

January 1958

Vol. III, No. 4

# VALUES



THE RELATIVIST IN HIS BOTTLE

WISDOM'S LANGUAGE

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NEXT MONTH

THE HUMAN TOUCH

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# Editorial

OUR apologies for not publishing a bijou dictionary.

Instead, what rare fare we've got!

To start with there's Nataraja Guru's invasion of the money world (a delightful fountain of clear water jetted across the financial desert). This itself makes VALUES worth your pennies.

Then there's the famous Romain Rolland's account of his historic meeting with Nataraja Guru nearly thirty years ago (in French, but we shall give you the English version next month).

And you will be glad to know Roy Jacobsen, after reading his absolutist knockout correspondence with the relativists of Columbia University, and you will look out, we know, for further instalments of this exposure.

If you want a further example of absolutism on the move, there is Garry Davis, who refuses to let go the squirming tail of the relativists in some part of the world or other—this time Paris. And be sure and send us your vote on the ballot on page 105. Your reply will be mailed fast to World Man No. 1.

Oh, we also do hope you won't cut yourself on that somewhat sharp fragment, the razor article. (We nearly cut ourselves writing it.)

Would you like to please three people? Here's how. Just gift VALUES as a New Year present to some nice guy, and you've done it. You've made yourself happy, him happy, and us happy.

Our New Year Resolution: to keep VALUES going.

Our Aim: to be a true medium for the truth that makes men free and debonair. Each issue, every month, we present a new topic, so that, from every point of view, dealing with all the interests of human beings, what is known as wisdom, the great core of real commonsense, uttered in so many styles by wise men known or anonymous, can come to the rescue of our troubled world of common human beings. We are not offering a system, a revelation, a doctrine, a religion, a cult or an ideology. These have all been tried. But there is a know-how of reaching to what we have all got and what most of us have forgotten—the proper COMMON sense which we all should share to make the world an intelligent and happy home.

And a very Happy New Year to you all!

# Une Rencontre avec Nataraja Gourou

par ROMAIN ROLLAND

(extraits de son journal L'Inde)

*IL n'est pas tout-a-fait étrange que Romain Rolland souffre ici d'une certaine confusion a propos de question de caste ou de race telle qu'elles obtient aux Indes contemporaine. Il tend a oublier que, presque toutes les races du monde ont melanges sans cesse pendant l'histoire de cette vaste sous-continent non-seulement durant des centaines mais de milliers d'annees, a telle point, que, si par exemple, les ecoliers plus age de n'importe quelle externat aux Indes aujourd'hui, passe en revue en uniforme presenteront aucune base scientifique de classification ethnique ou racial. Les 'Thiyyas' de Malabar comprise actuellement des types tres divergent de origine, comparativement plus recent que 'des parias' qui signifie une inferiorite plutot socio-religieux seulement, appertinent au contexte dialectique 'brahmine et paria.'*

—ÉDITEUR.

APRES une visite de C. F. Andrews, l'ami de Tagore, Rolland ecrivait :

"Il nous decrit un groupement de trois millions d'intouchables Indien, dans l'Etat de Travancore (au Sud de la Peninsula, pres de Cap Comorin), qu'on nomme Thyys, et qui sont reunis autour d'un gourou celebre, Narayana Swami. Ce Narayana, plus age de Tagore (et que Tagore a etc visiter recemment), preche une doctrine, tres haute et pure, depuis une vingtaine d'annees. (Justement, aujourd'hui, a Geneve, un de ces jeunes disciples, un intouchable Indien, venu en Europe pour etudier, Natarajan, celebre son anniversaire . . . Il est a rappeler que, de tout temps, les intouchables ont eu des gourous, et que ces gourous intouchables sont honores par tous les Indiens, sans prejuges de caste : car le Sanyasin, l'homme de Dieu, s'eleva au-dessus de toutes de castes."

