research," Hitler was systematically exploring and exploiting the secret fears and hopes, the cravings, anxieties and frustrations of the German masses. It is by manipulating "hidden forces" that the advertising experts induce us to buy their wares — a tooth-paste, a brand of cigarettes, a political candidate. And it is by appealing to the same hidden forces — and to others too dangerous for Madison Avenue to meddle with — that Hitler induced the German masses to buy themselves a Fuehrer, an insane philosophy and the Second World War.

Unlike the masses, intellectuals have a taste for rationality and an interest in facts. Their critical habit of mind makes them resistant to the kind of propaganda that works so well on the majority. Among the masses "instinct is supreme, and from instinct comes faith... While the healthy common folk instinctively close their ranks to form a community of the people" (under a Leader, it goes without saying) "intellectuals run this way and that, like hens in a poultry yard. With them one cannot make history; they cannot be used as elements composing a community." Intellectuals are the kind of people who demand evidence and are shocked by logical inconsistencies and fallacies. They regard over-simplification as the original sin of the mind and have no use for the slogans, the unqualified assertions and sweeping generalizations which are the propagandist's stock in trade. "All effective propaganda," Hitler wrote, "must be confined to a few bare necessities and then must be expressed in a few stereotyped formulas." These stereotyped formulas must be constantly repeated, for "only constant repetition will finally succeed in imprinting an idea upon the memory of a crowd." Philosophy teaches us to feel uncertain about the things that seem to us self-evident. Propaganda, on the other hand, teaches us to accept as self-evident matters about which it would be reasonable to suspend our judgment or to feel doubt. The aim of the demagogue is to create social coherence under his own leadership. But, as Bertrand Russell has pointed out, "systems of dogma without empirical foundations, such as scholasticism, Marxism and fascism, have the advantage of producing a great deal of social coherence among their disciples." The demagogic propagandist must therefore be consistently dogmatic. All his statements are made without qualification. There are no grays in his picture of the world; everything is either diabolically black or celestially white. In Hitler's words, the propagandist should adopt "a systematically one-sided attitude towards every problem that has to be dealt with." He must never admit that he might be wrong or that people with a different point of view might be even partially right. Opponents should not be argued with; they should be attacked, shouted down, or, if they become too much of a nuisance, liquidated. The morally squeamish intellectual may be shocked by this kind of thing. But the masses are always convinced that "right is on the side of the active aggressor."

Such, then, was Hitler's opinion of humanity in the mass. It was a very low opinion. Was it also an incorrect opinion? The tree is known by its fruits, and a theory of human nature which inspired the kind of techniques that proved so horribly effective must contain at least an element of truth. Virtue and intelligence belong to human beings as individuals freely associating with other individuals in small groups. So do

sin and stupidity. But the subhuman mindlessness to which the demagogue makes his appeal, the moral imbecility on which he relies when he goads his victims into action, are characteristic not of men and women as individuals, but of men and women in masses. Mindlessness and moral idiocy are not characteristically human attributes; they are symptoms of herd-poisoning. In all the world's higher religions, salvation and enlightenment are for individuals. The kingdom of heaven is within the mind of a person, not within the collective mindlessness of a crowd. Christ promised to be present where two or three are gathered together. He did not say anything about being present where thousands are intoxicating one another with herd-poison. Under the Nazis enormous numbers of people were compelled to spend an enormous amount of time marching in serried ranks from point A to point B and back again to point A. "This keeping of the whole population on the march seemed to be a senseless waste of time and energy. Only much later," adds Hermann Rauschning, "was there revealed in it a subtle intention based on a well-judged adjustment of ends and means. Marching diverts men's thoughts. Marching kills thought. Marching makes an end of individuality. Marching is the indispensable magic stroke performed in order to accustom the people to a mechanical, quasi-ritualistic activity until it becomes second nature."

From his point of view and at the level where he had chosen to do his dreadful work, Hitler was perfectly correct in his estimate of human nature. To those of us who look at men and women as individuals rather than as members of crowds, or of regimented collectives, he seems hideously wrong. In an age of accelerating over-population, of accelerating over-organization and ever more efficient means of mass communication, how can we preserve the integrity and reassert the value of the human individual? This is a question that can still be asked and perhaps effectively answered. A generation from now it may be too late to find an answer and perhaps impossible, in the stifling collective climate of that future time, even to ask the question.

VI. The Arts of Selling

THE SURVIVAL

OF democracy depends on the ability of large numbers of people to make realistic choices in the light of adequate information. A dictatorship, on the other hand, maintains itself by censoring or distorting the facts, and by appealing, not to reason, not to enlightened self-interest, but to passion and prejudice, to the powerful "hidden forces," as Hitler called them, present in the unconscious depths of every human mind.

In the West, democratic principles are proclaimed and many able and conscientious publicists do their best to supply electors with adequate information and to persuade them, by rational argument, to make realistic choices in the light of that information. All this is greatly to the good. But unfortunately propaganda in the Western democracies, above all in America, has two faces and a divided personality. In charge of the editorial department there is often a democratic Dr. Jekyll — a propagandist who

would be very happy to prove that John Dewey had been right about the ability of human nature to respond to truth and reason. But this worthy man controls only a part of the machinery of mass communication. In charge of advertising we find an anti-democratic, because anti-rational, Mr. Hyde — or rather a Dr. Hyde, for Hyde is now a Ph.D. in psychology and has a master's degree as well in the social sciences. This Dr. Hyde would be very unhappy indeed if everybody always lived up to John Dewey's faith in human nature. Truth and reason are Jekyll's affair, not his. Hyde is a motivation analyst, and his business is to study human weaknesses and failings, to investigate those unconscious desires and fears by which so much of men's conscious thinking and overt doing is determined. And he does this, not in the spirit of the moralist who would like to make people better, or of the physician who would like to improve their health, but simply in order to find out the best way to take advantage of their ignorance and to exploit their irrationality for the pecuniary benefit of his employers. But after all, it may be argued, "capitalism is dead, consumerism is king" — and consumerism requires the services of expert salesmen versed in all the arts (including the more insidious arts) of persuasion. Under a free enterprise system commercial propaganda by any and every means is absolutely indispensable. But the indispensable is not necessarily the desirable. What is demonstrably good in the sphere of economics may be far from good for men and women as voters or even as human beings. An earlier, more moralistic generation would have been profoundly shocked by the bland cynicism of the motivation analysts. Today we read a book like Mr. Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*, and are more amused than horrified, more resigned than indignant. Given Freud, given Behaviorism, given the mass producer's chronically desperate need for mass consumption, this is the sort of thing that is only to be expected. But what, we may ask, is the sort of thing that is to be expected in the future? Are Hyde's activities compatible in the long run with Jekyll's? Can a campaign in favor of rationality be successful in the teeth of another and even more vigorous campaign in favor of irrationality? These are questions which, for the moment, I shall not attempt to answer, but shall leave hanging, so to speak, as a backdrop to our discussion of the methods of mass persuasion in a technologically advanced democratic society.

The task of the commercial propagandist in a democracy is in some ways easier and in some ways more difficult than that of a political propagandist employed by an established dictator or a dictator in the making. It is easier inasmuch as almost everyone starts out with a prejudice in favor of beer, cigarettes and iceboxes, whereas almost nobody starts out with a prejudice in favor of tyrants. It is more difficult inasmuch as the commercial propagandist is not permitted, by the rules of his particular game, to appeal to the more savage instincts of his public. The advertiser of dairy products would dearly love to tell his readers and listeners that all their troubles are caused by the machinations of a gang of godless international margarine manufacturers, and that it is their patriotic duty to march out and burn the oppressors' factories. This sort of thing, however, is ruled out, and he must be content with a milder approach. But the mild approach is less exciting than the approach through verbal or physical

violence. In the long run, anger and hatred are self-defeating emotions. But in the short run they pay high dividends in the form of psychological and even (since they release large quantities of adrenalin and noradrenalin) physiological satisfaction. People may start out with an initial prejudice against tyrants; but when tyrants or would-be tyrants treat them to adrenalin-releasing propaganda about the wickedness of their enemies — particularly of enemies weak enough to be persecuted — they are ready to follow him with enthusiasm. In his speeches Hitler kept repeating such words as “hatred,” “force,” “ruthless,” “crush,” “smash”; and he would accompany these violent words with even more violent gestures. He would yell, he would scream, his veins would swell, his face would turn purple. Strong emotion (as every actor and dramatist knows) is in the highest degree contagious. Infected by the malignant frenzy of the orator, the audience would groan and sob and scream in an orgy of uninhibited passion. And these orgies were so enjoyable that most of those who had experienced them eagerly came back for more. Almost all of us long for peace and freedom; but very few of us have much enthusiasm for the thoughts, feelings and actions that make for peace and freedom. Conversely almost nobody wants war or tyranny; but a great many people find an intense pleasure in the thoughts, feelings and actions that make for war and tyranny. These thoughts, feelings and actions are too dangerous to be exploited for commercial purposes. Accepting this handicap, the advertising man must do the best he can with the less intoxicating emotions, the quieter forms of irrationality.

Effective rational propaganda becomes possible only when there is a clear understanding, on the part of all concerned, of the nature of symbols and of their relations to the things and events symbolized. Irrational propaganda depends for its effectiveness on a general failure to understand the nature of symbols. Simple-minded people tend to equate the symbol with what it stands for, to attribute to things and events some of the qualities expressed by the words in terms of which the propagandist has chosen, for his own purposes, to talk about them. Consider a simple example. Most cosmetics are made of lanolin, which is a mixture of purified wool fat and water beaten up into an emulsion. This emulsion has many valuable properties: it penetrates the skin, it does not become rancid, it is mildly antiseptic and so forth. But the commercial propagandists do not speak about the genuine virtues of the emulsion. They give it some picturesquely voluptuous name, talk ecstatically and misleadingly about feminine beauty and show pictures of gorgeous blondes nourishing their tissues with skin food. “The cosmetic manufacturers,” one of their number has written, “are not selling lanolin, they are selling hope.” For this hope, this fraudulent implication of a promise that they will be transfigured, women will pay ten or twenty times the value of the emulsion which the propagandists have so skilfully related, by means of misleading symbols, to a deep-seated and almost universal feminine wish — the wish to be more attractive to members of the opposite sex. The principles underlying this kind of propaganda are extremely simple. Find some common desire, some widespread unconscious fear or anxiety; think out some way to relate this wish or fear to the product you have to sell; then build a bridge of verbal or pictorial symbols over which your customer

can pass from fact to compensatory dream, and from the dream to the illusion that your product, when purchased, will make the dream come true. "We no longer buy oranges, we buy vitality. We do not buy just an auto, we buy prestige." And so with all the rest. In toothpaste, for example, we buy, not a mere cleanser and antiseptic, but release from the fear of being sexually repulsive. In vodka and whisky we are not buying a protoplasmic poison which, in small doses, may depress the nervous system in a psychologically valuable way; we are buying friendliness and good fellowship, the warmth of Dingley Dell and the brilliance of the Mermaid Tavern. With our laxatives we buy the health of a Greek god, the radiance of one of Diana's nymphs. With the monthly best seller we acquire culture, the envy of our less literate neighbors and the respect of the sophisticated. In every case the motivation analyst has found some deep-seated wish or fear, whose energy can be used to move the consumer to part with cash and so, indirectly, to turn the wheels of industry. Stored in the minds and bodies of countless individuals, this potential energy is released by, and transmitted along, a line of symbols carefully laid out so as to bypass rationality and obscure the real issue.

Sometimes the symbols take effect by being disproportionately impressive, haunting and fascinating in their own right. Of this kind are the rites and pomps of religion. These "beauties of holiness" strengthen faith where it already exists and, where there is no faith, contribute to conversion. Appealing, as they do, only to the aesthetic sense, they guarantee neither the truth nor the ethical value of the doctrines with which they have been, quite arbitrarily, associated. As a matter of plain historical fact, the beauties of holiness have often been matched and indeed surpassed by the beauties of unholiness. Under Hitler, for example, the yearly Nuremberg rallies were masterpieces of ritual and theatrical art. "I had spent six years in St. Petersburg before the war in the best days of the old Russian ballet," writes Sir Nevile Henderson, the British ambassador to Hitler's Germany, "but for grandiose beauty I have never seen any ballet to compare with the Nuremberg rally." One thinks of Keats— "beauty is truth, truth beauty." Alas, the identity exists only on some ultimate, supramundane level. On the levels of politics and theology, beauty is perfectly compatible with nonsense and tyranny. Which is very fortunate; for if beauty were incompatible with nonsense and tyranny, there would be precious little art in the world. The masterpieces of painting, sculpture and architecture were produced as religious or political propaganda, for the greater glory of a god, a government or a priesthood. But most kings and priests have been despotic and all religions have been riddled with superstition. Genius has been the servant of tyranny and art has advertised the merits of the local cult. Time, as it passes, separates the good art from the bad metaphysics. Can we learn to make this separation, not after the event, but while it is actually taking place? That is the question.

