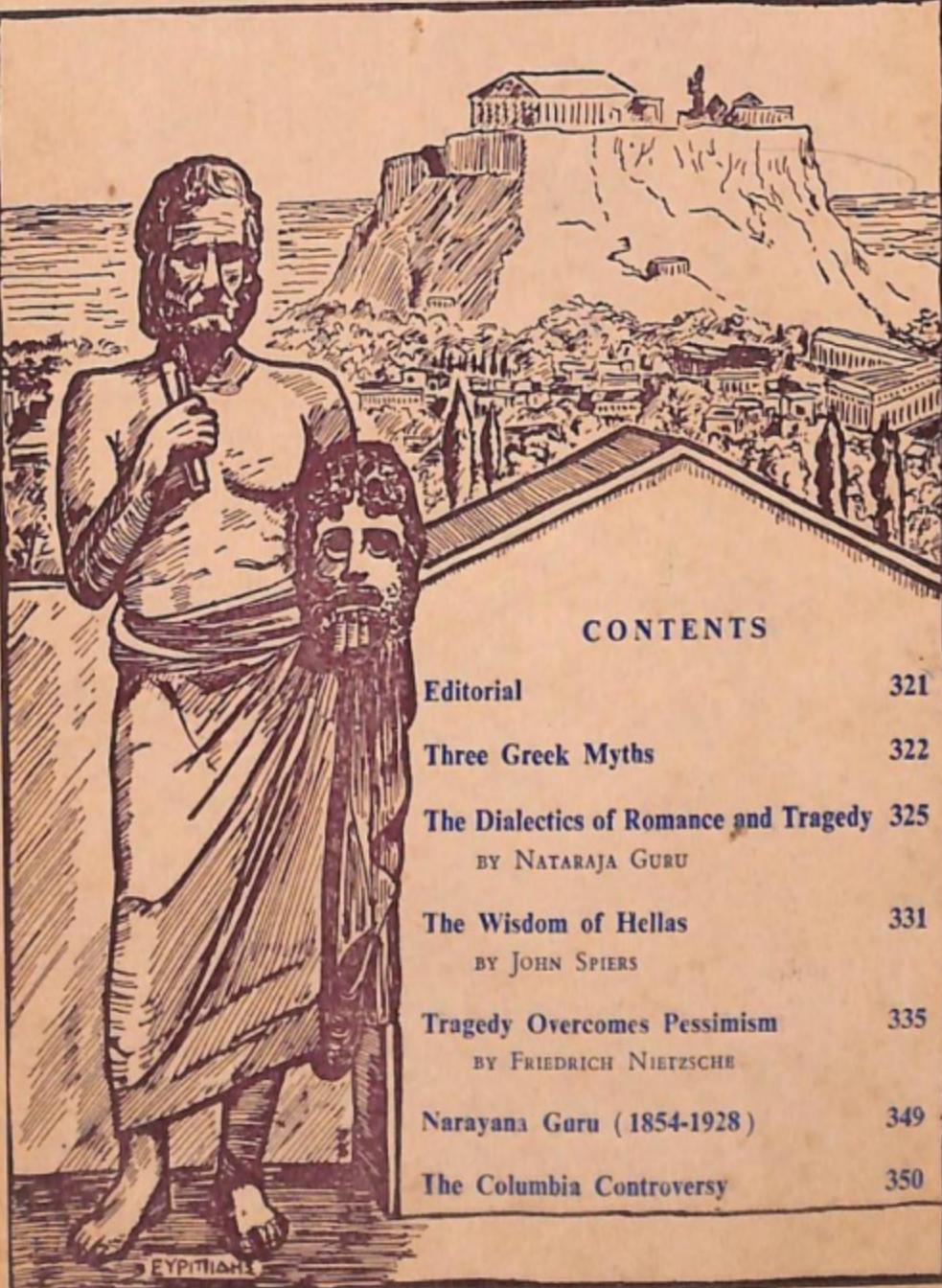


VALUES



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VALUES is devoted to integrating human understanding unitively, impartially and globally in the interests of the general good.

NEXT MONTH
MAN-WOMAN
DIALECTICS

Published monthly for the Gurukula Publishing House, Kaggalipura P. O., Bangalore District (South), India, and Edited by John Spiers. Printed by Kalyan Printers (Private) Ltd., 12, Jayachamaraja Road, Bangalore 2.

Rates (Yearly) by International Postal Money Orders : Australia 25/-; Austria 75 Sch.; Belgium 140 francs; Canada \$4; Denmark 20 kroner; France 1000 francs; Germany 12 Dmk; India Rs. 6; Italy 1800 lire; Malaya \$6; Mexico 28 pesos; Netherlands 10 guilders; New Zealand 18/-; Norway 20 kroner; Sweden 15 kroner; Switzerland 12 francs; United Kingdom 18/-; U.S.A. \$4.

Editorial

*Home is heaven and orgies are vile,
But you need an orgy, once in a while.* —OGDEN NASH

HAVING reached the limits of our credit last month, we had to take a holiday. This from the personal point of view was a compensatory pleasure. Now, thanks to the generosity of a few trusty friends, *VALUES* is out again.

This month marks the 104th birthday anniversary of the wise man who was the Guru of Nataraja Guru. Nara-yana Guru was a model teacher, still adored by millions. In the midst of action he stressed the need for the contemplative attitude. Consistent with the great traditions of wisdom of all world teachers, he looked on the world as a place of sport or drama. Merely to do good action, he said, is not enough. It may be wrongly conceived. Also to save oneself from wrong action it is not enough to be inactive. But what is essential for wisdom to prevail is to be free from the sense of any personal gain. Thus if a man is violently attacked, he is perfectly right to take all measures to stop the assailant, not because he takes pleasure in it, but for the sake of the general good.

For the wise man every day is a holiday because his mind is not involved in personal gain. How different, alas, from the nationalist statesmen who put their own state interests before the common needs of humanity. These envenomed letters to each other that we have all read in the world's press! This Wild West that they have made of the Middle East! In seeking out a neutral place to meet they forget that far more important is the need for a calm and neutral mind, the mind that can put aside nationalism and see humanity.

Many such statesmen profess to follow some religious teacher. Jesus for example, asked his followers to imitate the flowers. But we are told that a relationship with lilies and sparrows is idealistic, and are offered instead a relationship with atom bombs.

Truly the weary statesmen need a Himalayan holiday, like Nehru had recently. Which is just the same as saying they need wisdom.

[E N D]

Three Greek Myths

The interplay of free contemplative factors with relativistic actions and interests makes every Greek myth or allegory profound and precious for the student of unitive wisdom, whether of the West or East.



ABOVE: Left to right: HERA, ATHENA, APHRODITE (with Eros), HERMES AND PARIS — from a Greek vase.

I. The Judgment of Paris

IN THIS story only a knowledge of dialectics gives it any sense. It is usually interpreted as a mere beauty context. This is both vulgar and ridiculous. It is the story of how, at the wedding of Peleus (a mortal) with Thetis (a marine goddess), all the gods were invited except Eris (Strife). Enraged at her exclusion, she threw a golden apple (the devotion of a man) among the guests, inscribed "to the fairest." Thereupon Aphrodite, Hera and Athena each claimed the apple for themselves. Zeus ordered Hermes to take the goddesses to Mount Ida and to entrust the decision to the shepherd Paris (who was actually the son of Priam, king of Troy). The goddesses appeared before Paris and each promised him certain *gifts*. This point is important to remember. Hera, the jealous wife of Zeus, representing the fame that a matron loves, offered the gift of sovereignty over all Asia. Athena, goddess of wisdom, offered Paris victory in all disputes and wars. Aphrodite, the goddess of love, offered him the fairest of all women for his wife.

It is clearly a choice of values to which a man will devote his life. Whichever Paris chooses, the others will be neglected. We know his choice. He got the lovely Helen of Troy, even though she was another man's wife, with the result that the Trojan war began.

The goddesses were indistinguishable from the gifts they brought and represented. The word is *semeia* (a sign, token, seal, gift, value). It was not which of the goddesses were loveliest, but which of these values typified by the goddesses Paris chose for himself. It was not an outside choice but an inner desire.

It is only with the choice self-made, thus affecting Paris and not the value-goddesses, that the romance or tragedy which follows has meaning and is right for his own nature. It was also *right* for the interests represented by Hera and Athena to be opposed to the interest represented by Aphrodite. In the representation of this allegory on one Greek vase the artist has made the scene correct when he shows Oenone (the first wife of Paris) cry out: "O, Paris! Give it to Pallas (Athena); but he heard me not." Obviously the cool austere wisdom of Athena was a better gift for Paris, a higher value than either the domestic felicity of Hera or the erotic glamour of Aphrodite.

II. Atalanta's Race

P A R I S gave away his heart (the golden apple) to the value typified by Aphrodite. In the story of Atalanta we find the same theme at a purer level. The central figure this time is a chaste young woman who has devoted herself to the goddess Artemis who stands for all the noble earthly values of maidenhood as a queen of nature. Atalanta's father who stands for the pressures of relativistic society, wants her to marry and requires that Atalanta's suitors contend with her in a foot-race. Whoever conquers wins her as a bride, whoever loses is put to death.

Atalanta, as long as she retains her absolutist virtues, conquers all the suitors. But she is at last trapped by Milanion, again, we are told, with the assistance of Aphrodite who has given him three golden apples which he drops during the race one after the other. Their beauty charms Atalanta so much that she cannot abstain from gathering them, and Milanion thus gains the goal before her and she becomes his wife.

Aphrodite's apples can only be the erotic and vitalistic values which Atalanta sees in Milanion, so that she cannot bear to have him slaughtered. That their love was true and proper for their natures is seen from the later parts of the legend, where they are metamorphosed into lions because they have profaned by their passionate embraces the sacred grove of Zeus. In other words the citadel of the Absolute has been invaded by desire.