"14 janvier 1929—Un Indien de Sud, P. Natarajan, paria d'origine, je crois, directeur d'ecole dans l'Etat de Travancore, disciple d'un grand gourou, mort il y a quelques mois, Sri Narayana. (Andrews nous en avait parle.)—ce maitre etait un type assez rare de jnanin d'action, de grand intellectuel oriente vers le bien social. Savant sanscritiste, ayant parcouru l'Inde, et s'etant, apres une longue periode de concentration, voue a sa mission, il avait exerce une profonde influence sur deux millions de fideles. Ces Indiens du Sud de l'Inde paraissent etre, comme lui, (au contraire de ce que j'imaginai) beaucoup plus disposes au pur rationalisme, ou du moins a la foi intellectuelle, que les Bengalis. Narayana se mefinit du sentimentalisme et de la bhakti extatique du Bengale. Il s'adressait a la raison et au bon sens. Bien agissait individuellement sur le peuple, en prenant les hommes, un a un, dans l'intimite. Perpetuellement en course, il allait les trouver, le soir apres leur repas, s'entretenait familièrement avec bonhomie, finesse, bonne humeur affectueuse, a les degager de leurs superstitions. Mais le plus remarquable, c'est que sa croyance etait le plus inaccessible, eut-on pense, au commun des mortels : le pur Advaita de Cankara, le Monisme absolu, Cependant, il parvenait, a l'infiltrer peu

( voyez page 102 )

# A Nice Walk on the Razor's Edge

By JOHN SPIERS

THIS is not going to be what you expect. There are no attempts here to emulate Noah Webster. What a relief! For it's not word-trouble but thinking-trouble.

It was said our language was "so difficult." When we asked for a list of hard words did any come? Not on your life. It would have been remarkable if a list had come.

Not the language, but the human ego is hard.

Have you complained to your newspaper about its language? Do the dwellers on the Thames, the Volga, the Ganges or the Hudson wail about the poor old *Sputnik* orbiting with the *dynamic imponderability* of a *quantum rocket* and exposed to *interstellar* or *cosmic radiation*? We haven't heard, and so the possible threat of space-transportation for our levity or our zero gravity in the matter may be yet sustained. . . .

How hard to find a pigeon-hole!

Indeed the absolutist can only be pigeon-holed in his own unique category. Isn't it a shame!

But thinking! What gobbledegook!

Our tools are riddles and paradoxes, the contradictions and their reconciliation.

Must we have a style? Is it writing to order? Who forbids? Find the robot and give it a planchette!

**Literature!** Pub-crawling gutter-boys with crimson passages for the yellow press; Mandarin stylists ladling treacled prose for the highbrow quarterlies; science experts hammering out their machine-cut verbiage; pious clichés from the mantram orators of goody-goody religion; and the stuff that also pays so richly, the syndicated, dehydrated bits and pieces, harlotted round the world's press and thrown finally into the morgues known as digests. Let's get the taste of this out of our mouth.

Checkbooks, passbooks and account-books. The holy books of the money-lending age, read by the sweetest religious souls and the most charming scoundrels. How sordid to bring it up!

We are all SO good, at ALL costs, so good.



Good Baptists, Good Atheists, Good Jews, Good Catholics and Hindus and Mohammedans and Parsis . . . and Good Communists, Good Democrats and Good Nationalists . . . and above all, Good Earners, Good Family People. We read the respectable newspapers, the Times or Pravda, as properly pasteurized as the morning milk. We keep abreast of the latest movies and make love as they instruct. We're on the right track. The Government is right, whether in Paris, Delhi, Washington or Moscow.

And we're all in a relativistic hell.

I know of a good psychiatrist.

**Didn't you know** it was dangerous to think? Who will come for a nice walk on the razor's edge? No offers?

There are such lovely new thoughts to think—on the social counter of the department store, beautifully produced, thrilling, and sterilized, provided so generously by the Holy Fatherland of the State.

"We don't know what you're talking about"—which is a lie. They know too well. But they are farked.

"Very well then, but it's easy for you!" As if there was something fine in comfort at all costs. It appears a padded cell is delightful.

Living, they call it!

Safe in the foam-rubbered, gadget-serviced apartment of the Family, with an Aristophanic frog-chorus of "yes, yes, yes, yes" from all the Neighbours, in the tedious (but ah, so safe) Job. Safety first and no escape. And when the Country calls or orders (but forget that), off we go like Mickey Mouse to the safest of chemically couraged wars to attack the mirror-imaged "others" equally assured of perfect safety . . .

How the Absolute strains to deliver us from it all! What vast labour pains which only the wise men know! To be born anew! If not by self-determination and understanding, then, by the hair of the Sputnik dog, it's going to be a hard, hard birth with rocketting H-Bombs for scissors.