In commercial propaganda the principle of the disproportionately fascinating symbol is clearly understood. Every propagandist has his Art Department, and attempts are constantly being made to beautify the billboards with striking posters, the advertising pages of magazines with lively drawings and photographs. There are no master-

pieces; for masterpieces appeal only to a limited audience, and the commercial propagandist is out to captivate the majority. For him, the ideal is a moderate excellence. Those who like this not too good, but sufficiently striking, art may be expected to like the products with which it has been associated and for which it symbolically stands.

Another disproportionately fascinating symbol is the Singing Commercial. Singing Commercials are a recent invention; but the Singing Theological and the Singing Devotional — the hymn and the psalm — are as old as religion itself. Singing Militaries, or marching songs, are coeval with war, and Singing Patriotics, the precursors of our national anthems, were doubtless used to promote group solidarity, to emphasize the distinction between “us” and “them,” by the wandering bands of paleolithic hunters and food gatherers. To most people music is intrinsically attractive. Moreover, melodies tend to ingrain themselves in the listener’s mind. A tune will haunt the memory during the whole of a lifetime. Here, for example, is a quite uninteresting statement or value judgment. As it stands nobody will pay attention to it. But now set the words to a catchy and easily remembered tune. Immediately they become words of power. Moreover, the words will tend automatically to repeat themselves every time the melody is heard or spontaneously remembered. Orpheus has entered into an alliance with Pavlov — the power of sound with the conditioned reflex. For the commercial propagandist, as for his colleagues in the fields of politics and religion, music possesses yet another advantage. Nonsense which it would be shameful for a reasonable being to write, speak or hear spoken can be sung or listened to by that same rational being with pleasure and even with a kind of intellectual conviction. Can we learn to separate the pleasure of singing or of listening to song from the all too human tendency to believe in the propaganda which the song is putting over? That again is the question.

Thanks to compulsory education and the rotary press, the propagandist has been able, for many years past, to convey his messages to virtually every adult in every civilized country. Today, thanks to radio and television, he is in the happy position of being able to communicate even with unschooled adults and not yet literate children.

Children, as might be expected, are highly susceptible to propaganda. They are ignorant of the world and its ways, and therefore completely unsuspecting. Their critical faculties are undeveloped. The youngest of them have not yet reached the age of reason and the older ones lack the experience on which their new-found rationality can effectively work. In Europe, conscripts used to be playfully referred to as “cannon fodder.” Their little brothers and sisters have now become radio fodder and television fodder. In my childhood we were taught to sing nursery rhymes and, in pious households, hymns. Today the little ones warble the Singing Commercials. Which is better — “Rheingold is my beer, the dry beer,” or “Hey diddle-diddle, the cat and the fiddle”? “Abide with me” or “You’ll wonder where the yellow went, when you brush your teeth with Pepsodent”? Who knows?

“I don’t say that children should be forced to harass their parents into buying products they’ve seen advertised on television, but at the same time I cannot close my eyes to the fact that it’s being done every day.” So writes the star of one of the

many programs beamed to a juvenile audience. "Children," he adds, "are living, talking records of what we tell them every day." And in due course these living, talking records of television commercials will grow up, earn money and buy the products of industry. "Think," writes Mr. Clyde Miller ecstatically, "think of what it can mean to your firm in profits if you can condition a million or ten million children, who will grow up into adults trained to buy your product, as soldiers are trained in advance when they hear the trigger words, Forward March!" Yes, just think of it! And at the same time remember that the dictators and the would-be dictators have been thinking about this sort of thing for years, and that millions, tens of millions, hundreds of millions of children are in process of growing up to buy the local despot's ideological product and, like well-trained soldiers, to respond with appropriate behavior to the trigger words implanted in those young minds by the despot's propagandists.

Self-government is in inverse ratio to numbers. The larger the constituency, the less the value of any particular vote. When he is merely one of millions, the individual elector feels himself to be impotent, a negligible quantity. The candidates he has voted into office are far away, at the top of the pyramid of power. Theoretically they are the servants of the people; but in fact it is the servants who give orders and the people, far off at the base of the great pyramid, who must obey. Increasing population and advancing technology have resulted in an increase in the number and complexity of organizations, an increase in the amount of power concentrated in the hands of officials and a corresponding decrease in the amount of control exercised by electors, coupled with a decrease in the public's regard for democratic procedures. Already weakened by the vast impersonal forces at work in the modern world, democratic institutions are now being undermined from within by the politicians and their propagandists.

Human beings act in a great variety of irrational ways, but all of them seem to be capable, if given a fair chance, of making a reasonable choice in the light of available evidence. Democratic institutions can be made to work only if all concerned do their best to impart knowledge and to encourage rationality. But today, in the world's most powerful democracy, the politicians and their propagandists prefer to make nonsense of democratic procedures by appealing almost exclusively to the ignorance and irrationality of the electors. "Both parties," we were told in 1956 by the editor of a leading business journal, "will merchandize their candidates and issues by the same methods that business has developed to sell goods. These include scientific selection of appeals and planned repetition... Radio spot announcements and ads will repeat phrases with a planned intensity. Billboards will push slogans of proven power... Candidates need, in addition to rich voices and good diction, to be able to look 'sincerely' at the TV camera."

The political merchandisers appeal only to the weaknesses of voters, never to their potential strength. They make no attempt to educate the masses into becoming fit for self-government; they are content merely to manipulate and exploit them. For this purpose all the resources of psychology and the social sciences are mobilized and set to work. Carefully selected samples of the electorate are given "interviews in depth."

These interviews in depth reveal the unconscious fears and wishes most prevalent in a given society at the time of an election. Phrases and images aimed at allaying or, if necessary, enhancing these fears, at satisfying these wishes, at least symbolically, are then chosen by the experts, tried out on readers and audiences, changed or improved in the light of the information thus obtained. After which the political campaign is ready for the mass communicators. All that is now needed is money and a candidate who can be coached to look “sincere.” Under the new dispensation, political principles and plans for specific action have come to lose most of their importance. The personality of the candidate and the way he is projected by the advertising experts are the things that really matter.

In one way or another, as vigorous he-man or kindly father, the candidate must be glamorous. He must also be an entertainer who never bores his audience. Inured to television and radio, that audience is accustomed to being distracted and does not like to be asked to concentrate or make a prolonged intellectual effort. All speeches by the entertainer-candidate must therefore be short and snappy. The great issues of the day must be dealt with in five minutes at the most — and preferably (since the audience will be eager to pass on to something a little livelier than inflation or the H-bomb) in sixty seconds flat. The nature of oratory is such that there has always been a tendency among politicians and clergymen to over-simplify complex issues. From a pulpit or a platform even the most conscientious of speakers finds it very difficult to tell the whole truth. The methods now being used to merchandise the political candidate as though he were a deodorant positively guarantee the electorate against ever hearing the truth about anything.

VII. Brainwashing

IN THE TWO preceding chapters I have described the techniques of what may be called wholesale mind-manipulation, as practiced by the greatest demagogue and the most successful salesmen in recorded history. But no human problem can be solved by wholesale methods alone. The shotgun has its place, but so has the hypodermic syringe. In the chapters that follow I shall describe some of the more effective techniques for manipulating not crowds, not entire publics, but isolated individuals.

In the course of his epoch-making experiments on the conditioned reflex, Ivan Pavlov observed that, when subjected to prolonged physical or psychic stress, laboratory animals exhibit all the symptoms of a nervous breakdown. Refusing to cope any longer with the intolerable situation, their brains go on strike, so to speak, and either stop working altogether (the dog loses consciousness), or else resort to slow-downs and sabotage (the dog behaves unrealistically, or develops the kind of physical symptoms which, in a human being, we would call hysterical). Some animals are more resistant to stress than others. Dogs possessing what Pavlov called a “strong excitatory” constitution break down much more quickly than dogs of a merely “lively” (as opposed to

a choleric or agitated) temperament. Similarly “weak inhibitory” dogs reach the end of their tether much sooner than do “calm imperturbable” dogs. But even the most stoical dog is unable to resist indefinitely. If the stress to which he is subjected is sufficiently intense or sufficiently prolonged, he will end by breaking down as abjectly and as completely as the weakest of his kind.

Pavlov’s findings were confirmed in the most distressing manner, and on a very large scale, during the two World Wars. As the result of a single catastrophic experience, or of a succession of terrors less appalling but frequently repeated, soldiers develop a number of disabling psychophysical symptoms. Temporary unconsciousness, extreme agitation, lethargy, functional blindness or paralysis, completely unrealistic responses to the challenge of events, strange reversals of lifelong patterns of behavior — all the symptoms, which Pavlov observed in his dogs, reappeared among the victims of what in the First World War was called “shell shock,” in the Second, “battle fatigue.” Every man, like every dog, has his own individual limit of endurance. Most men reach their limit after about thirty days of more or less continuous stress under the conditions of modern combat. The more than averagely susceptible succumb in only fifteen days. The more than averagely tough can resist for forty-five or even fifty days. Strong or weak, in the long run all of them break down. All, that is to say, of those who are initially sane. For, ironically enough, the only people who can hold up indefinitely under the stress of modern war are psychotics. Individual insanity is immune to the consequences of collective insanity.

The fact that every individual has his breaking point has been known and, in a crude unscientific way, exploited from time immemorial. In some cases man’s dreadful inhumanity to man has been inspired by the love of cruelty for its own horrible and fascinating sake. More often, however, pure sadism was tempered by utilitarianism, theology or reasons of state. Physical torture and other forms of stress were inflicted by lawyers in order to loosen the tongues of reluctant witnesses; by clergymen in order to punish the unorthodox and induce them to change their opinions; by the secret police to extract confessions from persons suspected of being hostile to the government. Under Hitler, torture, followed by mass extermination, was used on those biological heretics, the Jews. For a young Nazi, a tour of duty in the Extermination Camps was (in Himmler’s words) “the best indoctrination on inferior beings and the subhuman races.” Given the obsessional quality of the anti-Semitism which Hitler had picked up as a young man in the slums of Vienna, this revival of the methods employed by the Holy Office against heretics and witches was inevitable. But in the light of the findings of Pavlov and of the knowledge gained by psychiatrists in the treatment of war neuroses, it seems a hideous and grotesque anachronism. Stresses amply sufficient to cause a complete cerebral breakdown can be induced by methods which, though hatefully inhuman, fall short of physical torture.

Whatever may have happened in earlier years, it seems fairly certain that torture is not extensively used by the Communist police today. They draw their inspiration, not from the Inquisitor or the SS man, but from the physiologist and his methodically

conditioned laboratory animals. For the dictator and his policemen, Pavlov's findings have important practical implications. If the central nervous system of dogs can be broken down, so can the central nervous system of political prisoners. It is simply a matter of applying the right amount of stress for the right length of time. At the end of the treatment, the prisoner will be in a state of neurosis or hysteria, and will be ready to confess whatever his captors want him to confess.

But confession is not enough. A hopeless neurotic is no use to anyone. What the intelligent and practical dictator needs is not a patient to be institutionalized, or a victim to be shot, but a convert who will work for the Cause. Turning once again to Pavlov, he learns that, on their way to the point of final breakdown, dogs become more than normally suggestible. New behavior patterns can easily be installed while the dog is at or near the limit of its cerebral endurance, and these new behavior patterns seem to be ineradicable. The animal in which they have been implanted cannot be deconditioned; that which it has learned under stress will remain an integral part of its make-up.

Psychological stresses can be produced in many ways. Dogs become disturbed when stimuli are unusually strong; when the interval between a stimulus and the customary response is unduly prolonged and the animal is left in a state of suspense; when the brain is confused by stimuli that run counter to what the dog has learned to expect; when stimuli make no sense within the victim's established frame of reference. Furthermore, it has been found that the deliberate induction of fear, rage or anxiety markedly heightens the dog's suggestibility. If these emotions are kept at a high pitch of intensity for a long enough time, the brain goes 'on strike.' When this happens, new behavior patterns may be installed with the greatest of ease.

Among the physical stresses that increase a dog's suggestibility are fatigue, wounds and every form of sickness.

For the would-be dictator these findings possess important practical implications. They prove, for example, that Hitler was quite right in maintaining that mass meetings at night were more effective than mass meetings in the daytime. During the day, he wrote, "man's will power revolts with highest energy against any attempt at being forced under another's will and another's opinion. In the evening, however, they succumb more easily to the dominating force of a stronger will."