They are thus given an immortal status, but at the level of the sub-human or animal world. Here again a scale of values is suggested which is dialectically correct. That such a choice limited Atalanta and her lover to the animal level of sex does not mean that sex is despised. It has its own grace and perfection. But it has to be given its accurately placed position in a scale of values, and this is certainly lower than that of contemplative wisdom or of the unblemished state of maidenly innocence typified by Artemis.

III. Arethusa

T H E meaning of this story, so well known from the poetic rendering of Shelley, is also clear in the light of dialectics. Here the nymph Arethusa stands for an absolute value of innocence and purity. The name may be derived from *arete* meaning "goodness" or "excellence." This spirit of goodness is shown as bathing in the river Alpheus which is also the name of the river god. This name is perhaps derived from the word *alphano* which means "acquisitive." Alpheus seeks to violate her, but Arethusa

races to the sea where she finds sanctuary and safety.

We can easily see why this simple story still has enormous appeal for the intuitive artist. The ocean can be none other than the Absolute which swallows up all relativistic rivers indifferently. Arethusa belongs strictly to the ocean. As soon as he enters into a sea of goodness Alphaeus, the greedy relativistic factor of force and grabbing would lose all his identity which is based on distinctive separative values. Absolutism can encompass the relative but the relative can never grasp the Absolute.

All great artists have realized this. It is brought out in the *Uttara Ramayana* of Valmiki, where the Earth Mother (the Innocence Value) swallows up the virtuous and maligned Sita. It would be unjust to have her rejoin the relativistic Rama. In the Tamil classic too the chaste dancing-girl Manimehalai though pursued by the Prince Udayakumaran, sticks to her Buddhist life and triumphs over all relativist interests. And even Jeanne d'Arc goes happily to her death rather than surrender to the political interests of her time. This victory of the Absolute over the relative is one of the commonest themes of art everywhere.

[END]



SWAMI MANGALANANDA

Head, Narayana Gurukula, Varkala, India, is now in Malaya, where he is busy giving lectures and taking classes in Brahman-vidya (the Science of the Absolute). Photo taken on his departure from Madras. His address is 16, Smith Road, Singapore 27.

... to bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
That is the top of sovereignty.

— KEATS (*Hyperion*, 11, 203)

The Dialectics of Romance and Tragedy—II

By NATARAJA GURU

Basing his critique on fundamental unitive principles underlying aesthetics generally, the author, through illustrations of method as exemplified in many universally acclaimed plays and poems, provides here a dialectically conceived scheme of evaluation, constituting an entirely new and convincing approach to their understanding.

FROM the days of Aristotle down, literary criticism has made bold efforts to define and fix the characteristics of Romance and Tragedy. Much speculative subtlety has been allowed and tolerated. The nature of the tragic hero, what makes for the tragic situation, the action that has tragic grandeur or stature not to speak of what is often referred to as the true spirit or experience of Tragedy, have all been profusely dwelt upon by various critics and writers both ancient and modern.

Having come to the point of recognizing that there is a deep, unitive mystery underlying both Romance and Tragedy as understood from the most ancient times, we shall here try to take a closer view in order to bring to light the inner structure and the dialectical interplay of the ambivalent factors involved, and thus see the plan of drama in better relation with human life. The Absolute understood in all its bearings, whether cosmological or psychological, has to be given a central place in aesthetics if the subject is to be treated as having universally valid norms in a world context free from cultural parochialisms and prejudices.

Wisdom Inspired both Philosophy and Art : Art and philosophy had their common source in Wisdom. *Kavi* (Poet) in Sanskrit is synonymous with *jnani* (wisdom-seer) and in the Greco-Roman context Socrates and Euripides had much common life together. It is said of Socrates that “he seldom went to the theatre except to see some new play of Euripides” and H. B. Cotterill (*Ancient Greece*, p. 358) even suspects Socrates “of having a hand in some

of these plays." Aristotle called Euripides the "most tragic of poets."

The divorce of art from philosophy as also from religion and ritual was a later development and, as we travel down the alleys of time to our own modern age, the estrangement between art and philosophy becomes wider than ever. By such a compartmentalization both branches have suffered and the central theme of both, which is the mystery of the Absolute, which both are to unravel, has become more and more forgotten and left behind.

Philosophy itself in turn tended to become analytical, and the first bifurcation of its scope took place quite early in the history of thought when Aristotle had to part company with his teacher Plato on the issue of the world of the Intelligibles of the latter and the world of actualities or prime realities of the former. Ascending and descending dialectics, instead of being considered as applying to one and the same central notion of the Absolute, were understood to refer to two distinct realities. The Aristotelian tradition has had a more pronounced influence on later thought. If we therefore look upon Aristotle with a certain respect here in the matter of understanding the unitive secret of drama we should feel fully justified.

Aristotle's Definition Re-Examined : Aristotle's definition which we have already quoted (see p. 307 VALUES last issue) contains some significant phrases, which should not pass unnoticed. In the first place Tragedy is said to *imitate* some original. According to Plato the original of this imitation is in the world of the Intelligibles. To Aristotle on the other hand the reality imitated is nearer at hand and right here below in the world of humans.

When we know that the whole zig-zag course of Western philosophy represents the dialectical interplay between the two worlds of these twin yet rival philosophers, it is not hard to see how a central notion of the Absolute has merely got to be supplied by us (in the light of what we have elaborated in the pages of VALUES) to see how vestiges of duality could be finally abolished by the unitive non-dual concept wherein the apparent conflict between the theories of the two philosophers could be effectively resolved.

We said simply that it is the Absolute that art imitates. The second phrase that concerns us in Aristotle's definition is what refers to the subject-matter of Tragedy which should be "serious, complete, and of a certain amplitude." What the three epithets are meant to indicate is not clear to a modern reader, but in the mind of Aristotle and to the minds of many of his contemporaries, they must have made more meaning than to us, to whom they are but pointers towards some unitive or central value in life which, according to what we have stated, cannot be anything other than what the Absolute represents.

The other hints thrown out in Aristotle's *Poetics* are his remarks: "A thing can be whole and yet lacking in amplitude," and again, referring to the "pattern" of a "fable" that should be given a correct tragic "disclosure" he indicates that it must have a "beginning", a "middle" and an "end." The beginning is to be recognized by the fact that there is no beginning before it and the end by the fact that nothing follows or is to follow naturally by the very nature of the fable. The middle is

where the complication is to be located and has to refer to both the others. All these requirements are easily understandable. What makes us suspect, however, that Aristotle had really in his mind a dialectically and not merely an organically conceived pattern for a true Tragedy, is brought to light when he stipulates that the "end" has to be the "opposite" of what constitutes the "beginning."

The third phrase of the definition which is of importance to us is the stipulation that the tragedy should be "acted and not narrated." It is in the Self that action which is overt and action which is innate could exist together in a unitive, therefore living and tragic form, instead of being a second-hand reality of narration. A bound Prometheus can be a representative of such a Self and thus reveal those tragic absolutist traits that give dignity to Man.

Ambivalent Aspects of the Soul of Tragedy : In Tragedy then, we see our own self with all the possibilities and probabilities of natural, legitimate or just action disclosing itself round it in a form that is full of the breath of life. To write Tragedy in this sense, as the classical sages understood drama at its best, the Self has first to be visualized in its own proper setting both in dialectical terms and in the context of the Absolute.

This was the reason why, in ancient India, in Sanskrit literature *nataka* (drama) was the ultimate limit of poetic genius as enshrined in the adage *natakantham kavitvam* (poethood culminates in drama). When a child acts out say, an accident that he might have witnessed on the road, before he has learnt to describe it in the form of a narrative he is really nearer to the original and greater than a mere narrative poet, and attains to a truer status as a dramatist, for action is a more direct expression of the Self. He puts into it something of his inner sense of wonder and identifies himself unconsciously with what he acts. No pseudo art can find place in such genuine stuff. What he means from his inside and what the action is meant to imitate in the world of actual happenings meet in the child, who, though helplessly dumb, is eloquent through art, even in spite of his omissions and errors.

Dramatic action is the meeting-place of overt and inner action. These two classes of action really refer to two ambivalent aspects of the Absolute which meet in the human psyche or self. In drawing the difference between Comedy and Tragedy, Aristotle himself refers to these aspects when he writes of the two kinds of characters in drama as follows: "This is the difference that marks Comedy from Tragedy; Comedy is inclined to imitate persons *below the level of the world*; Tragedy persons *above it*." Evidently Platonic or hypostatic values are under reference here, when Aristotle makes the distinction between persons *above* the level of the world.

As with characters, actions may be similarly classified. When we keep in mind the secret of Dithyrambos which refers to the central figure of Dionysos, who in turn represents the Absolute Self, as we have already touched upon in the first part of this essay, and try to understand this ambivalent principle in the light of other sayings we have cited, such as the one which refers to the "blessing" of Dionysos as the *counterpart* of the "blessing of bread" and finally also that other enigma in which the God

Dionysos himself is spoken of as being "poured out in offering to the Gods," the modern mind, given a little intuitive understanding or imagination, cannot fail to see the mystical doctrine that underlies this kind of allegorical language.

The Bhagavad Gita puts the paradox involved masterfully, when it states that one has to be able to see *action in inaction* and *inaction in action* to be called wise among men. Unitively understood in this way, it will be seen that elements of Romance and Tragedy meet and fuse into each other dialectically in any drama worth the name. As J. W. Krutch would put it, "Tragedy is essentially an expression, not of despair, but of the triumph over despair and of confidence in the value of human life." He adds elsewhere "All works of art which deserve their name have a happy end . . . It is a profession of faith and a sort of religion."