**What price social security?** The dollared, bolstered, Welfare State, this mechanical plotting and planning, five years plus five years plus five, and five and five, money-lending, book-keeping State without end. Are we so much better than the little dog up beyond the blue, blue sky?

Absolutism is not the tyranny of the state or politics. There's an absolutist Absolutism and a relativistic absolutism. There can be a relativistic absolute monarch. The absolutist Absolutism is freedom from qualified absolutism, freedom from limitations and dictatorial authority. It means all-outness, and also an all-in attitude, absolutely inviolable, effortlessly, holding on in unwavering contemplative solitude in selfhood. It means living without surrender or breakdown in the unprincipled world of opinions which pass for principles.

We have broken the backs of words. Pass on. The whole subject is impossible in relativistic terminology.

**Yes! Sputnik lives** pretending to enjoy our modern (or ancient) coffins. All the time safe in sealed containers, perfectly canned and beautifully labelled, ticketed with all the data with 47 answers, from date of birth to club membership.

Remember the movie "Marty"? "Whatya gonna do tonight Marty?" "Aw, I don't know. Be at the old place, I guess." "See ya later, Marty."

Martyism! Take the dog for a pee-walk. Have you powdered your nose? Oh, say can you see?

Indeed we are not moles. We can hear, too...

He said...that'll be seven-fifty Madam...yes, two at bedtime...sure, he's offering ten per cent., guaranteed...she said...they say...sign here please...only twentyfive francs...listen to what Krushenhower said...nineteen and six...it's true, I saw it in the papers...I must ask my wife...I'll ask my husband...mummy, teacher says...forty lire...sign here please, and here, and here, and here, and here...fifty rupees...it's got seventeen vitamins...bring your papers...you're not allowed...fifteen dollars...but what will they think...no, but I know a chap in the ministry who can get it for you...sorry, go to the next block, fifth floor...ten yen...the rules say clearly...she doesn't charge much...three hundred drachmae...not last year's model...it is not permitted...cost him twelve hundred...I don't like...if she goes I don't...according to regulation 403...you told him and he told them and she said to me...a great man, worth a million...now, do what you're told...nine marks...we always go to the movies on Wednesday...but the immigration rules...your license needs renewing...we'll let you know...sign here please, and here...

Oh, say can you hear?

Have you the eyes and ears of a child? Perhaps you are rundown with words? Or flatulent with sheer goodness? May we send for a purge? And let us not forget the dear little spivs and teddy-boys. Have you heard the latest rock'n roll? It's rock around the globe as well as round the clock. We need not tell you it's atomic.

**And the grand panjandrums** who have munched down the whole thesaurus, who have grazed among the thousand categories, in so many languages, of white and black, of right and wrong, of good and bad, superbly learned in dualism, with the taste of fish glue in their mouths, having also eaten the consoling dessert of the binding, the only integration known to them. They are suffering from bookworms, and can no longer tolerate a change of diet. The wheeled stretcher awaits them and the cosmic doctor is impatient.

Does the butterfly in the sunny air where the lemon-trees bloom remember, as it sucks the nectar from the newly opened spring flowers, its days as a grub eating wordy leaves? Does it remember the wordless egg and the pupal sleep?

And thought which you forgot, dear Bertrand, leaps over your logical positivism, just as it laughs at a dreamed-up cosmos. What does the thinker care for light speed space, when already he waits on all planets for the slow space-ships to come?

We are so deadly frivolous that our sides are splitting with weeping. We mean everything that hasn't been said.

**Were Marx and Engels outlawed** because they roused the workers? Oh dear no. It was because of their unanswerable exposure

(continued on page 126)



UNDER THE FLAG OF WORLD GOVERNMENT

World Citizens at the Gurukula World Centre, Bangalore.

### **Une Rencontre—**( *continue de page 98* )

a peu, par des moyens indirects, dans le cœur des plus simples. Il en arrivait à faire convertir certains temples et maisons de service social—ou à persuader les paysans de l'inutilité de leurs idoles, et à les faire remplacer, sur l'autel, par un simple miroir, devant lequel une femme était en attitude d'adoration—symbole très accessible et pénétrant, sans explications inutile, de l'identité de l'âme humaine avec Dieu.—Il était surtout un grand pétrisseur d'hommes; il avait formé beaucoup de disciples; et sans parler publiquement lui-même, il les instruisait à parler, il les fournissait d'arguments et de doctrine...