Pavlov would have agreed with him; fatigue increases suggestibility. (That is why, among other reasons, the commercial sponsors of television programs prefer the evening hours and are ready to back their preference with hard cash.)

Illness is even more effective than fatigue as an intensifier of suggestibility. In the past, sickrooms were the scene of countless religious conversions. The scientifically trained dictator of the future will have all the hospitals in his dominions wired for sound and equipped with pillow speakers. Canned persuasion will be on the air twenty-four hours a day, and the more important patients will be visited by political soul-savers and mind-changers just as, in the past, their ancestors were visited by priests, nuns and pious laymen.

The fact that strong negative emotions tend to heighten suggestibility and so facilitate a change of heart had been observed and exploited long before the days of Pavlov. As Dr. William Sargant has pointed out in his enlightening book, *Battle for the Mind*, John Wesley's enormous success as a preacher was based upon an intuitive understanding of the central nervous system. He would open his sermon with a long and detailed description of the torments to which, unless they underwent conversion, his hearers would undoubtedly be condemned for all eternity. Then, when terror and an agonizing sense of guilt had brought his audience to the verge, or in some cases over the verge, of a complete cerebral breakdown, he would change his tone and promise salvation to those who believed and repented. By this kind of preaching, Wesley converted thousands of men, women and children. Intense, prolonged fear broke them down and produced a state of greatly intensified suggestibility. In this state they were able to accept the preacher's theological pronouncements without question. After which they were reintegrated by words of comfort, and emerged from their ordeal with new and generally better behavior patterns ineradicably implanted in their minds and nervous systems.

The effectiveness of political and religious propaganda depends upon the methods employed, not upon the doctrines taught. These doctrines may be true or false, wholesome or pernicious — it makes little or no difference. If the indoctrination is given in the right way at the proper stage of nervous exhaustion, it will work. Under favorable conditions, practically everybody can be converted to practically anything.

We possess detailed descriptions of the methods used by the Communist police for dealing with political prisoners. From the moment he is taken into custody, the victim is subjected systematically to many kinds of physical and psychological stress. He is badly fed, he is made extremely uncomfortable, he is not allowed to sleep for more than a few hours each night. And all the time he is kept in a state of suspense, uncertainty and acute apprehension. Day after day — or rather night after night, for these Pavlovian policemen understand the value of fatigue as an intensifier of suggestibility — he is questioned, often for many hours at a stretch, by interrogators who do their best to frighten, confuse and bewilder him. After a few weeks or months of such treatment, his brain goes on strike and he confesses whatever it is that his captors want him to confess. Then, if he is to be converted rather than shot, he is offered the comfort of hope. If he will but accept the true faith, he can yet be saved — not, of course, in the next life (for, officially, there is no next life), but in this.

Similar but rather less drastic methods were used during the Korean War on military prisoners. In their Chinese camps the young Western captives were systematically subjected to stress. Thus, for the most trivial breaches of the rules, offenders would be summoned to the commandant's office, there to be questioned, browbeaten and publicly humiliated. And the process would be repeated, again and again, at any hour of the day or night. This continuous harassment produced in its victims a sense of bewilderment and chronic anxiety. To intensify their sense of guilt, prisoners were made to write and rewrite, in ever more intimate detail, long autobiographical accounts of their

shortcomings. And after having confessed their own sins, they were required to confess the sins of their companions. The aim was to create within the camp a nightmarish society, in which everybody was spying on, and informing against, everyone else. To these mental stresses were added the physical stresses of malnutrition, discomfort and illness. The increased suggestibility thus induced was skilfully exploited by the Chinese, who poured into these abnormally receptive minds large doses of pro-Communist and anti-capitalist literature. These Pavlovian techniques were remarkably successful. One out of every seven American prisoners was guilty, we are officially told, of grave collaboration with the Chinese authorities, one out of three of technical collaboration.

It must not be supposed that this kind of treatment is reserved by the Communists exclusively for their enemies. The young field workers, whose business it was, during the first years of the new regime, to act as Communist missionaries and organizers in China's innumerable towns and villages were made to take a course of indoctrination far more intense than that to which any prisoner of war was ever subjected. In his *China under Communism* R. L. Walker describes the methods by which the party leaders are able to fabricate out of ordinary men and women the thousands of selfless fanatics required for spreading the Communist gospel and for enforcing Communist policies. Under this system of training, the human raw material is shipped to special camps, where the trainees are completely isolated from their friends, families and the outside world in general. In these camps they are made to perform exhausting physical and mental work; they are never alone, always in groups; they are encouraged to spy on one another; they are required to write self-accusatory autobiographies; they live in chronic fear of the dreadful fate that may befall them on account of what has been said about them by informers or of what they themselves have confessed. In this state of heightened suggestibility they are given an intensive course in theoretical and applied Marxism — a course in which failure to pass examinations may mean anything from ignominious expulsion to a term in a forced labor camp or even liquidation. After about six months of this kind of thing, prolonged mental and physical stress produces the results which Pavlov's findings would lead one to expect. One after another, or in whole groups, the trainees break down. Neurotic and hysterical symptoms make their appearance. Some of the victims commit suicide, others (as many, we are told, as 20 per cent of the total) develop a severe mental illness. Those who survive the rigors of the conversion process emerge with new and ineradicable behavior patterns. All their ties with the past — friends, family, traditional decencies and pieties — have been severed. They are new men, recreated in the image of their new god and totally dedicated to his service.

Throughout the Communist world tens of thousands of these disciplined and devoted young men are being turned out every year from hundreds of conditioning centers. What the Jesuits did for the Roman Church of the Counter Reformation, these products of a more scientific and even harsher training are now doing, and will doubtless continue to do, for the Communist parties of Europe, Asia and Africa.

In politics Pavlov seems to have been an old-fashioned liberal. But, by a strange irony of fate, his researches and the theories he based upon them have called into existence a great army of fanatics dedicated heart and soul, reflex and nervous system, to the destruction of old-fashioned liberalism, wherever it can be found.

Brainwashing, as it is now practiced, is a hybrid technique, depending for its effectiveness partly on the systematic use of violence, partly on skilful psychological manipulation. It represents the tradition of 1984 on its way to becoming the tradition of Brave New World. Under a long-established and well-regulated dictatorship our current methods of semiviolent manipulation will seem, no doubt, absurdly crude. Conditioned from earliest infancy (and perhaps also biologically predestined), the average middle- or lower-caste individual will never require conversion or even a refresher course in the true faith. The members of the highest caste will have to be able to think new thoughts in response to new situations; consequently their training will be much less rigid than the training imposed upon those whose business is not to reason why, but merely to do and die with the minimum of fuss. These upper-caste individuals will be members, still, of a wild species — the trainers and guardians, themselves only slightly conditioned, of a breed of completely domesticated animals. Their wildness will make it possible for them to become heretical and rebellious. When this happens, they will have to be either liquidated, or brainwashed back into orthodoxy, or (as in Brave New World) exiled to some island, where they can give no further trouble, except of course to one another. But universal infant conditioning and the other techniques of manipulation and control are still a few generations away in the future. On the road to the Brave New World our rulers will have to rely on the transitional and provisional techniques of brainwashing.

VIII. Chemical Persuasion

IN THE BRAVE New World of my fable there was no whisky, no tobacco, no illicit heroin, no bootlegged cocaine. People neither smoked, nor drank, nor sniffed, nor gave themselves injections. Whenever anyone felt depressed or below par, he would swallow a tablet or two of a chemical compound called soma. The original soma, from which I took the name of this hypothetical drug, was an unknown plant (possibly *Asclepias acida*) used by the ancient Aryan invaders of India in one of the most solemn of their religious rites. The intoxicating juice expressed from the stems of this plant was drunk by the priests and nobles in the course of an elaborate ceremony. In the Vedic hymns we are told that the drinkers of soma were blessed in many ways. Their bodies were strengthened, their hearts were filled with courage, joy and enthusiasm, their minds were enlightened and in an immediate experience of eternal life they received the assurance of their immortality. But the sacred juice had its drawbacks. Soma was a dangerous drug — so dangerous that even the great sky-god, Indra, was sometimes made ill by drinking it. Ordinary mortals might even die of an overdose. But the

experience was so transcendently blissful and enlightening that soma drinking was regarded as a high privilege. For this privilege no price was too great.

The soma of Brave New World had none of the drawbacks of its Indian original. In small doses it brought a sense of bliss, in larger doses it made you see visions and, if you took three tablets, you would sink in a few minutes into refreshing sleep. And all at no physiological or mental cost. The Brave New Worlders could take holidays from their black moods, or from the familiar annoyances of everyday life, without sacrificing their health or permanently reducing their efficiency.

In the Brave New World the soma habit was not a private vice; it was a political institution, it was the very essence of the Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. But this most precious of the subjects' inalienable privileges was at the same time one of the most powerful instruments of rule in the dictator's armory. The systematic drugging of individuals for the benefit of the State (and incidentally, of course, for their own delight) was a main plank in the policy of the World Controllers. The daily soma ration was an insurance against personal maladjustment, social unrest and the spread of subversive ideas. Religion, Karl Marx declared, is the opium of the people. In the Brave New World this situation was reversed. Opium, or rather soma, was the people's religion. Like religion, the drug had power to console and compensate, it called up visions of another, better world, it offered hope, strengthened faith and promoted charity. Beer, a poet has written,

... does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man.

And let us remember that, compared with soma, beer is a drug of the crudest and most unreliable kind. In this matter of justifying God's ways to man, soma is to alcohol as alcohol is to the theological arguments of Milton.

In 1931, when I was writing about the imaginary synthetic by means of which future generations would be made both happy and docile, the well-known American biochemist, Dr. Irvine Page, was preparing to leave Germany, where he had spent the three preceding years at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute, working on the chemistry of the brain. "It is hard to understand," Dr. Page has written in a recent article, "why it took so long for scientists to get around to investigating the chemical reactions in their own brains. I speak," he adds, "from acute personal experience. When I came home in 1931 ... I could not get a job in this field (the field of brain chemistry) or stir a ripple of interest in it." Today, twenty-seven years later, the non-existent ripple of 1931 has become a tidal wave of biochemical and psychopharmacological research. The enzymes which regulate the workings of the brain are being studied. Within the body, hitherto unknown chemical substances such as adrenochrome and serotonin (of which Dr. Page was a co-discoverer) have been isolated and their far-reaching effects on our mental and physical functions are now being investigated. Meanwhile new drugs are being synthesized — drugs that reinforce or correct or interfere with the actions of the various chemicals, by means of which the nervous system performs its daily and hourly miracles as the controller of the body, the instrument and mediator of consciousness.

From our present point of view, the most interesting fact about these new drugs is that they temporarily alter the chemistry of the brain and the associated state of the mind without doing any permanent damage to the organism as a whole. In this respect they are like soma — and profoundly unlike the mind-changing drugs of the past. For example, the classical tranquillizer is opium. But opium is a dangerous drug which, from neolithic times down to the present day, has been making addicts and ruining health. The same is true of the classical euphoric, alcohol — the drug which, in the words of the Psalmist, “maketh glad the heart of man.” But unfortunately alcohol not only maketh glad the heart of man; it also, in excessive doses, causes illness and addiction, and has been a main source, for the last eight or ten thousand years, of crime, domestic unhappiness, moral degradation and avoidable accidents.

Among the classical stimulants, tea, coffee and maté are, thank goodness, almost completely harmless. They are also very weak stimulants. Unlike these “cups that cheer but not inebriate,” cocaine is a very powerful and a very dangerous drug. Those who make use of it must pay for their ecstasies, their sense of unlimited physical and mental power, by spells of agonizing depression, by such horrible physical symptoms as the sensation of being infested by myriads of crawling insects and by paranoid delusions that may lead to crimes of violence. Another stimulant of more recent vintage is amphetamine, better known under its trade name of Benzedrine. Amphetamine works very effectively — but works, if abused, at the expense of mental and physical health. It has been reported that, in Japan, there are now about one million amphetamine addicts.

Of the classical vision-producers the best known are the peyote of Mexico and the southwestern United States and *Cannabis sativa*, consumed all over the world under such names as hashish, bhang, kif and marihuana. According to the best medical and anthropological evidence, peyote is far less harmful than the White Man’s gin or whisky. It permits the Indians who use it in their religious rites to enter paradise, and to feel at one with the beloved community, without making them pay for the privilege by anything worse than the ordeal of having to chew on something with a revolting flavor and of feeling somewhat nauseated for an hour or two. *Cannabis sativa* is a less innocuous drug — though not nearly so harmful as the sensation-mongers would have us believe. The Medical Committee, appointed in 1944 by the Mayor of New York to investigate the problem of marihuana, came to the conclusion, after careful investigation, that *Cannabis sativa* is not a serious menace to society, or even to those who indulge in it. It is merely a nuisance.