I. A. Richards in his *Principles of Literary Criticism* puts his finger on this very point of balancing counterparts in Tragedy when he writes :

"It is the relation between the two sets of impulses pity and terror, which gives its specific character to Tragedy, and from their relation the peculiar poise of the tragic experience springs." (p. 432, *Eight Great Tragedies*, Mentor, New York.)

The Common Criteria of both Romance and Tragedy :

The pattern or scheme to which both Romance and Tragedy must conform to make them an elevating, serious, noble or sublime work of art, may first be centralized round the Personality of Man himself. The divine and the satanic are ambivalent aspects of human nature, with heaven and hell as worlds corresponding to each of these poles of life.

Satan is an immortal with the secret of double negation, implicit in the human value he represents. The omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent God or Zeus on high is also immortal, and belongs to the same contemplative context of double assertion. Between them there is a subtle reciprocity of relation as between the Absolute and the Relative. Satan himself could be considered very respectable because he represents the necessary counterpart of the free or contingent aspect of life.

In the more correct dialectics of pre-Christian thought, Pluto, and the Goddess Demeter with Persephone, represent the aspect of bread which is negative or necessary, while God Zeus brought up the vanguard of free divine values.

Thorough-going pagan dialectics prevailed before the new Gods of Olympus came into vogue and the central figure here was the figure of Dionysos who was known to be the counterpart of bread as a blessing to life. He represented freedom.

Between the plus and minus poles of contemplative values we have to imagine an axis of graded intermediate values. Jacob's ladder upon which angels went up or down represents this axis in myth. This same myth has been modified in other similar myths of later origin, as for example, in Goethe's *Faust* where Powers of Nature ascend and descend and reach to each other golden vessels filled with the waters of life. One who reads Dante or Milton will be able to discern these graded value-worlds described with great minuteness of detail and in Goethe's *Faust* where we have a drama which conforms to the required pattern in its structure and amplitude we have several sub-human and supra-human worlds introduced.

Faust again proves that the worst tragedy in a horizontal or outer sense could be the sublimest of happy romances viewed vertically. The middle of the play is punctuated by the worst imaginable of tragic events, but at the end of the second part of *Faust* full amends are made in this matter which is so evident in the words of her who on earth was called Gretchen but glorified above as Marguerite :

" O Mary, hear me !
From realms supernal
Of light eternal
Incline thy countenance upon my bliss !
My loved, my lover,
His trials over
In yonder world returns to me in this."

(translation by H. B. Cotterill)

A Common Structural Scheme for Romance and Tragedy : A central Self or Soul caught between heaven and earth is pictured in both Romance and Tragedy. The dominant note of both is a supreme bliss of happiness when the Soul or Self is able to transcend horizontal forces that intervene disastrously in the middle of the play.

If we take the case of *Othello* we see him a changed man after he becomes aware of the innocence of Desdemona. He is no more a murderer. His heroism as a soldier was interrupted by suspicion, but he soon caught up with his own nature and rose to tragic stature. His tragic exaltation gives him a new status, although the end aspect of the pattern of the play has been made very abrupt. The hero transcends pleasure and pain and attains a degree of exalted bliss that has an absolute character when playing on the words "kiss" and "kill" as if they were interchangeable terms he stabs himself saying :

" Killing myself I die upon a kiss " (V. ii. 359)

In the case of *Alcestis* as we have already seen, the vertical and horizontal aspects of the structure of the play are perfectly and symmetrically conceived. Coming back to life is the core of vertical action and dying to make the King Admetus her consort the most unhappy man belongs to the dualistic context of the horizontal amplitude of the play. The dualistic and unitive attitudes are juxtaposed cleverly by Euripides himself when he makes Admetus say : " Those who are about to die are dead, and the dead are nothing." To which Herakles replies in a unitive spirit, " Men hold that to be and not to be are different things." (p. 261, *Seven Famous Greek Plays—Alcestis* : Modern Library, New York.)

In *Hernani* the double suicide marks the dualism of the horizontal, and the vertical amplitude is left merely suggested to the imagination of the reader or spectator. Elements of the vertical amplitude are present in the character of Dona Sol, as it were below the level of the world, and in adventurous Hernani above, and the flight of the two souls together, if it had been also acted out, would have given the play a more complete structure and revealed the truly tragic heights which as it is are merely implicit rather than explicit. The words, " Let us depart in equal flight towards a better world " are perhaps the only ones which refer to the positive aspects of the vertical amplitude. Making allowances for differences of structure of this kind, we can therefore see how both Romance

and Tragedy conform to the same basic pattern.

If we take the case of Kalidasa's Sakuntala the structure reveals the same scheme of value references. Although she occupies the centre of the play like Alcestis, Sakuntala scarcely speaks and the action is mostly the wrong done to her rather than anything she does herself. The element of wonder is brought in by a heavenly voice and she finally rises into the higher world by mere truthfulness to her own pure nature.

Nemesis and Katharsis Unitively Understood : When the structure of a play, whether Romance or Tragedy, is understood as having a beginning, a middle and an end, and if we should grant also that the end has to have an opposite character to the beginning, then it is easy to concede that the middle is the seat of the complication or the conflict. When the conflict has an amplitude which lies along the horizontal axis we have the tragic phenomenon known as *nemesis*. When this is transcended through sublimation into a higher state of mind and the central hero, twin spirits, or heroine, as the case may be, avail of the sweet uses of adversity, we have the phenomenon known as *katharsis*. By the *rappoport* between the onlooker and the actor *katharsis* works as a purifying influence on both. If the doctrine of vicarious suffering is to have any sense at all it is in this way.

Affiliated to the context of wisdom man is capable of transcending horizontal and mutually exclusive conflicts by a unitive and absolutist attitude whereby he feels happy at a higher level and thus solves even the worst problems that life can present. He outlives pain by transcending the worst outer or mechanistic circumstances. He lives in the golden mean of the middle way where the four different aspects of reality cancel themselves out into a neutrality which belongs to the Absolute.

These four aspects of reality are (1) the virtual and (2) the actual of the horizontal axis and (3) the negative and (4) positive of the vertical axis in the scheme of the Absolute viewed as the supreme cosmological and psychological Person both subjectively and objectively. These terms have to be placed in their proper philosophical perspective to be grasped. Aesthetics has to be treated as part and parcel of a unitive and absolutist view of life. We shall not dare to enter into this task here, but content ourselves in the remaining portion of this essay with trying to distinguish the limbs or component parts of the structure of drama so as to justify and exemplify the generalizations we have made in the course of our discussion.

The Vertical Series of Worlds in Heroic Poetry : The highest role of poetry is where it fulfils the requirements of pure morality and religion and culminates in revealing Man and the World of Man in the light of supreme wisdom. Man is haunted by strange anxieties and fears. Despair and hope alternate in him minute after minute and stage after stage in life.

Doubts are of all grades and are his worst enemies. Man seeks with all his heart, whether consciously, or unconsciously, to know the Beyond and how he has to attune himself with that great Beyond which is the Absolute in himself. Great epics of all great peoples and civilizations have given the broad hints in this matter. The lasting popular interest in such

(Continued on page 339)

The Wisdom of Hellas

By JOHN SPIERS

The remark made by a friend that "VALUES is all Greek" we take to be a compliment; for to be Greek is a distinction in the cultural sense. Further, as only a dialectical understanding makes for the best culture, the importance of the Hellenic sources of Western wisdom makes the study of Greek life and thought important throughout the modern world.

PROF. J. B. S. HALDANE has been telling Indian audiences of the affinities they will find between their gods and those of the Greeks, inferring that Christianity should be bypassed. He is right, with our amended suggestion that even Jesus' teaching needs the study of the philosophical mythology and religious art of the Greeks to give it value and global validity. For there are many absurdities arising from non-dialectical theological conceptions which need correction. This can only be done by seeing the place of Jesus' teaching in due perspective, which means against the Greek-Roman-Hebrew-Oriental background of his time.

Besides, that affinity of Greek wisdom which universalized its religion, drama, mythology and legends, with the wisdom of India, is a further factor necessary for the integration of world thought, so that contemplative unity may be established at both the dominant Western end and the recessive end of human existence, typified perhaps by India.

It is always towards such a unity that the pages of VALUES are directed. Our studies are not just didactic criticism, although no doubt a well-grounded criticism with wisdom-norms can emerge through the unitive approach thus brought into view.

The Word for it: Everybody knows that "the Greeks had a word for it." Our sciences and arts are loaded with Greek words. Global mathematics uses the Greek alphabet. Whenever a new term is wanted in physics, botany, medicine or music the Greek is there, in all the *-ologies* and *-itisises*.

We have been using the Greek term *dialectics* a great deal, trying by context to restore the meaning it had for

the Greek philosophers and relating it with its equivalent Indian term *yoga*.

Without Greek there would be no Christianity since the word "Christ" itself is Greek for "the Anointed One," who has been bathed with holy oil. The New Testament has come down to us in Greek, although some people childishly believe in the sacred infallibility of the pseudo-archaic English of the Authorized Version of 1611. The original text abounds with Greek words like *logos*, *gnosis*, *sophia*, *pneuma*, *phusis*, *ouranos*, *ousios*, etc., all of which have a definite meaning inseparable from Greek philosophy.

In the regions where Sanskrit and Greek were spoken wise men of universal insight devised a precision of terminology which could be of great service for an integrated world in need of a terminology for wisdom. Such words belong to mankind. They should be assimilated in every language, and especially in dominant world languages like English, whose vocabulary is largely used for merely commercial usage.

Not long before he died, the great humanitarian savant, Prof. Gilbert Murray, at the age of ninety, declared:

"There has never been a day, I suppose, when I have failed to give thought both to work for peace and for Hellenism. The one is a matter of life and death for all of us; the other of maintaining amid all the dust of modern industrial life our love and appreciation for the eternal values." (broadcast published in *The Listener* London, Jan. 5, 1956.)