... Natarajan... est d'un type brun foncé, à large face, à corps trapu, petit, robuste, assez laid, intelligent, sans distinction, mais pas très différent physiquement de certains types du Punjab (Moralement, c'est une autre affaire; En nous parlant des Punjabites, Natarajan définit leur tempérament combatif par le mot: "race de frontières"...)—Natarajan est venu en Europe, pour compléter ses études de pédagogie; et il travaille à l'Institut J. J. Rousseau de Genève; il a fait inscrire à la Faculté des Lettres de Paris une thèse sur l'éducation. Il cherche à concilier l'idéal éducatif Indien du gourou avec l'idéal européen des Ecoles Nouvelles, qui donne la prépondérance à l'enfant."



## The Danger of Relativistic Thought by Garry Davis

*We give here extracts from a letter to Mr. Hugh Schonfield of the Commonwealth of World Citizens, London.*

MY DEAR HUGH:

I think it best if I just plunge frankly into the heart of the matter rather than build up a foundation of precedent. To my mind your way and thinking and thus your approach to the problems of mankind is relative. My way of thinking and thus my "approach" to the same problem of mankind is absolute. By relative I mean partial; by absolute I mean whole . . . .

There is no world citizen without a World Government.

When you assert the Commonwealth of World Citizens to be a Servant-Nation, you at once deny your own world citizenship. The word "nation" implies exclusivity, part of the whole, thus relative. But the very problems which you presume to want to solve are *not* exclusive, but are indeed whole or global . . .

Your letters are cast in either-or terms: either become a "loyal" Commonwealth "Citizen" or continue your own way without the



GARRY DAVIS

### DAS SCHRECKGESPENST!

Was won all dem ist Garry Davis, Weltburger "Nr. 1" und Schreckgespenst samtlicher Zollbeamten und Innenministerien in de rweiten Welt:

—KOLNISCHE RUNDSCHAU, 2 Nov. 1957

### THE TERRIFYING APPARITION!

To home office officials and frontier officials throughout the world is not Garry Davis, World Citizen No. 1, a terrifying apparition?

—KOLNISCHE RUNDSCHAU, 2 Nov. 1957.

Isn't it a good thing somebody scares them!

Commonwealth. But Hugh, whereas the Commonwealth cannot accept me unless I sign up as a "Citizen," the World Government *has already claimed* the loyalty of all human beings as of October 5, 1956 according to the same legal principles by which states now claim loyalty: *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* [rights as humans under the sun, and of the same blood—Ed.] Thus all "Citizens" of the Commonwealth, including yourself, are already Citizens of World Government and represented *in toto* as integral parts of mankind which we are anyway whether we agree to it or not. *This attitude conforms strictly to the exigencies of our own nuclear age and is not a matter of personal choice or desire.*

**Someone Must Speak for Everyone:** The basic fallibility of your approach is revealed here. You consider that I have a choice in being accorded the title "World Citizen No. 1". You use such phrases as "belong to the Commonwealth," "Becoming a Citizen of the Commonwealth," "There would be an end of World Citizen No. 1" etc. You go further and say that I never "repudiated the false title" given me. Besides your source of information in this regard being incorrect in that I have since the beginning "repudiated" this title, since you yourself admit that it was "given" me, how indeed is it to be refused? And moreover if it was the public itself which gave it to me — in which I include myself — then the title itself is nothing more than a *public trust* to be used as wisely as I am able and definitely *not* to be repudiated. If you are sincerely interested in ridding me of this burdensome title, then you must be prepared to assume it yourself. I have come to realize over the years that someone must speak for everyone or in political terms, represent the General Good *and* the Good of Each.

The Commonwealth of World Citizens by its own constitutional admission does not represent mankind, but only those who have signed up. Further, it binds all its "Citizens" to the collective program since as you write, "Becoming a Citizen of the Commonwealth meant being one hundred per cent. committed to our programme." What is the difference between the Commonwealth and any competitive nation *in practice*? Since you eschew "any demonstration or flouting of authority" — quoted from yours of 25 Sept. — you must then conform to every national device under the guise of law which denies fundamental human rights. Your "Citizens" must fight the very wars ordered by the states against which you are instituted. Hugh, this is so blatantly contradictory that it is no wonder — as I have heard — that Commonwealth "Citizens" are "seceding." It just doesn't work. . .