From these classical mind-changes we pass to the latest products of psychopharmacological research. Most highly publicized of these are the three new tranquillizers, reserpine, chlorpromazine and meprobamate. Administered to certain classes of psychotics, the first two have proved to be remarkably effective, not in curing mental illnesses, but at least in temporarily abolishing their more distressing symptoms. Meprobamate (alias Miltown) produces similar effects in persons suffering from various forms of neurosis. None of these drugs is perfectly harmless; but their cost, in terms of

physical health and mental efficiency, is extraordinarily low. In a world where nobody gets anything for nothing tranquillizers offer a great deal for very little. Miltown and chlorpromazine are not yet soma; but they come fairly near to being one of the aspects of that mythical drug. They provide temporary relief from nervous tension without, in the great majority of cases, inflicting permanent organic harm, and without causing more than a rather slight impairment, while the drug is working, of intellectual and physical efficiency. Except as narcotics, they are probably to be preferred to the barbiturates, which blunt the mind's cutting edge and, in large doses, cause a number of undesirable psychophysical symptoms and may result in a full-blown addiction.

In LSD-25 (lysergic acid diethylamide) the pharmacologists have recently created another aspect of soma — a perception-improver and vision-producer that is, physiologically speaking, almost costless. This extraordinary drug, which is effective in doses as small as fifty or even twenty-five millionths of a gram, has power (like peyote) to transport people into the other world. In the majority of cases, the other world to which LSD-25 gives access is heavenly; alternatively it may be purgatorial or even infernal. But, positive or negative, the lysergic acid experience is felt by almost everyone who undergoes it to be profoundly significant and enlightening. In any event, the fact that minds can be changed so radically at so little cost to the body is altogether astonishing.

Soma was not only a vision-producer and a tranquillizer; it was also (and no doubt impossibly) a stimulant of mind and body, a creator of active euphoria as well as of the negative happiness that follows the release from anxiety and tension.

The ideal stimulant — powerful but innocuous — still awaits discovery. Amphetamine, as we have seen, was far from satisfactory; it exacted too high a price for what it gave. A more promising candidate for the role of soma in its third aspect is Iproniazid, which is now being used to lift depressed patients out of their misery, to enliven the apathetic and in general to increase the amount of available psychic energy. Still more promising, according to a distinguished pharmacologist of my acquaintance, is a new compound, still in the testing stage, to be known as Deaner. Deaner is an ammo-alcohol and is thought to increase the production of acetyl-choline within the body, and thereby to increase the activity and effectiveness of the nervous system. The man who takes the new pill needs less sleep, feels more alert and cheerful, thinks faster and better — and all at next to no organic cost, at any rate in the short run. It sounds almost too good to be true.

We see then that, though soma does not yet exist (and will probably never exist), fairly good substitutes for the various aspects of soma have already been discovered. There are now physiologically cheap tranquillizers, physiologically cheap vision-producers and physiologically cheap stimulants.

That a dictator could, if he so desired, make use of these drugs for political purposes is obvious. He could ensure himself against political unrest by changing the chemistry of his subjects' brains and so making them content with their servile condition. He could use tranquillizers to calm the excited, stimulants to arouse enthusiasm in the

indifferent, hallucinants to distract the attention of the wretched from their miseries. But how, it may be asked, will the dictator get his subjects to take the pills that will make them think, feel and behave in the ways he finds desirable? In all probability it will be enough merely to make the pills available. Today alcohol and tobacco are available, and people spend considerably more on these very unsatisfactory euphorics, pseudo-stimulants and sedatives than they are ready to spend on the education of their children. Or consider the barbiturates and the tranquillizers. In the United States these drugs can be obtained only on a doctor's prescription. But the demand of the American public for something that will make life in an urban-industrial environment a little more tolerable is so great that doctors are now writing prescriptions for the various tranquillizers at the rate of forty-eight millions a year. Moreover, a majority of these prescriptions are refilled. A hundred doses of happiness are not enough: send to the drugstore for another bottle — and, when that is finished, for another... There can be no doubt that, if tranquillizers could be bought as easily and cheaply as aspirin, they would be consumed, not by the billions, as they are at present, but by the scores and hundreds of billions. And a good, cheap stimulant would be almost as popular.

Under a dictatorship pharmacists would be instructed to change their tune with every change of circumstances. In times of national crisis it would be their business to push the sale of stimulants. Between crises, too much alertness and energy on the part of his subjects might prove embarrassing to the tyrant. At such times the masses would be urged to buy tranquillizers and vision-producers. Under the influence of these soothing syrups they could be relied upon to give their master no trouble.

As things now stand, the tranquillizers may prevent some people from giving enough trouble, not only to their rulers, but even to themselves. Too much tension is a disease; but so is too little. There are certain occasions when we ought to be tense, when an excess of tranquillity (and especially of tranquillity imposed from the outside, by a chemical) is entirely inappropriate.

At a recent symposium on meprobamate, in which I was a participant, an eminent biochemist playfully suggested that the United States government should make a free gift to the Soviet people of fifty billion doses of this most popular of the tranquillizers. The joke had a serious point to it. In a contest between two populations, one of which is being constantly stimulated by threats and promises, constantly directed by one-pointed propaganda, while the other is no less constantly being distracted by television and tranquillized by Miltown, which of the opponents is more likely to come out on top?

As well as tranquillizing, hallucinating and stimulating, the soma of my fable had the power of heightening suggestibility, and so could be used to reinforce the effects of governmental propaganda. Less effectively and at a higher physiological cost, several drugs already in the pharmacopoeia can be used for the same purpose. There is scopolamine, for example, the active principle of henbane and, in large doses, a powerful poison; there are pentothal and sodium amytal. Nicknamed for some odd reason "the truth serum," pentothal has been used by the police of various countries for the

purpose of extracting confessions from (or perhaps suggesting confessions to) reluctant criminals. Pentothal and sodium amytal lower the barrier between the conscious and the subconscious mind and are of great value in the treatment of “battle fatigue” by the process known in England as “abreaction therapy,” in America as “narcosynthesis.” It is said that these drugs are sometimes employed by the Communists, when preparing important prisoners for their public appearance in court.

Meanwhile pharmacology, biochemistry and neurology are on the march, and we can be quite certain that, in the course of the next few years, new and better chemical methods for increasing suggestibility and lowering psychological resistance will be discovered. Like everything else, these discoveries may be used well or badly. They may help the psychiatrist in his battle against mental illness, or they may help the dictator in his battle against freedom. More probably (since science is divinely impartial) they will both enslave and make free, heal and at the same time destroy.

IX. Subconscious Persuasion

IN A FOOTNOTE appended to the 1919 edition of his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Sigmund Freud called attention to the work of Dr. Poetzl, an Austrian neurologist, who had recently published a paper describing his experiments with the tachistoscope. (The tachistoscope is an instrument that comes in two forms — a viewing box, into which the subject looks at an image that is exposed for a small fraction of a second; a magic lantern with a high-speed shutter, capable of projecting an image very briefly upon a screen.) In these experiments “Poetzl required the subjects to make a drawing of what they had consciously noted of a picture exposed to their view in a tachistoscope... He then turned his attention to the dreams dreamed by the subjects during the following night and required them once more to make drawings of appropriate portions of these dreams. It was shown unmistakably that those details of the exposed picture which had not been noted by the subject provided material for the construction of the dream.”

With various modifications and refinements Poetzl’s experiments have been repeated several times, most recently by Dr. Charles Fisher, who has contributed three excellent papers on the subject of dreams and “preconscious perception” to the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*. Meanwhile the academic psychologists have not been idle. Confirming Poetzl’s findings, their studies have shown that people actually see and hear a great deal more than they consciously know they see and hear, and that what they see and hear without knowing it is recorded by the subconscious mind and may affect their conscious thoughts, feelings and behavior.

Pure science does not remain pure indefinitely. Sooner or later it is apt to turn into applied science and finally into technology. Theory modulates into industrial practice, knowledge becomes power, formulas and laboratory experiments undergo a metamorphosis, and emerge as the H-bomb. In the present case, Poetzl’s nice little piece of pure

science, and all the other nice little pieces of pure science in the field of preconscious perception, retained their pristine purity for a surprisingly long time. Then, in the early autumn of 1957, exactly forty years after the publication of Poetzl's original paper, it was announced that their purity was a thing of the past; they had been applied, they had entered the realm of technology. The announcement made a considerable stir, and was talked and written about all over the civilized world. And no wonder; for the new technique of "subliminal projection," as it was called, was intimately associated with mass entertainment, and in the life of civilized human beings mass entertainment now plays a part comparable to that played in the Middle Ages by religion. Our epoch has been given many nicknames — the Age of Anxiety, the Atomic Age, the Space Age. It might, with equally good reason, be called the Age of Television Addiction, the Age of Soap Opera, the Age of the Disk Jockey. In such an age the announcement that Poetzl's pure science had been applied in the form of a technique of subliminal projection could not fail to arouse the most intense interest among the world's mass entertainees. For the new technique was aimed directly at them, and its purpose was to manipulate their minds without their being aware of what was being done to them. By means of specially designed tachistoscopes words or images were to be flashed for a millisecond or less upon the screens of television sets and motion picture theaters during (not before or after) the program. "Drink Coca-Cola" or "Light up a Camel" would be superimposed upon the lovers' embrace, the tears of the broken-hearted mother, and the optic nerves of the viewers would record these secret messages, their subconscious minds would respond to them and in due course they would consciously feel a craving for soda pop and tobacco. And meanwhile other secret messages would be whispered too softly, or squeaked too shrilly, for conscious hearing. Consciously the listener might be paying attention to some such phrase as "Darling, I love you"; but subliminally, beneath the threshold of awareness, his incredibly sensitive ears and his subconscious mind would be taking in the latest good news about deodorants and laxatives.

Does this kind of commercial propaganda really work? The evidence produced by the commercial firm that first unveiled a technique for subliminal projection was vague and, from a scientific point of view, very unsatisfactory. Repeated at regular intervals during the showing of a picture in a movie theater, the command to buy more popcorn was said to have resulted in a 50 per cent increase in popcorn sales during the intermission. But a single experiment proves very little. Moreover, this particular experiment was poorly set up. There were no controls and no attempt was made to allow for the many variables that undoubtedly affect the consumption of popcorn by a theater audience. And anyhow was this the most effective way of applying the knowledge accumulated over the years by the scientific investigators of subconscious perception? Was it intrinsically probable that, by merely flashing the name of a product and a command to buy it, you would be able to break down sales resistance and recruit new customers? The answer to both these questions is pretty obviously in the negative. But this does not mean, of course, that the findings of the neurologists and psychologists are without

any practical importance. Skillfully applied, Poetzl's nice little piece of pure science might well become a powerful instrument for the manipulation of unsuspecting minds.

For a few suggestive hints let us now turn from the popcorn vendors to those who, with less noise but more imagination and better methods, have been experimenting in the same field. In Britain, where the process of manipulating minds below the level of consciousness is known as "strobonic injection," investigators have stressed the practical importance of creating the right psychological conditions for subconscious persuasion. A suggestion above the threshold of awareness is more likely to take effect when the recipient is in a light hypnotic trance, under the influence of certain drugs, or has been debilitated by illness, starvation, or any kind of physical or emotional stress. But what is true for suggestions above the threshold of consciousness is also true for suggestions beneath that threshold. In a word, the lower the level of a person's psychological resistance, the greater will be the effectiveness of strobonically injected suggestions. The scientific dictator of tomorrow will set up his whispering machines and subliminal projectors in schools and hospitals (children and the sick are highly suggestible), and in all public places where audiences can be given a preliminary softening up by suggestibility-increasing oratory or rituals.

From the conditions under which we may expect subliminal suggestion to be effective we now pass to the suggestions themselves. In what terms should the propagandist address himself to his victims' subconscious minds? Direct commands ("Buy popcorn" or "Vote for Jones") and unqualified statements ("Socialism stinks" or "X's toothpaste cures halitosis") are likely to take effect only upon those minds that are already partial to Jones and popcorn, already alive to the dangers of body odors and the public ownership of the means of production. But to strengthen existing faith is not enough; the propagandist, if he is worth his salt, must create new faith, must know how to bring the indifferent and the undecided over to his side, must be able to mollify and perhaps even convert the hostile. To subliminal assertion and command he knows that he must add subliminal persuasion.