Our Dark Age: Our present world network of communications makes the clash between commercial and spiritual values all the more serious. Since the spiritual light of unitive wisdom which the ancient Greeks and Indians had is absent, we may be said to be living in a continuation of the Dark Ages. This light has nothing to do with the state of material development. That is the mistake of mere utilitarians and social reformers, whether they call themselves democrats or communists, believers in God or atheists. Good plumbing is a material good but by itself does not equate with human happiness. Material goods do not necessarily mean wisdom at all. There are a few societies in the remote corners of the world whose members are perfectly happy with no spiritual agonies, who have no plumbing, no automation and have never heard of nuclear power. On the other hand, wherever people have heard about atomic bombs they are in a state of fright as to when they are going to suffer from them. The hectic life of super-saturated production, with the fever of marketing, competitive rivalries in commerce and in the preparations for war, fear of unemployment and the general lack of security which prevails in the major part of the world reveals the absence of happiness and wisdom, despite the enormous advances in material power.

Theatrical drama at its best should help us to understand the real drama with its romance and tragedy in which we are the central actors. To reach to the understanding of the world's drama to which artists and philosophers from Homer, Plato and Marcus Aurelius to Dante, Shakespeare and Hardy have directed their thought, means turning to philosophy and to contemplation. Most people are not serious about this and therefore go through their whole lives in a state of uncertainty, neither

behaving like animals nor humans, for as Whitman pointed out animals don't fret and worry about their way of life while the really human person will use that intelligence which is his mark, to become wise.

Wisdom and Action: It must be a matter of concern to all who have followed us so far to realise how little understood human nature is in the highly finished world of material prosperity when a university like Columbia in the summit city of modernity, New York, says that wisdom cannot be taught. We did not say so. It has taken a much misunderstood court action to wring out this admission.

If this statement of Columbia's is correct, then Jesus and Plato and all the wise men of the world had no business taking pupils or disciples. What Columbia should have said was that they had no wisdom to teach and nobody to teach it. That would have been honest.

Vyasa and Parmenides would not have said that wisdom could not be taught. As always with wise men, their prayer was to have worthy pupils.

It may be true that Greece and India in the eyes of comfort lovers (and every social reformer and commercial salesman is a lover of comfort) are places of squalor; yet one wise man in all the squalor of ancient Jerusalem, Athens or Benares completely redeems the physical, moral or political background in which he may be found. That background with all its clashing activity, its fashions and great men and its graces and disgraces, is what Nataraja Guru has been calling the horizontal. Whereas the axis of perennial or eternal values in which the human being has a central place as a spectator at peace, whether playing his part on the stage or just watching, is the vertical. He may be entirely withdrawn or he may be in a state of extraverted frenzy. He may ascend or descend from one value to another. He may be absolutely funny or absolutely serious, absolutely romantic or absolutely tragic. But these background factors which absorb the attention, time, money and life of most people, are to him of no account whatsoever, mere strange properties. Even his body is but a mask to be cast aside when the act is over. He can act but is never to be identified with action. This is what the Chinese call *wu-wei* (the art of doing no-doing), the secret of Tao. This is what the Bhagavad Gita of Vyasa calls *karma-akarma* (doing-non-doing). It is the secret of Greek drama.

It took the whole lifetime of Sankara, India's most renowned philosopher-Guru, to expound this very simple central axiom. And in India he is still not understood except by a very few philosophers.

The Tragedy of the Artist: It is not too much to say that for the ancient Greeks art and the drama was their expression of religion. From the actively neutral position of wisdom, both art and religion have the same function; to express aspects of the Absolute. Although for the wise man action as such is not his concern, this does not mean that action can dispense with wisdom. It is because the lack of wisdom in action is disastrous that wisdom needs acquiring first, so that whatever action is done may be done without mental suffering, without worry and trouble. Wisdom therefore equates with peace and happiness.

This philosophic function of art and religion has been forgotten or suppressed in the interests of the acquisitive who used both art and

religion for the gratification of their love of power. India rejected her wise men and listened instead to the dangerously sweet words of brahmin priests. Greece listened to her merchant-politicians. Temporal interests took over the loyalty of the followers of Christ. Wisdom may be said to have disappeared and with the real light gone, the Dark Ages began. Only here and there throughout the slow centuries of the last two thousand years or more occasional lights appeared, as mystics, artists and philosophers with heroic effort and often under appalling circumstances, lit their absolutist lamps at the old submerged fires. Some of these lights were steady flames, others flared, flickered and fell. It is because of this confusion that it is necessary to seek out the sure foundations.

The ugly motives of the world of trade and politics and the depressingly negative world of temporal religion hold out no virtue or value for an artist. The torments of hunger and the needs of daily life may compel him in desperation to serve these masters, but with what agony of spirit! A slave can be happy because his mind at least is free, but the artist whose mind is enchain'd to party policy, to the propaganda department of state, to the advertisement section of a big business, knows a kind of spiritual suffering far worse than bondage of body.

Confused Search: The artist's real concern is with the expression of values of quite an opposite character to that of industry and the state. That is why they have turned to the old legends and myths — in India to the epics and puranic stories and in Europe to Greece and Rome. With only their own universalist reason to guide them they have often been confused. If one looks at Renaissance paintings one is never quite sure without the title whether one is supposed to see Aphrodite or the Virgin Mary, a Greek nymph or a Christian angel, a Bacchus or a John the Baptist. In the art of poetry those who have been thoroughly Greek can be counted on one's fingers, like Shelley and Chenier, but for most poets from Spenser to T. S. Eliot the mixture of Greek fire and Christian brimstone, the confusion of allegories and metaphors drawn from Christian theology and legend and from pagan antiquity is symptomatic evidence of the bewilderment and conflict raging within their minds.

Space does not allow for many examples. They can easily be found in almost all the poets of Europe. The whole of Milton's works bears this out. Take the sonnet *On His Deceased Wife*. The very first lines read :

"Methought I saw my late espoused Saint,
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave."

Here he is speaking of two subjects at the same time when he brings "Saint" and "Alcestis" together. And if the Greek references are removed from poems like *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, or *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, Milton himself will disappear with Pan, Apollo and all the throng of nymphs and satyrs. Milton is the very symbol here of a tragic English Teresias, a lover of a bright Hellenic world, trying at the same time to be a theological preacher, caught between two worlds, trying to be loyal now to one and now to the other, and for all the marvellous magic of his words, inevitably marring the sublimity of

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Tragedy Overcomes Pessimism

By FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

The following passages from this lonely, daringly original German philosopher's first work *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) illustrate really the whole theme of his later books. Born in 1844, and at 24 appointed Classical Philologist at Basel, Nietzsche is best known for his *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*) and *Jenseits Gute und Boese* (*Beyond Good and Evil*). His dialectical insight is clear from the introductory passages below. He died in 1900.

AN IDEA—the opposition of the Dionysian and the Apollonian conceptions—is translated into metaphysics; history itself is treated as the development of this idea; in tragedy this opposition merges into a higher unity; from this standpoint things which had previously never been juxtaposed are suddenly brought face to face, with the result that they illuminate and clarify each other.

No Suffering: The yea-saying to life, even to its strangest and most difficult problems: the will to life rejoicing at its own inexhaustible-ness in the sacrifice of its highest types — this is what I called Dionysian (in *The Twilight of the Gods*), this is what I meant as the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. Not to relieve oneself of terror and pity, not to purge one's self of dangerous emotion by a vehement discharge (this was Aristotle's misunderstanding of it) but rather, far beyond pity and terror, to be the eternal joy of Becoming itself — that joy which also involves the joy of destruction In this sense I have the right to regard myself as the first *tragic philosopher* — that is to say the extreme antithesis and antipodes of a pessimistic philosopher.

I predict a new age of tragedy: the highest art of life-affirmation, tragedy, will be reborn when mankind is conscious, but *without any feeling of suffering*, that it has behind it the hardest but most necessary of wars.

— ECCE HOMO.

The Dionysian State: Transform Beethoven's "Hymn to Joy" into a painting; let your imagination conceive the multitudes bowing to the dust, awestruck — then you will be able to appreciate the Dionysian. Now the slave is free; now all the stubborn, hostile barriers, which necessity, caprice or "shameless fashion" have erected between man and man, are broken down. Now, with the gospel of universal harmony, each one feels himself not only united, reconciled, blended with his neighbour, but as one with him; he feels as if the veil of Maya had been torn aside and were now merely fluttering in tatters before the mysterious Primordial Unity.

In song and in dance man expresses himself as a member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and speak; he is about to take a dancing flight into the air. His very gestures bespeak enchantment. Just as the animals now talk, just as the earth yields milk and honey, so from him emanate supernatural sounds. He feels himself a god, he

himself now walks about enchanted, in ecstasy, like to the gods whom he saw walking about in his dreams. He is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art; in these paroxysms of intoxication the artistic power of all nature reveals itself to the highest gratification of the Primordial Unity.

WITH his sublime gestures, he (Apollo) shows us how necessary is the entire world of suffering, that by means of it the individual may be impelled to realize the redeeming vision (of Unity), and then, sunk in contemplation of it, sit quietly in his tossing barque, amid the waves.

The Place of Apollo: If we at all conceive of it as imperative and mandatory, this apotheosis of individuation knows but one law—the individual, *i.e.* the delimiting of the boundaries of the individual, *measure* in the Hellenic sense. Apollo, as ethical deity, exacts measure of his disciples, and, that to this end, he requires self-knowledge. And so, side by side with the aesthetic necessity for beauty, there occur the demands "know thyself" and "nothing overmuch"; consequently pride and excess are regarded as the truly inimical demons of the non-Apollonian sphere, hence as characteristics of the pre-Apollonian age—that of the Titans; and of the extra-Apollonian world—that of the barbarians. Because of his Titanlike love for man, Prometheus must be torn to pieces by vultures; because of his excessive wisdom, which could solve the riddle of the Sphinx, Oedipus must be plunged into a bewildering vortex of crime. Thus did the Delphic god interpret the Greek past.