**Principle and Practice:** I am not here devaluing your initiative in terms of good-will, highly principled intentions, and immense effort, both intellectual and physical. It represents a unique and historic chapter in Man's search for his unity. As such, it deserves high praise and support. It was in this light that I applied for "citizenship" several years ago. You now state that I had "done nothing to maintain" my "citizenship," that I "sent no registration fee," neither did I pay "any citizen's tax or engaged in any activity on behalf of the Commonwealth or promote its development."

During this time however, I declared a World Government, established an executive agency, designed, printed and issued a World Passport,

# WORLD REFERENDUM

## How Would YOU Vote ?

THIS really started in the letters to the Editor section of the New York Herald Tribune, where a controversy over a World-Poll took place in October, in which Garry Davis had participated.

But Garry would not leave it there. So on November 23, he rigged up a polling booth to start the poll, near the foot of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The crowd who gathered were all sympathetic and

even started to vote, but the police as usual came along and took him to the Police Station.

Here is the printed Ballot Paper in English. Garry had it in French and German as well.

If you send us your vote we shall be happy to send it along to him.

| WORLD BALLOT   | mark X in column below |    |
|--|------------------------|----|
|  | YES                    | NO |
| 1. Should the people of the world be directly consulted by referendum on major world issues? |                        |    |
| 2. Should the people directly elect representatives to a World Assembly?                     |                        |    |
| 3. Do you think all nations should be admitted to the United Nations?                        |                        |    |

travelled to India with it, asked for and received the support of the wisest man in India, Guru Natarajan, and the Prime Minister, travelled west through Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, speaking everywhere and spreading the *principles and practices* of World Citizenship, entering the United States with only my World Passport in possession, then finally coming to Germany and within one month forcing both the German and French governments to consider me as "outside" their laws with resultant publicity again for World Citizenship. If the Commonwealth is unable to consider any of this direct World Citizenship activity "on behalf of the Commonwealth to promote its development," it becomes quite clear to

me that those who make this contention—and here I distinguish between the Commonwealth “authorities” and the “public”—simply want to harness the energy of a World Citizen, exposing the fact that they are mere patrons of World Citizenship.

*[ The writer then asked for Mr. Schonfield's allegiance to World Government and enclosed the necessary papers, and also asked for a list of all their “Citizens” so that they could also be sent the forms. The next is a consideration of the Commonwealth of World Citizens “Declaration to be Signed by All Applicants for Citizenship.” ]*

DEAR HUGH:

Please consider this as a postscript . . .

**Who Are “Our People”?**: Relevant to my discussion of relative and absolute attitudes are certain items contained in this Declaration. The confusion arises in mixing these two levels or attitudes indiscriminately. . .

The second paragraph mixes the impartial or universal unitive principle with the partial or exclusive relative principle. It first defines the obligations incumbent on a World Citizen as being openly generous to all, then obliges the said “World Citizen” to limit his words and actions to “the people and world community to which I now dedicate myself.” Can one dedicate oneself to that to which one belongs already by virtue of one's innate characteristics? The mind plays a trick on itself here. Unable to realize the whole *at once* through direct perception, it postulates the whole *in theory* and then seeks to convince others of the validity of the theory by organizing a club or group *for* The Whole, which gets translated into such words as “world peace,” “world government,” “freedom,” etc.

After a careful reading of the third paragraph, I see that you have been inconsistent on a fundamental issue indicating a confusion in your own mind . . . I refer to the second sentence: “I will not, as a World Citizen, comply with any enactment which requires me to inflict physical or moral injury on any part of the human race, whether by participating in war or by violation of any of the fundamental human rights.” Then in your letter to me . . . you say . . . “but our activity excludes any demonstrations or flouting of authority . . . so we have to be very orderly, harmless, and wise in statesmanship and mature in judgment.”

**Flouting of Authority:** Refusing to go to war is certainly “flouting of authority” is it not? Refusing to pay war taxes, refusing to abide by restrictive devices against travel, against free assembly, free speech, freedom to work, etc. of the State are certainly direct violations of authority, but authority which first violates human rights. Gandhi “flouted” authority as did Christ and Thoreau. Then what about national soldiers who have “authority” to murder? You should become stateless for ten minutes, Hugh, and you would shortly become shockingly aware of the negative aspects of “authority.” . . .