Above the threshold of awareness, one of the most effective methods of non-rational persuasion is what may be called persuasion-by-association. The propagandist arbitrarily associates his chosen product, candidate or cause with some idea, some image of a person or thing which most people, in a given culture, unquestioningly regard as good. Thus, in a selling campaign female beauty may be arbitrarily associated with anything from a bulldozer to a diuretic; in a political campaign patriotism may be associated with any cause from apartheid to integration, and with any kind of person, from a Mahatma Gandhi to a Senator McCarthy. Years ago, in Central America, I observed an example of persuasion-by-association which filled me with an appalled admiration for the men who had devised it. In the mountains of Guatemala the only imported art works are the colored calendars distributed free of charge by the foreign companies whose products are sold to the Indians. The American calendars showed pictures of dogs, of landscapes, of young women in a state of partial nudity. But to the Indian dogs are merely utilitarian objects, landscapes are what he sees only too

much of, every day of his life, and half-naked blondes are uninteresting, perhaps a little repulsive. American calendars were, in consequence, far less popular than German calendars; for the German advertisers had taken the trouble to find out what the Indians valued and were interested in. I remember in particular one masterpiece of commercial propaganda. It was a calendar put out by a manufacturer of aspirin. At the bottom of the picture one saw the familiar trademark on the familiar bottle of white tablets. Above it were no snow scenes or autumnal woods, no cocker spaniels or bosomy chorus girls. No — the wily Germans had associated their pain-relievers with a brightly colored and extremely lifelike picture of the Holy Trinity sitting on a cumulus cloud and surrounded by St. Joseph, the Virgin Mary, assorted saints and a large number of angels. The miraculous virtues of acetyl salicylic acid were thus guaranteed, in the Indians' simple and deeply religious minds, by God the Father and the entire heavenly host.

This kind of persuasion-by-association is something to which the techniques of subliminal projection seem to lend themselves particularly well. In a series of experiments carried out at New York University, under the auspices of the National Institute of Health, it was found that a person's feelings about some consciously seen image could be modified by associating it, on the subconscious level, with another image, or, better still, with value-bearing words. Thus, when associated, on the subconscious level, with the word "happy," a blank expressionless face would seem to the observer to smile, to look friendly, amiable, outgoing. When the same face was associated, also on the subconscious level, with the word "angry," it took on a forbidding expression, and seemed to the observer to have become hostile and disagreeable. (To a group of young women, it also came to seem very masculine — whereas when it was associated with "happy," they saw the face as belonging to a member of their own sex. Fathers and husbands, please take note.) For the commercial and political propagandist, these findings, it is obvious, are highly significant. If he can put his victims into a state of abnormally high suggestibility, if he can show them, while they are in that state, the thing, the person or, through a symbol, the cause he has to sell, and if, on the subconscious level, he can associate this thing, person or symbol with some value-bearing word or image, he may be able to modify their feelings and opinions without their having any idea of what he is doing. It should be possible, according to an enterprising commercial group in New Orleans, to enhance the entertainment value of films and television plays by using this technique. People like to feel strong emotions and therefore enjoy tragedies, thrillers, murder mysteries and tales of passion. The dramatization of a fight or an embrace produces strong emotions in the spectators. It might produce even stronger emotions if it were associated, on the subconscious level, with appropriate words or symbols. For example, in the film version of *A Farewell to Arms*, the death of the heroine in childbirth might be made even more distressing than it already is by subliminally flashing upon the screen, again and again, during the playing of the scene, such ominous words as "pain," "blood" and "death." Consciously, the words would not be seen; but their effect upon the subconscious mind might be very great and these effects might

powerfully reinforce the emotions evoked, on the conscious level, by the acting and the dialogue. If, as seems pretty certain, subliminal projection can consistently intensify the emotions felt by moviegoers, the motion picture industry may yet be saved from bankruptcy — that is, if the producers of television plays don't get there first.

In the light of what has been said about persuasion-by-association and the enhancement of emotions by subliminal suggestion, let us try to imagine what the political meeting of tomorrow will be like. The candidate (if there is still a question of candidates), or the appointed representative of the ruling oligarchy, will make his speech for all to hear. Meanwhile the tachistoscopes, the whispering and squeaking machines, the projectors of images so dim that only the subconscious mind can respond to them, will be reinforcing what he says by systematically associating the man and his cause with positively charged words and hallowed images, and by strobonically injecting negatively charged words and odious symbols whenever he mentions the enemies of the State or the Party. In the United States brief flashes of Abraham Lincoln and the words "government by the people" will be projected upon the rostrum. In Russia the speaker will, of course, be associated with glimpses of Lenin, with the words "people's democracy," with the prophetic beard of Father Marx. Because all this is still safely in the future, we can afford to smile. Ten or twenty years from now, it will probably seem a good deal less amusing. For what is now merely science fiction will have become everyday political fact.

Poetzl was one of the portents which, when writing *Brave New World*, I somehow overlooked. There is no reference in my fable to subliminal projection. It is a mistake of omission which, if I were to rewrite the book today, I should most certainly correct.

X. Hypnopaedia

IN THE LATE autumn of 1957 the Woodland Road Camp, a penal institution in Tulare County, California, became the scene of a curious and interesting experiment. Miniature loud-speakers were placed under the pillows of a group of prisoners who had volunteered to act as psychological guinea pigs. Each of these pillow speakers was hooked up to a phonograph in the Warden's office. Every hour throughout the night an inspirational whisper repeated a brief homily on "the principles of moral living." Waking at midnight, a prisoner might hear this still small voice extolling the cardinal virtues or murmuring, on behalf of his own Better Self, "I am filled with love and compassion for all, so help me God."

After reading about the Woodland Road Camp, I turned to the second chapter of *Brave New World*. In that chapter the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning for Western Europe explains to a group of freshman conditioners and hatchers the workings of that state-controlled system of ethical education, known in the seventh century After Ford as hypnopaedia. The earliest attempts at sleep-teaching, the Director told his audience, had been misguided, and therefore unsuccessful. Educators had tried to give

intellectual training to their slumbering pupils. But intellectual activity is incompatible with sleep. Hypnopaedia became successful only when it was used for moral training — in other words, for the conditioning of behavior through verbal suggestion at a time of lowered psychological resistance. “Wordless conditioning is crude and wholesale, cannot inculcate the more complex courses of behavior required by the State. For that there must be words, but words without reason” ... the kind of words that require no analysis for their comprehension, but can be swallowed whole by the sleeping brain. This is true hypnopaedia, “the greatest moralizing and socializing force of all time.” In the Brave New World, no citizens belonging to the lower castes ever gave any trouble. Why? Because, from the moment he could speak and understand what was said to him, every lower-caste child was exposed to endlessly repeated suggestions, night after night, during the hours of drowsiness and sleep. These suggestions were “like drops of liquid sealing wax, drops that adhere, incrust, incorporate themselves with what they fall on, till finally the rock is all one scarlet blob. Till at last the child’s mind is these suggestions and the sum of these suggestions is the child’s mind. And not the child’s mind only. The adult’s mind too — all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and decides — made up of these suggestions. But these suggestions are our suggestions — suggestions from the State...”

To date, so far as I know, hypnopaedic suggestions have been given by no state more formidable than Tulare County, and the nature of Tulare’s hypnopaedic suggestions to lawbreakers is unexceptionable. If only all of us, and not only the inmates of the Woodland Road Camp, could be effectively filled, during our sleep, with love and compassion for all! No, it is not the message conveyed by the inspirational whisper that one objects to; it is the principle of sleep-teaching by governmental agencies. Is hypnopaedia the sort of instrument that officials, delegated to exercise authority in a democratic society, ought to be allowed to use at their discretion? In the present instance they are using it only on volunteers and with the best intentions. But there is no guarantee that in other cases the intentions will be good or the indoctrination on a voluntary basis. Any law or social arrangement which makes it possible for officials to be led into temptation is bad. Any law or arrangement which preserves them from being tempted to abuse their delegated power for their own advantage, or for the benefit of the State or of some political, economic or ecclesiastical organization, is good. Hypnopaedia, if it is effective, would be a tremendously powerful instrument in the hands of anyone in a position to impose suggestions upon a captive audience. A democratic society is a society dedicated to the proposition that power is often abused and should therefore be entrusted to officials only in limited amounts and for limited periods of time. In such a society, the use of hypnopaedia by officials should be regulated by law — that is, of course, if hypnopaedia is genuinely an instrument of power. But is it in fact an instrument of power? Will it work now as well as I imagined it working in the seventh century A.F.? Let us examine the evidence.

In the Psychological Bulletin for July, 1955, Charles W. Simon and William H. Emmons have analyzed and evaluated the ten most important studies in the field.

All these studies were concerned with memory. Does sleep-teaching help the pupil in his task of learning by rote? And to what extent is material whispered into the ear of a sleeping person remembered next morning when he wakes? Simon and Emmons answer as follows: "Ten sleep-learning studies were reviewed. Many of these have been cited uncritically by commercial firms or in popular magazines and news articles as evidence in support of the feasibility of learning during sleep. A critical analysis was made of their experimental design, statistics, methodology and criteria of sleep. All the studies had weaknesses in one or more of these areas. The studies do not make it unequivocally clear that learning during sleep actually takes place. But some learning appears to take place in a special kind of waking state wherein the subjects do not remember later on if they had been awake. This may be of great practical importance from the standpoint of economy in study time, but it cannot be construed as sleep learning... The problem is partially confounded by an inadequate definition of sleep."

Meanwhile the fact remains that in the American Army during the Second World War (and even, experimentally, during the First) daytime instruction in the Morse Code and in foreign languages was supplemented by instruction during sleep — apparently with satisfactory results. Since the end of World War II several commercial firms in the United States and elsewhere have sold large numbers of pillow speakers and clock-controlled phonographs and tape recorders for the use of actors in a hurry to learn their parts, of politicians and preachers who want to give the illusion of being extemporaneously eloquent, of students preparing for examinations and, finally and most profitably, of the countless people who are dissatisfied with themselves as they are and would like to be suggested or autosuggested into becoming something else. Self-administered suggestion can easily be recorded on magnetic tape and listened to, over and over again, by day and during sleep. Suggestions from the outside may be bought in the form of records carrying a wide variety of helpful messages. There are on the market records for the release of tension and the induction of deep relaxation, records for promoting self-confidence (much used by salesmen), records for increasing one's charm and making one's personality more magnetic. Among the best sellers are records for the achievement of sexual harmony and records for those who wish to lose weight. ("I am cold to chocolate, insensible to the lure of potatoes, utterly unmoved by muffins.") There are records for improved health and even records for making more money. And the remarkable thing is that, according to the unsolicited testimonials sent in by grateful purchasers of these records, many people actually do make more money after listening to hypnopaedic suggestions to that effect, many obese ladies do lose weight and many couples on the verge of divorce achieve sexual harmony and live happily ever after.

In this context an article by Theodore X. Barber, "Sleep and Hypnosis," which appeared in *The Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* for October, 1956, is most enlightening. Mr. Barber points out that there is a significant difference between light sleep and deep sleep. In deep sleep the electroencephalograph records no alpha waves; in light sleep alpha waves make their appearance. In this respect light sleep is

closer to the waking and hypnotic states (in both of which alpha waves are present) than it is to deep sleep. A loud noise will cause a person in deep sleep to awaken. A less violent stimulus will not arouse him, but will cause the reappearance of alpha waves. Deep sleep has given place for the time being to light sleep.

A person in deep sleep is unsuggestible. But when subjects in light sleep are given suggestions, they will respond to them, Mr. Barber found, in the same way that they respond to suggestions when in the hypnotic trance.

Many of the earlier investigators of hypnotism made similar experiments. In his classical *History, Practice and Theory of Hypnotism*, first published in 1903, Milne Bramwell records that “many authorities claim to have changed natural sleep into hypnotic sleep. According to Wetterstrand, it is often very easy to put oneself en rapport with sleeping persons, especially children... Wetterstrand thinks this method of inducing hypnosis of much practical value and claims to have often used it successfully.” Bramwell cites many other experienced hypnotists (including such eminent authorities as Bernheim, Moll and Forel) to the same effect. Today an experimenter would not speak of “changing natural into hypnotic sleep.” All he is prepared to say is that light sleep (as opposed to deep sleep without alpha waves) is a state in which many subjects will accept suggestions as readily as they do when under hypnosis. For example, after being told, when lightly asleep, that they will wake up in a little while, feeling extremely thirsty, many subjects will duly wake up with a dry throat and a craving for water. The cortex may be too inactive to think straight; but it is alert enough to respond to suggestions and to pass them on to the autonomic nervous system.

As we have already seen, the well-known Swedish physician and experimenter, Wetterstrand, was especially successful in the hypnotic treatment of sleeping children. In our own day Wetterstrand’s methods are followed by a number of pediatricians, who instruct young mothers in the art of giving helpful suggestions to their children during the hours of light sleep. By this kind of hypnopaedia children can be cured of bed wetting and nail biting, can be prepared to go into surgery without apprehension, can be given confidence and reassurance when, for any reason, the circumstances of their life have become distressing. I myself have seen remarkable results achieved by the therapeutic sleep-teaching of small children. Comparable results could probably be achieved with many adults.