Similarly the effects wrought by the *Dionysian* seemed "titanlike" and "barbaric" to the Apollonian Greek: while at the same time he could not conceal from himself that he too was inwardly related to these overthrown Titans and heroes. Indeed, he had to recognize even more than this: despite all its beauty and moderation, his entire existence rested on a hidden substratum of suffering and of knowledge, which was again revealed to him by the *Dionysian*. And lo! Apollo could not live without *Dionysus*! The "titanic" and the "barbaric" were in the last analysis as necessary as the Apollonian.

Actor and Spectator: To our humiliation and exaltation, one thing must be clear to us. The entire comedy of art is neither performed for our betterment or education nor are we the true authors of this art-world. On the contrary, we may assume that we are merely pictures and artistic projections for the true author, and that we have our highest dignity in our significance as works of art—for it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally *justified*—while of course our consciousness of our own significance hardly differs from that which the soldiers painted on canvas have of the battle represented on it. Thus all our knowledge of art is basically quite illusory, because as knowing beings we are not one and identical with that Being who, as the sole author and spectator of this comedy of art, prepares a perpetual entertainment for himself. Only in so far as the genius in the act of artistic creation coalesces with this primordial artist of the world, does he catch sight of the eternal essence of art; for in this state he is, in a marvellous manner, like the weird picture of the fairy-tale which can turn its eyes at will and behold itself; he is now at once subject and object, at once poet, actor and spectator.

The Sublime and the Comic: Knowledge kills action, action requires the veil of illusion—it is this lesson which Hamlet teaches... insight into the terrible truth preponderate over all motives inciting to action, in Hamlet as well as in the Dionysian man. There is no longer any use in comfort; his longing goes beyond a world after death, beyond the gods themselves; existence with its glittering reflexion in the gods or in the immortal beyond is abjured. In the consciousness of the truth once perceived, man now sees everywhere only the terror or the absurdity of existence; now he can understand the symbolism of Ophelia's fate; now he can realize the wisdom of the sylvan god Silenus; and he is filled with loathing.

But at this juncture, when the will is most imperilled, *art* approaches, as a redeeming and healing enchantress; she alone may transform these horrible reflexions on the terror and absurdity of existence into representations with which man may live. These are the representations of the *sublime* as the artistic conquest of the awful, and of the *comic* as the artistic release from the nausea of the absurd. The satyric chorus of the dithyramb is the saving device of Greek art; the paroxysms described above exhaust themselves in the intermediary world of these Dionysian votaries.

The Chorus: We have at last realized that the scene, together with the action, was fundamentally and originally thought of only as a *vision* that the only reality is just the chorus, which of itself generates the vision and celebrates it with the entire symbolism of dancing, music, and speech. In the vision, this chorus beholds its lord and master Dionysus, and so it is forever a chorus that *serves*; it sees how he, the god, suffers and glorifies himself, and therefore does not itself *act*. But though its attitude towards the god is throughout the attitude of ministration, this is nevertheless the highest, that is, the Dionysian, expression of *Nature*, and therefore like *Nature* herself in a state of transport, the chorus utters oracles and wise sayings: as *fellow-sufferer* it is at the same time the *sage* who proclaims truth from out the heart of *Nature*. Thus then, originates the fantastic figure, seemingly so discordant, of the wise and inspired *satyr*, who is at the same time "the dumb man" in contrast to the god; who is the image of *Nature* and her strongest impulses, the very symbol of *Nature*, and at the same time the *proclaimer* of her art and vision: musician, poet, dancer and visionary united in one person.

Individuation and Oneness: Using Plato's terms we should have to speak of the tragic figures of the Hellenic stage somewhat as follows: the one truly real Dionysus appears in a variety of forms, in the mask of a fighting hero and entangled, as it were, in the net of the individual will. In the latter case the visible god talks and acts so as to resemble an erring, striving, suffering individual. That, generally speaking, he *appears* with such epic precision and clarity is the work of the dream-reading Apollo, who through this symbolic appearance indicates to the chorus its Dionysian state.

In reality however, and behind this appearance, the hero is the suffering Dionysus of the mysteries, the god experiencing in himself the agonies of individuation, of whom wonderful myths tell that as a boy he was torn to pieces by the Titans and has been worshipped in this state as Zagreus: whereby is intimated that this dismemberment, the properly Dionysian

suffering, is like a transformation into air, water, earth and fire, that we are therefore to regard the state of individuation as the origin and prime cause of all suffering, as something objectionable in itself.

From the smile of this Dionysus sprang the Olympian gods, from his tears sprang men. In this existence as a dismembered god, Dionysus possesses the dual nature of a cruel barbarized demon and a mild, gentle-hearted ruler. But the hope of the epopts looked towards a new birth of Dionysus, which we must now in anticipation conceive as the end of individuation.

It was for this coming third Dionysus that the epopts' stormy hymns of joy resounded. And it is this hope alone that casts a gleam of joy upon the features of a world torn asunder and shattered into individuals: as is symbolized in the myth of Demeter, sunk in eternal sorrow, who rejoices again only when told that she may *once more* give birth to Dionysus.

This view of things already provides us with all the elements of a profound and pessimistic contemplation of the world, together with the *mystery-doctrine of tragedy*; the fundamental knowledge of the oneness of everything existent, the conception of individuation as the prime cause of evil, and of art as the joyous hope that the bonds of individuation may be broken in augury of a restored oneness.

Joy in the Tragic: From the nature of art as it is usually conceived according to the single category of appearance and beauty, the tragic cannot honestly be deduced at all; it is only through the spirit of music that we can understand the joy involved in the annihilation of the individual. For only by the particular examples of such annihilation are we made clear as to the eternal phenomenon of Dionysian art, which gives expression to the will in its omnipotence, as it were, behind the *principium individuationis*, the eternal life beyond all phenomena, and despite all annihilation. The metaphysical joy in the tragic is a translation of the instinctive Dionysian wisdom into the language of the scene: the hero, the highest manifestation of the will, is disavowed for our pleasure, because he is only phenomenon, and because the eternal life of the will is not affected by his annihilation.

"We believe in eternal life," exclaims tragedy; while music is the immediate idea of this life. Plastic art has an altogether different aim: here Apollo dispels the suffering of the individual by the radiant glorification of the *eternity of the phenomenon*: here beauty triumphs over the suffering inherent in life; pain is in a sense obliterated from the features of nature. In Dionysian art and its tragic symbolism the same nature cries to us with its true, undissembled voice: "Be as I am! Amidst the ceaseless flux of phenomena I am the eternally creative primordial mother, eternally impelling to existence, eternally self-sufficient amid this flux of phenomena!"

Dionysian art, too, wishes to convince us of the eternal joy of existence: only we are to seek this joy not in phenomena, but behind them. We are to recognize that all that comes into being must be ready for a sorrowful end; we are forced to look into the terrors of the individual existence—yet we are not to become rigid with fear: a metaphysical comfort tears us momentarily from the bustle of the transforming figures. We are really for a brief moment Primordial Being itself, feeling its raging

desire for existence and joy in existence; the struggle, the pain, the destruction of phenomena, now appear to us as a necessary thing, in view of the surplus of countless forms of existence which force and push one another into life, in view of the exuberant fertility of the universal will. We are pierced by the maddened sting of these pains just when we have become, as it were, one with the infinite primordial joy in existence, and when we anticipate, in Dionysian ecstasy, the indestructibility and eternity of this joy. In spite of fear and pity, we are the happy living beings, not as individuals, but as the *one* living being, with whose creative joy we are united.

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The Dialectics of Romance and Tragedy—II

(continued from page 330)

works as those of a Homer, a Valmiki or a Vyasa are meant to feed and satisfy the eternal craving for wisdom in the heart of humanity. Here again it is round personalities called heroes who have some absolutist trait, that the grand poems unravel in heroic metres the story concerning some heroic episode.

Great men and women with this stature, which is no other than that of the tragic character, are equally capable of great mistakes and great acts of nobility or bravery, and are represented in their proper living settings in epics so as to enable the reader to place his own Self or the Soul or the Personality of Man similarly within its proper setting. Freedom and necessity regulate their movements and actions from two opposing poles. Their struggles represent the normal and natural agony of the human spirit. Dante, Milton and Goethe have kept alive this tradition in literature and made their striking immortal contributions. Tennyson, and others have written similar poetry of lasting appeal to the popular mind.

In every case a careful reader will be able to distinguish a vertical and a horizontal scale of values involved. There is an ascent and a descent. If this is not in cosmological terms it would be implied in psychological terms. Gods and men and the sub-human world come into dialectical interplay. Romance and Tragedy could be said to belong to the same context as heroic poetry, implying the same conflicts or trials of heroes. In Romance and Tragedy the conflict is only brought into greater relief and amplified and the drama as a whole is built round the central conflict.

The Structure of Goethe's Faust: In Goethe's *Faust* which has the structure of an epic as well as a tragedy, the various graded worlds of value begin with the lowest level, described by Faust himself as a "scene of swinish bestiality" where brawling and tipsy students drink and make merry in Auerbach's Cellar.

Next in the scale is the Witch's Kitchen which is meant to be sub-human and out of the actual world. It is a kind of underworld where Mephistopheles feels quite at home and in good company among the Meerkatzer—queer male and female ape forms—sitting stirring a witch's cauldron. Faust finds this world more disgusting than the one before. When the cauldron boils over, "With a hocus pocus of incantations the

witch who comes down the chimney from the flames sent up by the magic liquid in the cauldron, brews the magic draught which Faust drinks. He is then hurried away by Mephistopheles back into the world of Humanity."