( Continued on page 128 )

# Gold in Wisdom's Language

By NATARAJA GURU



NATARAJA GURU

*Here is the wise man's approach to economics and money. Some time ago we promised to focus attention on it thoroughly. What is the real gold standard? What is the relationship between the golden calf and the fatted calf? These, and other aspects are here given an initial survey.*

GOLD is the God of the world of finance. It occupies a central position among things that men, and women more especially, wish to possess and keep. The value of all other things is determined mostly with gold as the *norm* or standard. Although it is a thing, when related to man it has more of a perceptual status than a mere outside object. Its utility is often a theoretical and negligible factor. It is by the intimacy that gold is able to establish in a personal sense with human beings that it gets its value. It thus reflects a state of mind of which the businessman knows how to take advantage.

If we should toss a gold dollar and handle it we are struck by its weight and its sound quality, revealing its superlative materiality. In addition it has a dull gleam resembling the subdued brilliance of some of the distant stars. Of the earth most earthy, it has yet about it something celestial. Its radiance embellishes the glory of the sceptre or the crown of kings and the spires of temple towers shine with its lustre. It is thus more than a mere piece of inert matter, and this must be the reason why the *Tarka Sastra* (the Indian science of categories, relations of things, analogies, etc.) brings it under the item of *tejas* (fire, light) rather than under the category of "earth." It is thus lifted hypostatically and glorified in the philosophical thought of India. Its mysterious role in human affairs, dating from antiquity to the present day, seems only to justify this status.

**In Matter-of-Fact Language:** When gold is yet in its raw or natural setting in the womb of the earth, it is hardly more than a virtuality or a potentiality. Once brought to the surface after good luck



in prospecting, speculative investment and many man-hours of labour, it might be made into ornaments, plates to stagnate in the form of treasure, or relics. Its main role is to pamper vanity. The newly rich and the more ancient nobles through gold get an ostentatious satisfaction of shining in contrast to the ragged poor around them. These "bag barons," as Ruskin would call them, like the "crag barons" as the same writer nicknames them, who were not other than highway robbers hiding in a place of vantage against unwary travellers, had the same effect on "rags" who were the poor. Thus he developed the famous aphorism: "Bags and crags have the same effect on rags."

When gold does circulate from hand to hand, it happens more often secretly, sluggishly or slyly avoiding the public gaze. It takes the form of a gratification, a personal consideration or a mark of favour. Even at times of inflation, which is a form of modern economic malaise, gold value is not affected much and gold is not scattered about in the same way as paper currency. There is a steady dignity in its "buoyancy" or "shyness" in the money market.

**The Dragon of Finance :** When once outside the personal or domestic context, gold has the elusive way of hiding in safes or vaults. In national capitals like Moscow, Paris, London or Washington, gold exists in built-in safe vaults, more by supposition in the form of a credit which can be abstract or concrete or both. Even there it is an elusive presence. Mutually protected against rival officers themselves who may represent business or government interests or both, it has a way, as has been reported recently, of being just "found missing." Later, when nobody is the wiser, book adjustments can set right matters and neither business nor government are visibly worse off for it. Regeneration and recovery apply to money as well as to life or health. Whether the actual gold is in the mine or buried somewhere by a miser or still in the forty acres of London's banking district, it makes no perceptual difference to the actual individual human, whose meal reaches his mouth by the resultant interaction of multifarious life factors and circumstances both man-made and natural.

Credit can be created at the head-end of the dragon of finance while the debit is a virtuality residing at the dragon's tail, where gold-prospecting might be in progress. Irrespective of the amount of gold and in spite of more and more being dug up, human life in its most vitally necessary aspects goes flowing on, the same as ever. Gold makes itself evident through the newspapers now and then as a customs' haul as a contraband article in the most unforeseen places, or as a treasure-trove unearthed thousands of miles away from its origin and thousands of years later, making men ashamed or proud under varying circumstances. Gold infatuation also comes into evidence in human affairs now and then as a fecund cause of culpable homicide.