For a would-be dictator, the moral of all this is plain. Under proper conditions, hypnopaedia actually works — works, it would seem, about as well as hypnosis. Most of the things that can be done with and to a person in hypnotic trance can be done with and to a person in light sleep. Verbal suggestions can be passed through the somnolent cortex to the midbrain, the brain stem and the autonomic nervous system. If these suggestions are well conceived and frequently repeated, the bodily functions of the sleeper can be improved or interfered with, new patterns of feeling can be installed and old ones modified, posthypnotic commands can be given, slogans, formulas and trigger words deeply ingrained in the memory. Children are better hypnopaedic subjects than adults, and the would-be dictator will take full advantage of the fact. Children of

nursery-school and kindergarten age will be treated to hypnopaedic suggestions during their afternoon nap. For older children and particularly the children of party members — the boys and girls who will grow up to be leaders, administrators and teachers — there will be boarding schools, in which an excellent day-time education will be supplemented by nightly sleep-teaching. In the case of adults, special attention will be paid to the sick. As Pavlov demonstrated many years ago, strong-minded and resistant dogs become completely suggestible after an operation or when suffering from some debilitating illness. Our dictator will therefore see that every hospital ward is wired for sound. An appendectomy, an accouchement, a bout of pneumonia or hepatitis, can be made the occasion for an intensive course in loyalty and the true faith, a refresher in the principles of the local ideology. Other captive audiences can be found in prisons, in labor camps, in military barracks, on ships at sea, on trains and airplanes in the night, in the dismal waiting rooms of bus terminals and railway stations. Even if the hypnopaedic suggestions given to these captive audiences were no more than 10 per cent effective, the results would still be impressive and, for a dictator, highly desirable.

From the heightened suggestibility associated with light sleep and hypnosis let us pass to the normal suggestibility of those who are awake — or at least who think they are awake. (In fact, as the Buddhists insist, most of us are half asleep all the time and go through life as somnambulists obeying somebody else's suggestions. Enlightenment is total awakesness. The word "Buddha" can be translated as "The Wake.")

Genetically, every human being is unique and in many ways unlike every other human being. The range of individual variation from the statistical norm is amazingly wide. And the statistical norm, let us remember, is useful only in actuarial calculations, not in real life. In real life there is no such person as the average man. There are only particular men, women and children, each with his or her in-born idiosyncrasies of mind and body, and all trying (or being compelled) to squeeze their biological diversities into the uniformity of some cultural mold.

Suggestibility is one of the qualities that vary significantly from individual to individual. Environmental factors certainly play their part in making one person more responsive to suggestion than another; but there are also, no less certainly, constitutional differences in the suggestibility of individuals. Extreme resistance to suggestion is rather rare. Fortunately so. For if everyone were as unsuggestible as some people are, social life would be impossible. Societies can function with a reasonable degree of efficiency because, in varying degrees, most people are fairly suggestible. Extreme suggestibility is probably about as rare as extreme unsuggestibility. And this also is fortunate. For if most people were as responsive to outside suggestions as the men and women at the extreme limits of suggestibility, free, rational choice would become, for the majority of the electorate, virtually impossible, and democratic institutions could not survive, or even come into existence.

A few years ago, at the Massachusetts General Hospital, a group of researchers carried out a most illuminating experiment on the pain-relieving effects of placebos. (A placebo is anything which the patient believes to be an active drug, but which in

fact is pharmacologically inactive.) In this experiment the subjects were one hundred and sixty-two patients who had just come out of surgery and were all in considerable pain. Whenever a patient asked for medication to relieve pain, he or she was given an injection, either of morphine or of distilled water. All the patients received some injections of morphine and some of the placebo. About 30 per cent of the patients never obtained relief from the placebo. On the other hand 14 per cent obtained relief after every injection of distilled water. The remaining 55 per cent of the group were relieved by the placebo on some occasions, but not on others.

In what respects did the suggestible reactors differ from the unsuggestible non-reactors? Careful study and testing revealed that neither age nor sex was a significant factor. Men reacted to placebo as frequently as did women, and young people as often as old ones. Nor did intelligence, as measured by the standard tests, seem to be important. The average IQ of the two groups was about the same. It was above all in temperament, in the way they felt about themselves and other people that the members of the two groups were significantly different. The reactors were more co-operative than the non-reactors, less critical and suspicious. They gave the nurses no trouble and thought that the care they were receiving in the hospital was simply "wonderful." But though less unfriendly toward others than the non-reactors, the reactors were generally much more anxious about themselves. Under stress, this anxiety tended to translate itself into various psychosomatic symptoms, such as stomach upsets, diarrhea and headaches. In spite of or because of their anxiety, most of the reactors were more uninhibited in the display of emotion than were the non-reactors, and more voluble. They were also much more religious, much more active in the affairs of their church and much more preoccupied, on a subconscious level, with their pelvic and abdominal organs. It is interesting to compare these figures for reaction to placebos with the estimates made, in their own special field, by writers on hypnosis. About a fifth of the population, they tell us, can be hypnotized very easily. Another fifth cannot be hypnotized at all, or can be hypnotized only when drugs or fatigue have lowered psychological resistance. The remaining three-fifths can be hypnotized somewhat less easily than the first group, but considerably more easily than the second. A manufacturer of hypnopaedic records has told me that about 20 per cent of his customers are enthusiastic and report striking results in a very short time. At the other end of the spectrum of suggestibility there is an 8 per cent minority that regularly asks for its money back. Between these two extremes are the people who fail to get quick results, but are suggestible enough to be affected in the long run. If they listen perseveringly to the appropriate hypnopaedic instructions they will end by getting what they want — self-confidence or sexual harmony, less weight or more money.

The ideals of democracy and freedom confront the brute fact of human suggestibility. One-fifth of every electorate can be hypnotized almost in the twinkling of an eye, one-seventh can be relieved of pain by injections of water, one-quarter will respond promptly and enthusiastically to hypnopaedia. And to these all too co-operative minorities must be added the slow-starting majorities, whose less extreme suggestibility

can be effectually exploited by anyone who knows his business and is prepared to take the necessary time and trouble.

Is individual freedom compatible with a high degree of individual suggestibility? Can democratic institutions survive the subversion from within of skilled mind-manipulators trained in the science and art of exploiting the suggestibility both of individuals and of crowds? To what extent can the inborn tendency to be too suggestible for one's own good or the good of a democratic society be neutralized by education? How far can the exploitation of inordinate suggestibility by businessmen and ecclesiastics, by politicians in and out of power, be controlled by law? Explicitly or implicitly, the first two questions have been discussed in earlier articles. In what follows I shall consider the problems of prevention and cure.

XI. Education for Freedom

EDUCATION FOR FREEDOM must begin by stating facts and enunciating values, and must go on to develop appropriate techniques for realizing the values and for combating those who, for whatever reason, choose to ignore the facts or deny the values.

In an earlier chapter I have discussed the Social Ethic, in terms of which the evils resulting from over-organization and over-population are justified and made to seem good. Is such a system of values consonant with what we know about human physique and temperament? The Social Ethic assumes that nurture is all-important in determining human behavior and that nature — the psychophysical equipment with which individuals are born — is a negligible factor. But is this true? Is it true that human beings are nothing but the products of their social environment? And if it is not true, what justification can there be for maintaining that the individual is less important than the group of which he is a member?

All the available evidence points to the conclusion that in the life of individuals and societies heredity is no less significant than culture. Every individual is biologically unique and unlike all other individuals. Freedom is therefore a great good, tolerance a great virtue and regimentation a great misfortune. For practical or theoretical reasons, dictators, organization men and certain scientists are anxious to reduce the maddening diversity of men's natures to some kind of manageable uniformity. In the first flush of his Behavioristic fervor, J. B. Watson roundly declared that he could find "no support for hereditary patterns of behavior, nor for special abilities (musical, art, etc.) which are supposed to run in families." And even today we find a distinguished psychologist, Professor B. F. Skinner of Harvard, insisting that, "as scientific explanation becomes more and more comprehensive, the contribution which may be claimed by the individual himself appears to approach zero. Man's vaunted creative powers, his achievements in art, science and morals, his capacity to choose and our right to hold him responsible for the consequences of his choice — none of these is conspicuous in the new scientific

self-portrait.” In a word, Shakespeare’s plays were not written by Shakespeare, nor even by Bacon or the Earl of Oxford; they were written by Elizabethan England.

More than sixty years ago William James wrote an essay on “Great Men and Their Environment,” in which he set out to defend the outstanding individual against the assaults of Herbert Spencer. Spencer had proclaimed that “Science” (that wonderfully convenient personification, of the opinions, at a given date, of Professors X, Y and Z) had completely abolished the Great Man. “The great man,” he had written, “must be classed with all other phenomena in the society that gave him birth, as a product of its antecedents.” The great man may be (or seem to be) “the proximate initiator of changes... But if there is to be anything like a real explanation of these changes, it must be sought in that aggregate of conditions out of which both he and they have arisen.” This is one of those empty profundities to which no operational meaning can possibly be attached. What our philosopher is saying is that we must know everything before we can fully understand anything. No doubt. But in fact we shall never know everything. We must therefore be content with partial understanding and proximate causes including the influence of great men. “If anything is humanly certain,” writes William James, “it is that the great man’s society, properly so called, does not make him before he can remake it. Physiological forces, with which the social, political, geographical and to a great extent anthropological conditions have just as much and just as little to do as the crater of Vesuvius has to do with the flickering of this gas by which I write, are what make him. Can it be that Mr. Spencer holds the convergence of sociological pressures to have so impinged upon Stratford-upon-Avon about the twenty-sixth of April, 1564, that a W. Shakespeare, with all his mental peculiarities, had to be born there? ... And does he mean to say that if the aforesaid W. Shakespeare had died of cholera infantum, another mother at Stratford-upon-Avon would need have engendered a duplicate copy of him, to restore the sociologic equilibrium?”

Professor Skinner is an experimental psychologist, and his treatise on “Science and Human Behavior” is solidly based upon facts. But unfortunately the facts belong to so limited a class that when at last he ventures upon a generalization, his conclusions are as sweepingly unrealistic as those of the Victorian theorizer. Inevitably so; for Professor Skinner’s indifference to what James calls the “physiological forces” is almost as complete as Herbert Spencer’s. The genetic factors determining human behavior are dismissed by him in less than a page. There is no reference in his book to the findings of constitutional medicine, nor any hint of that constitutional psychology, in terms of which (and in terms of which alone, so far as I can judge) it might be possible to write a complete and realistic biography of an individual in relation to the relevant facts of his existence — his body, his temperament, his intellectual endowments, his immediate environment from moment to moment, his time, place and culture. A science of human behavior is like a science of motion in the abstract — necessary, but, by itself, wholly inadequate to the facts. Consider a dragonfly, a rocket and a breaking wave. All three of them illustrate the same fundamental laws of motion; but they illustrate these laws in different ways, and the differences are at least as important as the iden-

tities. By itself, a study of motion can tell us almost nothing about that which, in any given instance, is being moved. Similarly a study of behavior can, by itself, tell us almost nothing about the individual mind-body that, in any particular instance, is exhibiting the behavior. But to us who are mind-bodies, a knowledge of mind-bodies is of paramount importance. Moreover, we know by observation and experience that the differences between individual mind-bodies are enormously great, and that some mind-bodies can and do profoundly affect their social environment. On this last point Mr. Bertrand Russell is in full agreement with William James — and with practically everyone, I would add, except the proponents of Spencerian or Behavioristic scientism. In Russell's view the causes of historical change are of three kinds — economic change, political theory and important individuals. "I do not believe," says Mr. Russell, "that any of these can be ignored, or wholly explained away as the effect of causes of another kind." Thus, if Bismarck and Lenin had died in infancy, our world would be very different from what, thanks in part to Bismarck and Lenin, it now is. "History is not yet a science, and can only be made to seem scientific by falsifications and omissions." In real life, life as it is lived from day to day, the individual can never be explained away. It is only in theory that his contributions appear to approach zero; in practice they are all-important. When a piece of work gets done in the world, who actually does it? Whose eyes and ears do the perceiving, whose cortex does the thinking, who has the feelings that motivate, the will that overcomes obstacles? Certainly not the social environment; for a group is not an organism, but only a blind unconscious organization. Everything that is done within a society is done by individuals. These individuals are, of course, profoundly influenced by the local culture, the taboos and moralities, the information and misinformation handed down from the past and preserved in a body of spoken traditions or written literature; but whatever each individual takes from society (or, to be more accurate, whatever he takes from other individuals associated in groups, or from the symbolic records compiled by other individuals, living or dead) will be used by him in his own unique way — with his special senses, his biochemical makeup, his physique and temperament, and nobody else's. No amount of scientific explanation, however comprehensive, can explain away these self-evident facts. And let us remember that Professor Skinner's scientific portrait of man as the product of the social environment is not the only scientific portrait. There are other, more realistic likenesses. Consider, for example, Professor Roger Williams' portrait. What he paints is not behavior in the abstract, but mind-bodies behaving — mind-bodies that are the products partly of the environment they share with other mind-bodies, partly of their own private heredity. In *The Human Frontier and Free but Unequal* Professor Williams has expatiated, with a wealth of detailed evidence, on those innate differences between individuals, for which Dr. Watson could find no support and whose importance, in Professor Skinner's eyes, approaches zero. Among animals, biological variability within a given species becomes more and more conspicuous as we move up the evolutionary scale. This biological variability is highest in man, and human beings display a greater degree of biochemical, structural and temperamental diversity

than do the members of any other species. This is a plain observable fact. But what I have called the Will to Order, the desire to impose a comprehensible uniformity upon the bewildering manifoldness of things and events, has led many people to ignore this fact. They have minimized biological uniqueness and have concentrated all their attention upon the simpler and, in the present state of knowledge, more understandable environmental factors involved in human behavior. "As a result of this environmentally centered thinking and investigation," writes Professor Williams, "the doctrine of the essential uniformity of human infants has been widely accepted and is held by a great body of social psychologists, sociologists, social anthropologists, and many others, including historians, economists, educationalists, legal scholars and men in public life. This doctrine has been incorporated into the prevailing mode of thought of many who have had to do with shaping educational and governmental policies and is often accepted unquestioningly by those who do little critical thinking of their own."