After thus being transported from the bowels of the underworld of human values into the one of simple normal values, we have the whole of the main tragedy built round the simple home of a girl called Gretchen who is to be glorified in the higher world later as Marguerite with, as we shall see, a spiritual status as high as Mary the Mother of God herself. The pathetic little tragedy in the human world is touching and simple but only a miniature model of the world of human relations is presented here. Goethe is more interested in the vertical series of worlds and passes on to another higher world.

After Gretchen has sunk fainting to the ground, the wild and curious scenes of the *Walpurgisnacht* and the scene of Oberon's Wedding which has been called a kind of "after-dream" of the *Walpurgisnacht* supply two other value-worlds of a graded order in the vertical scale above the scale of the simple human level. Mr. H. B. Cotterill has the following significant observations about the multiplicity of worlds, especially these two last superhuman worlds of values which Goethe has created :

"The connection of these scenes with the main action of the play has puzzled many critics, especially the curious intermezzo which follows the *Walpurgisnacht*, the 'Golden Wedding of Oberon and Titania', a kind of dream vision, or rather nightmare, in which besides the fairies of Shakespeare's fairyland, besides will-o'-the wisps and weather-cocks and shooting-stars, numerous authors, philosophers and artists and other characters appear, including Goethe himself as the *Welt-kind* (world-child)."

And the same writer explains his own viewpoint further on when he writes on the relevancy of these scenes as follows :

"Although not written for the play, this Intermezzo cannot be said to be superfluous, for the subject of *Faust* is one that admits of almost any imaginative conception that is descriptive of the experiences of human nature in its quest for truth" (p. 98, *The Faust Legend and Goethe's Faust*, Harrap, London).

Puzzle for Critics: The puzzle of the critics arose because most of them simply thought that a tragic end made a Tragedy. The dialectical scope of Tragedy with the peculiarities of structure and amplitude require a vertical series of worlds through which the spirit of man should pass before the triumphant end of Tragedy could be normally attained. The pure intellectual agony of a man aspiring for wisdom is the central theme of *Faust*, and the path of such a progression has to have its course marked by intermediate stages of value-worlds, all of which have to lie on a scale which is vertical. The amplitude of a Tragedy has to move in a vertical scale of values before tragic or even romantic character could be given to any play.

To distinguish this vertical series of worlds in *Faust* we have first to mark the centre which is represented by Gretchen's simple human world. This is the dialectical middle position where the pure inner and the practical, gross or mechanistic world of actual pleasure come together.

Even the noblest of characters of whom Faust could be considered representative, have within themselves this common meeting-point of the pure and the gross aspects of life as an everlasting possibility. The human hero sometimes passes into the extraneous or non-spiritual aspect of life by sheer necessity. We have to distinguish the horizontal world of lust or pleasure which touches the vertical at some point or other in human nature and crosses it so as to make Tragedy. H. B. Cotterill himself is at first puzzled why Faust should have bestial experiences and a blood-stained hand before he is finally saved, and pertinently remarks: "Faust is (as so often is the case with noble and loveable men) open to assault at that point where, as nowhere else, the sensuous and ideal in our human nature seem to touch and coalesce." (*ibid.* p. 92.)

Mephistopheles surrounded by *witches* in the First Part of *Faust* is the counterpart of himself when in the Second Part he is made helpless by being surrounded by *angels* of heaven after Faust's grave was dug under his supervision. Protected from the double negation that Mephistopheles represents in himself, the spirit of Faust is able to rise and follow Marguerite into the world of wisdom and light. The Prologue in Heaven at the beginning of *Faust* belongs to the same world of values understood in rather Pythagorean terms of the music of the spheres. Thus there is a series of vertical worlds in *Faust*, ranging from the Witch's Kitchen, the Auerbach's Cellar, through the human where the horizontal and vertical aspects of life coalesce or cross. Hypostatically, there is the world of the *Walpurgisnacht* and the fully hypostatic or ideological domain of the world in which the Golden Wedding of Oberon and Titania takes place.

Horizontal World of Values: Mythology and theology and secret doctrines of various kinds have made it easy for us to recognize the vertical series of values in life, but to tell exactly what differentiates the vertical from the horizontal requires philosophical insight.

Rousseau has a very striking sentence in which he refers to the two aspects which we have named vertical and horizontal here and in other essays. In *Contrat Social* he wrote:

"As I meditated on the nature of man, it seemed that I discovered therein two distinct principles; one of them rose to the study of eternal verities, towards love, justice and true morality, to these regions of the world that the sage loves to contemplate; the other lowered, rendered it slave to the senses, and of passions, which are its instrument, and was thus opposed to all that was suggested by the first principle."

Satan with a cloven hoof already belongs to the world of contemplation, because he represents in himself values that are natural to erring man. Satan as a rival to God must belong to the same contemplative, therefore vertical, though negative, context.

The distinction between Wagner, the laboratory assistant of Faust, and Faust himself would represent more correctly the two sets of values involving corresponding attitudes towards life. The contrast can be brought out by two short quotations from *Faust* itself, rather than by descriptions of our own. The key to the difference is hinted at by Goethe in a very subtle way. Faust and Wagner go out for a walk and they

both see a black poodle coming towards them. Faust says that he sees a trail of phosphorescence gleaming behind the poodle, but Wagner is unable to see this trail of light that belongs to life. He has a matter-of-fact, so-called modern scientific attitude to life which admits no contemplative elements. Therefore the world that he sees is different from the vertical world in which contemplative values lie. Faust's attitude is portrayed as follows :

" For in each soul is born the rapture
Of yearning upward and away,
When o'er our heads, lost in the azure
The lark sends down her thrilling lay,
When o'er crags and pine-clad highlands
The poising eagle slowly soars,
And over plains and lakes and islands
The crane sails by to other shores."

On hearing these words, Wagner exclaims :

" I've had myself at times an odd caprice
But never such impulses as these.
The woods and fields *soon get intensely flat*,
And, as for flight — I never longed for that."

(Cotterill's translation)

There is an insipid world of horizontal values which consists of the feast of pleasurable things spread out in the world. The pleasures however, have no depth in them, and one gets a surfeit of them quickly, as implied in the italicized words "soon get intensely flat."

Bacchanalian Revelry and Concupiscence Distinguished :

Man has been created by God to enjoy life in a legitimate manner. If every kind of enjoyable experience is to be tabooed as sin or belonging to the Devil, an insipid world of horizontal values would be all that is left. Bacchus represents the pagan concept of natural enjoyment before Christianity killed out the simple joys of existence. That God put Adam and Eve in a garden rather than in a desert would show that he meant them to enjoy themselves, but the present Christian obsession with sin is a doctrine in which the pendulum swings to another extreme as wrong as pagan excesses (if any).

Goethe was sometimes called "the last of the pagans" although his hero Faust is finally taken to a very orthodox heaven following the foot-steps of Marguerite who is a devout Christian. In the intermediate stages the passage of the soul from sheer bestiality to tolerable or permissible pleasures, the sub-human is disgusting except to Mephistopheles and, as against this, the levels of enjoyment raised above the common level are dear to Faust but not to Mephistopheles. There is subtle dialectics to be noticed here in the reciprocity of ambivalent factors implied in the positive and the negative pleasures under reference.

In the *Alcestis* of Euripides we have Herakles coming as a guest to the house of Admetus whose whole household is in mourning for the departed Alcestis. This demi-god Herakles however, who stands between Zeus and Hades as it were, in spiritual status resembling Dionysos himself, gives himself to Bacchanalian feasting while all the others are mourning. This is a puzzle to the servant of the royal household who had to please the

guest. This touch of Bacchus is purposely introduced into the context of mourning by Euripides, because the absolutist attitude transcends sorrow. Herakles enunciates the principle of his joyful attitude characteristically in this play, as follows :

"Mortals should think mortal thoughts." and again :

"Count each day as it comes as life, and leave the rest to fortune." (p. 271, *Seven Famous Greek Plays*, Modern Library, New York.)

Enjoyment of life in a natural or god-given sense was within the limits of a good and full life. Even the Bhagavad Gita gives *kama* (desire) the status of the Absolute when it states :

"I am Desire when not opposed to the right way of life." (VII, 11).

Siva himself, although the king of renunciation, is often represented as in mad ecstasy, and drink is not altogether unassociated with him. Dionysos as we have seen, while still a God, has been spoken of as a libation poured out to the Gods. The joys of contemplative life include all legitimate joys of this world, and this is the reason why Faust, though aspiring for nothing less than the highest wisdom, has not left touch with the various worlds of enjoyment that came to him through the agency of Mephistopheles, whose only fault is of not attaining positive levels of value. It is the Wagnerian world which is to be avoided, but the graded Mephistophelian worlds brought to Faust are considered by Goethe as necessary stepping stones to his great work of self salvation. Simple concupiscence and the ecstasy that naturally and legitimately belongs to a life lived fully, have thus to be distinguished.

Kalidasa's Blending of Tragic and Romantic Elements :

Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* is one of the world's literary masterpieces and provides a supreme example of a play where the edges and angularities of both Romantic and Tragic interests are rounded off and harmonized in the form of contemplative literature.

The very first verse of *Sakuntala* gives us a key to the cosmology of the poet. He has a most comprehensive vision of the universe, which is shared by the other poets of the Golden Age of Sanskrit literature, like Dandin, and even by Vyasa in the Bhagavad Gita, where a vertical series of contemplative worlds belonging to the context of the unitive Absolute are enumerated :

"Earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, reason also, and consciousness of individuality, thus here is divided My eightfold nature.

"This is the non-transcendental. Know the other to be My nature, which is transcendental, constituting life, Arjuna, by which the phenomenal world is sustained."—*Gita*, VII, 4-5.