An ethical system that is based upon a fairly realistic appraisal of the data of experience is likely to do more good than harm. But many ethical systems have been based upon an appraisal of experience, a view of the nature of things, that is hopelessly unrealistic. Such an ethic is likely to do more harm than good. Thus, until quite recent times, it was universally believed that bad weather, diseases of cattle and sexual impotence could be, and in many cases actually were, caused by the malevolent operations of magicians. To catch and kill magicians was therefore a duty — and this duty, moreover, had been divinely ordained in the second Book of Moses: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." The systems of ethics and law that were based upon this erroneous view of the nature of things were the cause (during the centuries, when they were taken most seriously by men in authority) of the most appalling evils. The orgy of spying, lynching and judicial murder, which these wrong views about magic made logical and mandatory, was not matched until our own days, when the Communist ethic, based upon erroneous views about economics, and the Nazi ethic, based upon erroneous views about race, commanded and justified atrocities on an even greater scale. Consequences hardly less undesirable are likely to follow the general adoption of a Social Ethic, based upon the erroneous view that ours is a fully social species, that human infants are born uniform and that individuals are the product of conditioning by and within the collective environment. If these views were correct, if human beings were in fact the members of a truly social species, and if their individual differences were trifling and could be completely ironed out by appropriate conditioning, then, obviously, there would be no need for liberty and the State would be justified in persecuting the heretics who demanded it. For the individual termite, service to the termitary is perfect freedom. But human beings are not completely social; they are only moderately gregarious. Their societies are not organisms, like the hive or the anthill; they are organizations, in other words ad hoc machines for collective living. Moreover, the differences between individuals are so great that, in spite of the most intensive cultural ironing, an extreme endomorph (to use W. H. Sheldon's terminology) will retain his sociable viscerotonic characteristics, an extreme mesomorph will

remain energetically somatotonic through thick and thin and an extreme ectomorph will always be cerebrotonic, introverted and over-sensitive. In the Brave New World of my fable socially desirable behavior was insured by a double process of genetic manipulation and postnatal conditioning. Babies were cultivated in bottles and a high degree of uniformity in the human product was assured by using ova from a limited number of mothers and by treating each ovum in such a way that it would split and split again, producing identical twins in batches of a hundred or more. In this way it was possible to produce standardized machine-minders for standardized machines. And the standardization of the machine-minders was perfected, after birth, by infant conditioning, hypnopaedia and chemically induced euphoria as a substitute for the satisfaction of feeling oneself free and creative. In the world we live in, as has been pointed out in earlier chapters, vast impersonal forces are making for the centralization of power and a regimented society. The genetic standardization of individuals is still impossible; but Big Government and Big Business already possess, or will very soon possess, all the techniques for mind-manipulation described in Brave New World, along with others of which I was too unimaginative to dream. Lacking the ability to impose genetic uniformity upon embryos, the rulers of tomorrow's over-populated and over-organized world will try to impose social and cultural uniformity upon adults and their children. To achieve this end, they will (unless prevented) make use of all the mind-manipulating techniques at their disposal and will not hesitate to reinforce these methods of non-rational persuasion by economic coercion and threats of physical violence. If this kind of tyranny is to be avoided, we must begin without delay to educate ourselves and our children for freedom and self-government.

Such an education for freedom should be, as I have said, an education first of all in facts and in values — the facts of individual diversity and genetic uniqueness and the values of freedom, tolerance and mutual charity which are the ethical corollaries of these facts. But unfortunately correct knowledge and sound principles are not enough. An unexciting truth may be eclipsed by a thrilling falsehood. A skilful appeal to passion is often too strong for the best of good resolutions. The effects of false and pernicious propaganda cannot be neutralized except by a thorough training in the art of analyzing its techniques and seeing through its sophistries. Language has made possible man's progress from animality to civilization. But language has also inspired that sustained folly and that systematic, that genuinely diabolic wickedness which are no less characteristic of human behavior than are the language-inspired virtues of systematic forethought and sustained angelic benevolence. Language permits its users to pay attention to things, persons and events, even when the things and persons are absent and the events are not taking place. Language gives definition to our memories and, by translating experiences into symbols, converts the immediacy of craving or abhorrence, of hatred or love, into fixed principles of feeling and conduct. In some way of which we are wholly unconscious, the reticular system of the brain selects from a countless host of stimuli those few experiences which are of practical importance to us. From these unconsciously selected experiences we more or less consciously select and

abstract a smaller number, which we label with words from our vocabulary and then classify within a system at once metaphysical, scientific and ethical, made up of other words on a higher level of abstraction. In cases where the selecting and abstracting have been dictated by a system that is not too erroneous as a view of the nature of things, and where the verbal labels have been intelligently chosen and their symbolic nature clearly understood, our behavior is apt to be realistic and tolerably decent. But under the influence of badly chosen words, applied, without any understanding of their merely symbolic character, to experiences that have been selected and abstracted in the light of a system of erroneous ideas, we are apt to behave with a fiendishness and an organized stupidity, of which dumb animals (precisely because they are dumb and cannot speak) are blessedly incapable.

In their anti-rational propaganda the enemies of freedom systematically pervert the resources of language in order to wheedle or stampede their victims into thinking, feeling and acting as they, the mind-manipulators, want them to think, feel and act. An education for freedom (and for the love and intelligence which are at once the conditions and the results of freedom) must be, among other things, an education in the proper uses of language. For the last two or three generations philosophers have devoted a great deal of time and thought to the analysis of symbols and the meaning of meaning. How are the words and sentences which we speak related to the things, persons and events, with which we have to deal in our day-to-day living? To discuss this problem would take too long and lead us too far afield. Suffice it to say that all the intellectual materials for a sound education in the proper use of language — an education on every level from the kindergarten to the postgraduate school — are now available. Such an education in the art of distinguishing between the proper and the improper use of symbols could be inaugurated immediately. Indeed it might have been inaugurated at any time during the last thirty or forty years. And yet children are nowhere taught, in any systematic way, to distinguish true from false, or meaningful from meaningless, statements. Why is this so? Because their elders, even in the democratic countries, do not want them to be given this kind of education. In this context the brief, sad history of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis is highly significant. The Institute was founded in 1937, when Nazi propaganda was at its noisiest and most effective, by Mr. Filene, the New England philanthropist. Under its auspices analyses of non-rational propaganda were made and several texts for the instruction of high school and university students were prepared. Then came the war — a total war on all the fronts, the mental no less than the physical. With all the Allied governments engaging in “psychological warfare,” an insistence upon the desirability of analyzing propaganda seemed a bit tactless. The Institute was closed in 1941. But even before the outbreak of hostilities, there were many persons to whom its activities seemed profoundly objectionable. Certain educators, for example, disapproved of the teaching of propaganda analysis on the grounds that it would make adolescents unduly cynical. Nor was it welcomed by the military authorities, who were afraid that recruits might start to analyze the utterances of drill sergeants. And then there were the clergymen

and the advertisers. The clergymen were against propaganda analysis as tending to undermine belief and diminish churchgoing; the advertisers objected on the grounds that it might undermine brand loyalty and reduce sales.

These fears and dislikes were not unfounded. Too searching a scrutiny by too many of the common folk of what is said by their pastors and masters might prove to be profoundly subversive. In its present form, the social order depends for its continued existence on the acceptance, without too many embarrassing questions, of the propaganda put forth by those in authority and the propaganda hallowed by the local traditions. The problem, once more, is to find the happy mean. Individuals must be suggestible enough to be willing and able to make their society work, but not so suggestible as to fall helplessly under the spell of professional mind-manipulators. Similarly, they should be taught enough about propaganda analysis to preserve them from an uncritical belief in sheer nonsense, but not so much as to make them reject outright the not always rational outpourings of the well-meaning guardians of tradition. Probably the happy mean between gullibility and a total skepticism can never be discovered and maintained by analysis alone. This rather negative approach to the problem will have to be supplemented by something more positive — the enunciation of a set of generally acceptable values based upon a solid foundation of facts. The value, first of all, of individual freedom, based upon the facts of human diversity and genetic uniqueness; the value of charity and compassion, based upon the old familiar fact, lately rediscovered by modern psychiatry — the fact that, whatever their mental and physical diversity, love is as necessary to human beings as food and shelter; and finally the value of intelligence, without which love is impotent and freedom unattainable. This set of values will provide us with a criterion by which propaganda may be judged. The propaganda that is found to be both nonsensical and immoral may be rejected out of hand. That which is merely irrational, but compatible with love and freedom, and not on principle opposed to the exercise of intelligence, may be provisionally accepted for what it is worth.

XII. What Can Be Done?

WE BE EDUCATED for freedom — much better educated for it than we are at present. But freedom, as I have tried to show, is threatened from many directions, and these threats are of many different kinds — demographic, social, political, psychological. Our disease has a multiplicity of co-operating causes and is not to be cured except by a multiplicity of co-operating remedies. In coping with any complex human situation, we must take account of all the relevant factors, not merely of a single factor. Nothing short of everything is ever really enough. Freedom is menaced, and education for freedom is urgently needed. But so are many other things — for example, social organization for freedom, birth control for freedom, legislation for freedom. Let us begin with the last of these items.

From the time of Magna Carta and even earlier, the makers of English law have been concerned to protect the physical freedom of the individual. A person who is being kept in prison on grounds of doubtful legality has the right, under the Common Law as clarified by the statute of 1679, to appeal to one of the higher courts of justice for a writ of habeas corpus. This writ is addressed by a judge of the high court to a sheriff or jailer, and commands him, within a specified period of time, to bring the person he is holding in custody to the court for an examination of his case — to bring, be it noted, not the person's written complaint, nor his legal representatives, but his corpus, his body, the too too solid flesh which has been made to sleep on boards, to smell the fetid prison air, to eat the revolting prison food. This concern with the basic condition of freedom — the absence of physical constraint — is unquestionably necessary, but is not all that is necessary. It is perfectly possible for a man to be out of prison, and yet not free — to be under no physical constraint and yet to be a psychological captive, compelled to think, feel and act as the representatives of the national State, or of some private interest within the nation, want him to think, feel and act. There will never be such a thing as a writ of habeas mentem; for no sheriff or jailer can bring an illegally imprisoned mind into court, and no person whose mind had been made captive by the methods outlined in earlier articles would be in a position to complain of his captivity. The nature of psychological compulsion is such that those who act under constraint remain under the impression that they are acting on their own initiative. The victim of mind-manipulation does not know that he is a victim. To him, the walls of his prison are invisible, and he believes himself to be free. That he is not free is apparent only to other people. His servitude is strictly objective.

No, I repeat, there can never be such a thing as a writ of habeas mentem. But there can be preventive legislation — an outlawing of the psychological slave trade, a statute for the protection of minds against the unscrupulous purveyors of poisonous propaganda, modeled on the statutes for the protection of bodies against the unscrupulous purveyors of adulterated food and dangerous drugs. For example, there could and, I think, there should be legislation limiting the right of public officials, civil or military, to subject the captive audiences under their command or in their custody to sleep-teaching. There could and, I think, there should be legislation prohibiting the use of subliminal projection in public places or on television screens. There could and, I think, there should be legislation to prevent political candidates not merely from spending more than a certain amount of money on their election campaigns, but also to prevent them from resorting to the kind of anti-rational propaganda that makes nonsense of the whole democratic process.

Such preventive legislation might do some good; but if the great impersonal forces now menacing freedom continue to gather momentum, they cannot do much good for very long. The best of constitutions and preventive laws will be powerless against the steadily increasing pressures of over-population and of the over-organization imposed by growing numbers and advancing technology. The constitutions will not be abrogated and the good laws will remain on the statute book; but these liberal forms will

merely serve to mask and adorn a profoundly illiberal substance. Given unchecked over-population and over-organization, we may expect to see in the democratic countries a reversal of the process which transformed England into a democracy, while retaining all the outward forms of a monarchy. Under the relentless thrust of accelerating over-population and increasing over-organization, and by means of ever more effective methods of mind-manipulation, the democracies will change their nature; the quaint old forms — elections, parliaments, Supreme Courts and all the rest — will remain. The underlying substance will be a new kind of non-violent totalitarianism. All the traditional names, all the hallowed slogans will remain exactly what they were in the good old days. Democracy and freedom will be the theme of every broadcast and editorial — but democracy and freedom in a strictly Pickwickian sense. Meanwhile the ruling oligarchy and its highly trained elite of soldiers, policemen, thought-manufacturers and mind-manipulators will quietly run the show as they see fit.

How can we control the vast impersonal forces that now menace our hard-won freedoms? On the verbal level and in general terms, the question may be answered with the utmost ease. Consider the problem of over-population. Rapidly mounting human numbers are pressing ever more heavily on natural resources. What is to be done? Obviously we must, with all possible speed, reduce the birth rate to the point where it does not exceed the death rate. At the same time we must, with all possible speed, increase food production, we must institute and implement a world-wide policy for conserving our soils and our forests, we must develop practical substitutes, preferably less dangerous and less rapidly exhaustible than uranium, for our present fuels; and, while husbanding our dwindling resources of easily available minerals, we must work out new and not too costly methods for extracting these minerals from ever poorer and poorer ores — the poorest ore of all being sea water. But all this, needless to say, is almost infinitely easier said than done. The annual increase of numbers should be reduced. But how? We are given two choices — famine, pestilence and war on the one hand, birth control on the other. Most of us choose birth control — and immediately find ourselves confronted by a problem that is simultaneously a puzzle in physiology, pharmacology, sociology, psychology and even theology. “The Pill” has not yet been invented. When and if it is invented, how can it be distributed to the many hundreds of millions of potential mothers (or, if it is a pill that works upon the male, potential fathers) who will have to take it if the birth rate of the species is to be reduced? And, given existing social customs and the forces of cultural and psychological inertia, how can those who ought to take the pill, but don’t want to, be persuaded to change their minds? And what about the objections on the part of the Roman Catholic Church, to any form of birth control except the so-called Rhythm Method — a method, incidentally, which has proved, hitherto, to be almost completely ineffective in reducing the birth rate of those industrially backward societies where such a reduction is most urgently necessary? And these questions about the future, hypothetical Pill must be asked, with as little prospect of eliciting satisfactory answers, about the chemical and mechanical methods of birth control already available.

When we pass from the problems of birth control to the problems of increasing the available food supply and conserving our natural resources, we find ourselves confronted by difficulties not perhaps quite so great, but still enormous. There is the problem, first of all, of education. How soon can the innumerable peasants and farmers, who are now responsible for raising most of the world's supply of food, be educated into improving their methods? And when and if they are educated, where will they find the capital to provide them with the machines, the fuel and lubricants, the electric power, the fertilizers and the improved strains of food plants and domestic animals, without which the best agricultural education is useless? Similarly, who is going to educate the human race in the principles and practice of conservation? And how are the hungry peasant-citizens of a country whose population and demands for food are rapidly rising to be prevented from "mining the soil"? And, if they can be prevented, who will pay for their support while the wounded and exhausted earth is being gradually nursed back, if that is still feasible, to health and restored fertility? Or consider the backward societies that are now trying to industrialize. If they succeed, who is to prevent them, in their desperate efforts to catch up and keep up, from squandering the planet's irreplaceable resources as stupidly and wantonly as was done, and is still being done, by their forerunners in the race? And when the day of reckoning comes where, in the poorer countries, will anyone find the scientific manpower and the huge amounts of capital that will be required to extract the indispensable minerals from ores in which their concentration is too low, under existing circumstances to make extraction technically feasible or economically justifiable? It may be that, in time, a practical answer to all these questions can be found. But in how much time? In any race between human numbers and natural resources, time is against us. By the end of the present century, there may, if we try very hard, be twice as much food on the world's markets as there is today. But there will also be about twice as many people, and several billions of these people will be living in partially industrialized countries and consuming ten times as much power, water, timber and irreplaceable minerals as they are consuming now. In a word, the food situation will be as bad as it is today, and the raw materials situation will be considerably worse.

To find a solution to the problem of over-organization is hardly less difficult than to find a solution to the problem of natural resources and increasing numbers. On the verbal level and in general terms the answer is perfectly simple. Thus, it is a political axiom that power follows property. But it is now a historical fact that the means of production are fast becoming the monopolistic property of Big Business and Big Government. Therefore, if you believe in democracy, make arrangements to distribute property as widely as possible.

Or take the right to vote. In principle, it is a great privilege. In practice, as recent history has repeatedly shown, the right to vote, by itself, is no guarantee of liberty. Therefore, if you wish to avoid dictatorship by referendum, break up modern society's merely functional collectives into self-governing, voluntarily co-operating groups,

capable of functioning outside the bureaucratic systems of Big Business and Big Government.

Over-population and over-organization have produced the modern metropolis, in which a fully human life of multiple personal relationships has become almost impossible. Therefore, if you wish to avoid the spiritual impoverishment of individuals and whole societies, leave the metropolis and revive the small country community, or alternatively humanize the metropolis by creating within its network of mechanical organization the urban equivalents of small country communities, in which individuals can meet and co-operate as complete persons, not as the mere embodiments of specialized functions.

All this is obvious today and, indeed, was obvious fifty years ago. From Hilaire Belloc to Mr. Mortimer Adler, from the early apostles of co-operative credit unions to the land reformers of modern Italy and Japan, men of good will have for generations been advocating the decentralization of economic power and the widespread distribution of property. And how many ingenious schemes have been propounded for the dispersal of production, for a return to small-scale "village industry." And then there were Dubreuil's elaborate plans for giving a measure of autonomy and initiative to the various departments of a single large industrial organization. There were the Syndicalists, with their blueprints for a stateless society organized as a federation of productive groups under the auspices of the trade unions. In America, Arthur Morgan and Baker Brownell have set forth the theory and described the practice of a new kind of community living on the village and small-town level.

Professor Skinner of Harvard has set forth a psychologist's view of the problem in his *Walden Two*, a Utopian novel about a self-sustaining and autonomous community, so scientifically organized that nobody is ever led into anti-social temptation and, without resort to coercion or undesirable propaganda, everyone does what he or she ought to do, and everyone is happy and creative. In France, during and after the Second World War, Marcel Barbu and his followers set up a number of self-governing, non-hierarchical communities of production, which were also communities for mutual aid and fully human living. And meanwhile, in London, the Peckham Experiment has demonstrated that it is possible, by co-ordinating health services with the wider interests of the group, to create a true community even in a metropolis.

We see, then, that the disease of over-organization has been clearly recognized, that various comprehensive remedies have been prescribed and that experimental treatments of symptoms have been attempted here and there, often with considerable success. And yet, in spite of all this preaching and this exemplary practice, the disease grows steadily worse. We know that it is unsafe to allow power to be concentrated in the hands of a ruling oligarchy; nevertheless power is in fact being concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. We know that, for most people, life in a huge modern city is anonymous, atomic, less than fully human; nevertheless the huge cities grow steadily huger and the pattern of urban-industrial living remains unchanged. We know that, in a very large and complex society, democracy is almost meaningless except in rela-

tion to autonomous groups of manageable size; nevertheless more and more of every nation's affairs are managed by the bureaucrats of Big Government and Big Business. It is only too evident that, in practice, the problem of over-organization is almost as hard to solve as the problem of over-population. In both cases we know what ought to be done; but in neither case have we been able, as yet, to act effectively upon our knowledge.

At this point we find ourselves confronted by a very disquieting question: Do we really wish to act upon our knowledge? Does a majority of the population think it worth while to take a good deal of trouble, in order to halt and, if possible, reverse the current drift toward totalitarian control of everything? In the United States — and America is the prophetic image of the rest of the urban-industrial world as it will be a few years from now — recent public opinion polls have revealed that an actual majority of young people in their teens, the voters of tomorrow, have no faith in democratic institutions, see no objection to the censorship of unpopular ideas, do not believe that government of the people by the people is possible and would be perfectly content, if they can continue to live in the style to which the boom has accustomed them, to be ruled, from above, by an oligarchy of assorted experts. That so many of the well-fed young television-watchers in the world's most powerful democracy should be so completely indifferent to the idea of self-government, so blankly uninterested in freedom of thought and the right to dissent, is distressing, but not too surprising. "Free as a bird," we say, and envy the winged creatures for their power of unrestricted movement in all the three dimensions. But, alas, we forget the dodo. Any bird that has learned how to grub up a good living without being compelled to use its wings will soon renounce the privilege of flight and remain forever grounded. Something analogous is true of human beings. If the bread is supplied regularly and copiously three times a day, many of them will be perfectly content to live by bread alone — or at least by bread and circuses alone. "In the end," says the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's parable, "in the end they will lay their freedom at our feet and say to us, 'make us your slaves, but feed us.'" And when Alyosha Karamazov asks his brother, the teller of the story, if the Grand Inquisitor is speaking ironically, Ivan answers, "Not a bit of it! He claims it as a merit for himself and his Church that they have vanquished freedom and done so to make men happy." Yes, to make men happy; "for nothing," the Inquisitor insists, "has ever been more insupportable for a man or a human society than freedom." Nothing, except the absence of freedom; for when things go badly, and the rations are reduced, the grounded dodos will clamor again for their wings — only to renounce them, yet once more, when times grow better and the dodo-farmers become more lenient and generous. The young people who now think so poorly of democracy may grow up to become fighters for freedom. The cry of "Give me television and hamburgers, but don't bother me with the responsibilities of liberty," may give place, under altered circumstances, to the cry of "Give me liberty or give me death." If such a revolution takes place, it will be due in part to the operation of forces over which even the most powerful rulers have very little control, in part to the incompetence of those rulers,

their inability to make effective use of the mind-manipulating instruments with which science and technology have supplied, and will go on supplying, the would-be tyrant. Considering how little they knew and how poorly they were equipped, the Grand Inquisitors of earlier times did remarkably well. But their successors, the well-informed, thoroughly scientific dictators of the future will undoubtedly be able to do a great deal better. The Grand Inquisitor reproaches Christ with having called upon men to be free and tells Him that “we have corrected Thy work and founded it upon miracle, mystery and authority.” But miracle, mystery and authority are not enough to guarantee the indefinite survival of a dictatorship. In my fable of *Brave New World*, the dictators had added science to the list and thus were able to enforce their authority by manipulating the bodies of embryos, the reflexes of infants and the minds of children and adults. And, instead of merely talking about miracles and hinting symbolically at mysteries, they were able, by means of drugs, to give their subjects the direct experience of mysteries and miracles — to transform mere faith into ecstatic knowledge. The older dictators fell because they could never supply their subjects with enough bread, enough circuses, enough miracles and mysteries. Nor did they possess a really effective system of mind-manipulation. In the past free-thinkers and revolutionaries were often the products of the most piously orthodox education. This is not surprising. The methods employed by orthodox educators were and still are extremely inefficient. Under a scientific dictator education will really work — with the result that most men and women will grow up to love their servitude and will never dream of revolution. There seems to be no good reason why a thoroughly scientific dictatorship should ever be overthrown.

Meanwhile there is still some freedom left in the world. Many young people, it is true, do not seem to value freedom. But some of us still believe that, without freedom, human beings cannot become fully human and that freedom is therefore supremely valuable. Perhaps the forces that now menace freedom are too strong to be resisted for very long. It is still our duty to do whatever we can to resist them.

The Ted K Archive

Aldous Huxley
The Short Stories of Aldous Huxley

www.thetedkarchive.com