Heaven and earth do not belong to two dualistically conceived levels of reality here, but the ego on the one hand, which represents the aspiring soul in man, and the earth which is a reality in an everyday ontological sense, are strung together with other intermediate value-factors such as water, fire, air, sky, mind and reason, all of which counted make eight entities or value-factors representing the whole range of hypostatic or hierophantic value-systems of fundamental human interest. The Absolute

itself knows no trace of duality when finally understood according to the cosmology and psychology developed in the Gita. The Sanskrit poets adhered to this scheme, with slight variations as between individual poets, as the family resemblance between the cosmology of a Dandin and a Kalidasa amply reveals to the student.

It is in Kalidasa's other great drama *Vikramorvasiya* that the purity of the scheme becomes better still exemplified. The scenes in this play are laid not merely in the world of humans, but in all the three value levels. Urvasi, the heroine, belongs to heaven, but falls in love with a mortal king by a strange conspiracy of natural circumstances. Like the Forsaken Merman of Matthew Arnold, Urvasi is lost again for the mortal king who wanders in extreme pangs of separation but sees, through his pangs, in the human world itself, intimations of the world of immortality, revealed as the beauty of the neck of a swan or the voice of a *koel* (the Indian cuckoo). Heaven and earth seem blended to his contemplative vision. Urvasi herself, through the anger of the Gods, has to be born and pass her life for some time as a simple herb lost in a neglected part of a mountain valley.

Thus the vertical scale of values deftly fingered by the poetic genius of a Kalidasa ranges from the world of medicinal herbs and gems to the world of the Gods of Svarga (Heaven) with all its pleasures and luxuries. The horizontal factors are hardly brought in, so that only a contemplative can fully enjoy the play as it moves purely within the amplitude of the vertical axis.

Kalidasa's *Kumara Sambhava* (The Birth of the War-God), though an epic poem, reveals in its opening verses the same scheme and pattern of the world of values. The earth is there compared to a milch cow yielding precious stones and healing herbs under the presiding superintendence of Mount Meru, the Olympus of the Indian contemplative context. The Himalaya, (Abode of Snow) where Siva and Parvati live, constitutes the other pole. Between these two poles the epic moves in its majestic strains, combining romantic and tragic elements, particularly in the scene where Kama (Eros) is turned to ashes by the fiery gaze of the central eye of Siva, while pure Love triumphs to unite him with Parvati.

Poetic or Divine Justice: All religions have what corresponds to a heaven above or hell below. The descriptions might have variations with elements of wine or women dominant or recessive as the case may be. Joining these two poles of value-worlds there is a scale upon which, as Goethe imagined, angels or powers of nature ascend or descend and reach to each other golden vessels filled with the waters of life. Such a vertical axis has its positive and negative aspects. All below the level of earth, as Aristotle would say, consists of comic values corresponding to bread, and there is a positive aspect of the same where true tragic values reside and where the sheer joy of divine blessing is said to be offered to the Gods as a libation of wine.

The horizontal element that outer circumstances might bring to bear on this pure vertical movement of life would at once spell disaster, great or small, gruesomely tragic in its inexorable *nemesis* of pity and fear or in a sense that forces of evil are transcended through *katharsis*. The expiation comes from experience which is inner, outer or both.

In the case of Faust, he had to learn the hard way through the worst of tragic developments, but hope of rebirth into a pure life was not shut against him. A Beatrice or a Marguerite comes down from the higher pole of light to lead the erring soul of man. The sinner who listened to the voice of the principle of negation is again saved by being united with the positive light of wisdom which is the most potent factor in the process of self-salvation open to man.

Such are some of the broad lines along which poetic and divine justice work without contradiction. The Pagan and the Christian, the Believer and the Kaffir have the same fundamental factors of divine or poetic justice to guide their destinies. To swerve from the vertical axis of one's own *dharma* or natural sequential action develops Tragedy, and catching up with purer vertical values spells the transcending of evil and a rebirth, redemption or resurrection as in the case of a Pagan Dionysos or a Christian Son of God. The *Ramayana* and the *Maha-Bharata* as told by Valmiki and Vyasa respectively, have the same frame of reference within which divine or poetic justice may be said to live.

All virtues and worthwhile values in life belong to the vertical axis of life viewed both cosmologically and psychologically, and both as transcendent and immanent. Poets and seers have had the common task of interpreting this verity in various ways which we have tried to reduce into a schematic language like that of a mathematical graph. It is not meant to be a rival doctrine, but intended merely to help us to appreciate spirituality in more open terms than hitherto.

It is the Absolute which is the Self in which we find all human values strung vertically "as pearls on a string" as the Gita says. The Muse has to finger all the strings of her lyre to make Romance or Tragedy succeed.

[END]

The Wisdom of Hellas

(continued from page 334)

his compositions.

That is what is the matter also in varying degree, with Dante, Goethe and even Shakespeare. And parallels can be found in India. Indeed the trouble with them all is trying to serve two masters at the same time. In India since the time of Kalidasa there has been no real drama in the sense we mean. Tagore has no sound philosophy though he is of the stature of a Milton. We say nothing about the services of Tagore here to Indian nationalism nor of Milton to the best interests of England. But Indian nationalism and English nationalism are really secondary affairs in the interests of a global humanity. This is surely incontrovertible.

The Christian Tragedy: It is obviously a fact that Christianity has had to tolerate the support of artists holding an illicit love for the genius of ancient Greece. It is indeed not so long since they were openly suspected. Shakespeare was a criminal "vagabond" in the eyes of the law and liable to a whipping and had to seek the protection of aristocrats.

If religion does not make people happy what use is it except as a handle for private interests of one sort or another? Not all the art of the world (the fantasies of an El Greco or a Dore) can redeem a religion of doom and gloom, of that double negation of sin past and punishment to follow, and make it fine to contemplate. If an artist does not produce a world of universals presented as a complete composition then, no matter how fertile, skilful, deft and decorative he may be, he is merely clever with no genius at all.

The dialectical way to present the Christian allegory is to show Christ as an absolutist in which the agony is restricted to the relativists at his feet while he dismisses it debonairly as of no account whatsoever, in the way that Socrates met his death. Unless this is accepted then we should regard Socrates as the superior in contemplative wisdom. This, given the orthodox Christianity, is what artists intuitively do see. They prefer the bacchanalian revels and the joy of an Eleusinian renewal of life to the sad lilies and tears of the crucifixion and the irrational, physical, relativistically presented resurrection.

Jesus, of course abolished both hell and the groaning of relations and friends. Hell and heaven to him were within man, not somewhere spatially outside as theologians have told artists to put them. The free contemplative Guru who is Jesus stands above these mental states of polarized values.

Nothing happens to a contemplative.

When Tagore visited Narayana Guru and congratulated him on the wonderful "work" he had done in abolishing caste-thinking the Guru's reply was "We have done nothing."

Jesus always said, "Not I but the Father (the Absolute) in Me." This is the same kind of paradoxical language common to true dialecticians.

The grand tragedy of Christ will therefore be universalized only when the element of suffering is placed within the horizontal axis of the drama. With the double assertion of joy, joy here and joy hereafter, it will then become poetic wisdom.

The Art of Religion: That people have foolishly turned the art of religion into a joyless and forbidding nightmare of sin and damnation instead of regarding all religions as artistic expressions with an absolutist message, is hardly the fault of the founding artist Gurus. As Lorenzo Dow (an American preacher of the early 19th century) put it: You can and you can't—You shall and you shan't—You will and you won't—You'll be damned if you do—And you'll be damned if you don't.

There are "many mansions"—many possible artistic expressions of the mystery of the numinous—in the house of the Father (the Self of man). There is therefore as much sense in religious rivalry as there is in imagining rivalry between Shelley and Browning or Euripides and Shakespeare.

Universal values belong to the Absolute alone. There is no relative road to beauty, happiness, truth, reason, justice, peace, freedom and kindly-giving or grace. One can't have a half-truth, no matter what people say. If such a thing is imagined, then it is the worst form of a lie. An injustice masquerading as justice—that is a horrible thing indeed. It is like an apple with a great worm lurking inside. And that is what makes the world so sick today. We have a great big beautiful apple of peace which

has an atomic war inside it. Nobody can eat that apple.

It is the same with the orthodox religions. Instead of leading people through the numinous towards the Absolute, they have within the very opposite of wisdom—loads of mere piety, ritual, masses of meaninglessness and outright superstition.

Throughout the Christian world there is a universal custom of cracking a bottle of champagne on the launching of a ship. This is as old as the Greek custom of offering libations to the gods (of whom Poseidon was one of the most powerful) and of the equally ancient custom in India of breaking coconuts before their deities. In the dramatic interest of this ancient pre-Christian ritual, we say, there is more life and meaning and dramatic understanding than in the theology of the schools. There is the story (told by Catholics themselves) of the Japanese convert who said: "Honourable Father very nice, honourable Son very nice, honourable bird very difficult."

During the long history of art and religion many monstrous abortions have been produced and it requires Socratic midwifery to destroy them and sanction only such works of art and religion as have possibilities of maintaining the unitive principles at the heart of humanity.

Our Heritage: The Bible says "Where there is no vision (i.e. contemplation) the people perish" (*Proverbs*, xxix, 18). Vision is the triumph of wisdom over the delight-pain of romance-tragedy by the artist-philosopher.

As Arnold Toynbee has said, we are the inheritors of a world-wisdom. Our legacy not only includes the contributions of the Hebrew prophets and the Christian saints, but of the whole of antiquity, inclusive of the Greeks, Romans, Chinese and Indians, with many other sources such as those of the American Redskins and the ancient Vikings and Germans.

But for the Western world there is the assured supreme legacy of Hellas. The vast Greek treasure-house of wisdom is full of wonderful basic dialectical trove already half familiar to the educated modern mind. We should also remember that an understanding of any one of the ancient wisdom sciences, whether in Greek, Sanskrit, Tamil, Chinese or other sources, gives us a master-key to all the others. The road to Eleusis is also the road to the forest retreat of Vyasa, to the hut of Tiruvalluvar and the mountain-cave of Lao Tzu.

Nor should we feel this Greek legacy to be far away. Like heaven it is within. Knowing fully what we are about, with open eyes we can approach the antique Delphic wisdom-shrines where Apollo and Dionysos hold joint rule. It is not with half-ashamed footsteps either, but with the unclouded certainty of a determined will that we go to claim what belongs to humanity.

Nor shall we be disappointed. The peerless clear fountain is as it was when Parmenides drank its waters. And there in the hallowed ground sacred to the Muses and the Graces we shall also meet with humanity's Promethean teachers, with Vyasa, Yajnavalkya and Valmiki, with Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, with Jesus, Mohammed and the Buddha and with Nagasena, Nagarjuna and Bodhi Dharma, with Sankara and Sufis, and all with glorious bands of disciples and artists, all wreathed in the divine myrtle and olives of vigorous immortal beauty and peace, ever singing

praises of the Absolute, chanting strains of unitive song, dancing mystical measures of delight, with drum and flute and drama and dance in renewed refreshment for a happily released mankind.

Athens reborn with a revalued consecrated marriage of art and religion, crowned with her honey-coloured temples under her violet sky, under the wakeful wisdom eye of Athena, ever-adored, lies within all seekers of wisdom. Wisdom truly springs full-matured like the Wisdom-goddess herself from the noble brow of the Most High Absolute.

Shelley knew this intuitively when he wrote :

And our singing shall build
In the void's loose field

A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to wield.

for, as his poetic vision foresaw :

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies
The splendour of its prime.

[E N D]

Angels and Window-dressing

WE are often advised how to make VALUES more popular. What is meant is perhaps technically known as window-dressing, glossy cover, snappy writing, wise-cracks and all the rest. All that is easy, but it would not be VALUES any more. Our aim is really not popularity, but rather a plain and rational approach which most journals cannot afford. So we just have to depend upon readership goodwill. This goodwill is a delicate relationship between those who have full faith in us and ourselves in a joint venture to maintain without wavering, the high standard of presentation of wisdom values which, while they are quite openly public and thus "popular" in one sense, are at the same time novel to the conditioned or "popular" mind. This means we must have Angels which is popular slang for private support behind the scenes. Mere subscriptions are not enough. So we appeal to the Angels to send their donations, all of which will be acknowledged. And we promise to dress-up as far as this is consistent with the sublimity of our subject. And if you can't be angelic, at least be a good subscriber and remit your dues in time! An Editor-Manager cannot ask for more (or less...).

Narayana Guru 1854-1928

The birthday anniversary of Narayana Guru will be celebrated during the coming month. This great representative of Absolutist Wisdom was the teacher of Nataraja Guru, and because of the results of his teaching which enabled millions of "untouchables" or "out-castes" to enter into a free domain where humanity itself is seen as the single caste or species to which all belong, the Guru's name is surrounded with a magic which time cannot efface.

But mere remembrance of the Guru is not enough! It is his teaching, consisting in the application of the same unitive understanding to *all* situations in the rapidly changing world of today, which is most important.

The Narayana Gurukula

In *Values* and through the Narayana Gurukula, guided by Nataraja Guru, this teaching is kept to the forefront and as far as means permit, presented to the whole world, far beyond the limits possible in the actual lifetime of Narayana Guru.

Here we can only say that we do not recognize any division in dealing with this teaching. Whoever comes into its beneficent scope is no longer limited to special grouping, of race or community, nationality or East-West. Such a person is affiliated to wisdom which is one, to humanity which is one, to the Absolute who is one and the link which binds all together is that of proper Guruhood represented for us in that great son of Narayana Guru who is with us still—the living Nataraja Guru.

Birthday Celebrations

At all Narayana Gurukula centres we shall be celebrating the birthday of Narayana Guru, both in India and abroad.

Here in Bangalore this will be at the Gurukula, Kaggalipura on Sept. 7. At Fernhill it will be held on Oct. 5. In Singapore and Malaya it will take place on Aug. 31.

We salute with dedicated love the eternal Absolutist Narayana Guru whose blessing we believe is wafted through the world through these pages.

[END]

The Columbia Controversy

By ROY JACOBSEN

As this drama of a lone lover of wisdom who charges Columbia University with failing to teach the wisdom it proclaims, reaches its climax, the lawyers hit him through his mother. This is the eighth instalment of a unique case.

My parents became very upset when Columbia brought the case to court, especially because of the publicity that accompanied it. Their neighbors and acquaintances would say to them, "I hear your son is suing Columbia because he doesn't have any wisdom."

They had recently sold their house and were now living in an apartment in Dover, New Jersey. The landlord of the building was a lawyer practicing in that town, and my mother made an appointment one day to see him for advice.

"Yes, I know all about the case, Mrs. Jacobsen," he said. (Actually he could not have known any more than what had appeared in the newspapers, unless he had obtained inside information from Columbia.)

"What do you think his chances are?"

"Your son has as much chance as a snowball on a hot sidewalk in July. If the case goes to trial he'll be up against some of the toughest lawyers in the country. They know how to handle a case like this. What do you think they went to law school for?"

"But then why would he be suing if he hasn't got a chance?"

"I don't know what your son's private motives are. He says Columbia failed to teach wisdom, but you must understand, Mrs. Jacobsen, that Columbia can't be held responsible if a student can't grasp what's being taught. Columbia is one of the finest universities in the world."

"But he used to be a good student...."

"Mrs. Jacobsen, your son's case was discussed at a meeting of the Bar Association, and the members of this association agreed that he would not win."

"But there's no harm in his trying, is there?"

"Mrs. Jacobsen, you must realize that all three of you can be sued for libel after this case is over. In fact, Columbia would *have to* sue for libel, or else everyone would sue and would have nothing to lose by trying."

"You mean we can be sued for everything we've got, even though it's Roy who's doing the talking?"

"Yes. You are involved in the suit as co-makers on the debt. The best thing for you to do is to pay, Mrs. Jacobsen, because you haven't got a

chance, and you'll only get yourself in trouble. You haven't got a chance—not against a university like Columbia."

"But if we paid, would Roy still be able to sue by himself, or would that finish his case?"

"Oh no, he would be perfectly free to press his counterclaim, if he cared to. And you would be completely cleared of all charges of libel. You would be completely out of it."

"Well, I suppose maybe we'd better pay."

"I know Columbia's lawyer—I know Mr. Egan personally. Shall I call him now and make an appointment for you to pay him?"

"Well, if you think it's the best thing to do, I guess that will be all right."

The lawyer immediately telephoned Mr. Egan in Morristown and arranged for my mother to be at the latter's office 10 o'clock Monday morning.

On the Saturday preceding, when I visited my parents, my mother told me the details of the interview, and I took notes of the exact words of the conversation, as near as my mother could remember.

My father had been storming angry because my mother had made arrangements to pay without first consulting him, and I became just as angry when I heard about the lawyer's tactics. I tried to persuade my parents that they ought not to pay for the false education I had received, and tried to tell them that it is not libel if the charges are true and are made for the sake of justice and not malice. My parents, however, were sleepless and literally sick with worry, and wanted to be free since they understood they could pay without injuring my case.

The lawyer had mixed up so much truth and falsehood I did not at all trust his statement on this point, and I did not know the court rules concerning it, so on Sunday I went on a journey to the home of Judge Hall, having no other reliable means of finding out before it might be too late. His wife greeted me at the door of their simple, pretty house; but when she went to tell the judge I was there, she came back and said she regretted I had made such a long trip because the judge was obliged not to speak to either party privately, in the absence of the other party. However, I explained to Mrs. Hall the urgent predicament I was in, and I asked her if she knew whether I would be able to press my counterclaim if my parents paid the next morning; Mrs. Hall excused herself and went to ask the judge. The judge told her the answer and she came back and told me. Mrs. Hall said that according to the judge I would still be able to press my counterclaim.

The judge did not see me, and I learned what I needed. I later discovered that the governing Canons of Judicial Ethics include a little-known provision for an emergency interview in private, which Judge Hall in this emergency provided for in his own way, by his own judgment, and with the help of his wife.

On Monday morning, January 6, 1958, I accompanied my mother to Mr. Egan's office and quietly watched and listened while he collected full payment on the debt, from money my parents had obtained from the sale of their house.

On Friday, January 10th, came the next step in court. Judge Hall

ordered that my counterclaim be transferred to the Superior Court as I had requested, and he granted me permission to file a supplement demanding that Columbia return to my parents the \$1,049.50 collected on Monday.

After that the lawsuit was delayed about three months, because I did not have the \$43 necessary for filing the counterclaim and transferring all the documents in duplicate to the higher court. On January 18th I had written a letter to Judge Hall pointing out the reasons why Columbia ought to pay the court fees, but he denied this request, saying that the statutes required that the fees be paid by the party doing the filing, and that the court had no power to order the other party to pay the fees.

When I finally did pay, Mr. Egan gave notice for me to appear in court on May 23rd, at which time, he declared, he would ask to have me summarily dismissed without a trial. His "Notice of Motion" was accompanied by a revised affidavit of Dean Chamberlain. (The original affidavit and my answer to it were rendered ineffective, technically, because they were filed before the case actually was transferred to the Superior Court.) Mr. Egan also enclosed photostat copies of my applications for admission to Columbia, by which Dean Chamberlain, in one of his last official acts as head of Columbia College, tried to prove that this student was not seeking wisdom when he entered Columbia.

Many other universities and organizations would have boasted confidently that their approach to life was a wise one, that their teachings were attempts to impart this wisdom, and that any student who came to them was seeking this wisdom. Columbia, however, had trapped herself into asserting that pure reason or wisdom cannot be taught, and now chose to fabricate an elaborate defense in support of this original falsehood. The University finally had to resort to underhand maneuvers, as will be seen later.

[Next Month brings this History into Court.]

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