**Normative Principle of Possession :** We read in the *Don Bell Reports* (Florida, USA, issue Aug. 10, 1956) the following interesting commentary :

"Throughout the Babylonian Empire, temples were built to worship false gods. Within the temples were strong-rooms presided over by priests (later to be called bankers). The priests exhorted the people to

bring their gold and other precious items to the strong-rooms for safe keeping. Customers were handed little clay tablets as receipts (paper not yet being invented). The people paid interest to the priests (20%) for guarding their gold. And since it was inconvenient 'to go to the bank' for every transaction involving use of gold, the clay tablets began circulating as a 'medium of exchange'. The clay tablets were backed by gold supposedly deposited in the local 'Fort Knox.' So nobody questioned the use of clay tablets instead of gold.

"But the priests of the strong-room made a startling and history-shaking discovery. People seldom called for their stored gold. Less than ten per cent. of the gold was ever called for in a single day. Therefore, clay tablets, representing *ten times the amount of the gold on hand could be issued*, and no one but the bankers themselves would ever be the wiser. The banker could loan out ten times the value of the actual deposits and remain solvent. So instead of making twenty cents on each dollar in hand he could issue *credit money* and make ten times twenty cents on each dollar in hand—or make two dollars profit for each dollar actually deposited in the bank."

Gold thus enters into human life as finance. The possessive instinct of human beings and the advantage of one dealing with the possession of many by proxy, as it were, in a thing like gold, is at the basis of this kind of financial relationship which works to the mutual advantage of both borrower and lender. "Interest" and "discount" which vary only in the time of actual use of value makes for the thriving of banking. The modern bank-rate may be juster and better founded, but the reference of finance to gold and the constant of ten per cent. chance in favour of the banker are features that have not changed and cannot. The "inverted pyramid" of the credit system thus becomes erected, with which the common man who cashes a cheque or buys a meal is unconcerned or ignores.

**World Credit System's Need of Golden Rule:** Nimrod who founded the city of Babel at the dawn of history is said to have started to use gold as a norm in state affairs. Nebuchadnezzar fifteen hundred years later established the gold standard publicly. Although Britain went off the gold standard as late as 1931, it holds on to gold as tenaciously as in days of antiquity for the sake of regulating its international commitments through the Bank of International Settlements at Basle, Switzerland, or the 'World Bank.' The Governors of the Federal Reserve Bank of America or of the Bank of England are the architects of what is called "sound finance" for their respective areas, or for world finance generally, which they might be doing in the interests of both governments and business at once.

There are lurking contradictions at the core of financial policies which are of a secret dialectical order wherever the interests of one comes into relation with the interests of the many, whether at the social, national or international levels. The laws which might hold good in regulating the 'Credit of Nations' will not hold good the same way in dealing with 'One World Economics' which transcends national interests. Private or limited liability finance is thus different from public unlimited liability finance, which makes all the difference to the justice or validity

of the transactions. Without any unitive wisdom principle being consciously introduced here, chaos in world credit is bound to prevail. A golden rule based on the virtues of integrity, trustworthiness, parsimony in the interests of one and all, and just use of the power of credit, is involved here, which is still to be properly formulated.

**Spirituality and Gold-Value :** Saints or spiritually inclined men generally have despised gold (with wine and women) as filthy lucre. The worship of false gods or Mammon is associated also with the worship of the golden calf in Mediterranean religious history. Even a coin placed under the bed of Sri Ramakrishna of Bengal is said to have shocked him in a strange way; and it is written of him also, maybe rather imaginatively, that he used to throw lumps of gold and mud into the river Ganges to prove to himself and others the truth of the dictum, otherwise familiar to many Indians, that the man of wisdom considers a lump of clay, a pebble and a piece of gold with the same equanimity of mental attitude (*Gita* vi, 8). A saint generally wishes to live outside the world of high finance. The plain living and the parsimonious economical virtue that they generally cultivate for the emulation of their immediate followers, makes them consciously or instinctively recognize the truth of the saying of the American philosopher Thoreau, "Superfluous wealth can buy superfluities only. Money is not required to buy one necessary of the soul" (*Walden, Conclusion*.)

The Guru Narayana was once offered some natural flowers with a few gold ones thrown among them, by way of a pious birthday offering by a rich devotee who thought of surprising him and pleasing him by such a gift. The Guru picked a flower made of gold and, smelling it, remarked disappointedly that it had no scent. This was a gentle way of teaching the difference between the real value represented by a fresh blossom and the false value implied in the gold of the rich man. On another occasion, on the contrary, the Guru was known to have himself presented a gold coin to a disciple who was starting on a long voyage. He had questioned the same disciple already about his attitude to money and on his telling the Guru that it was a superfluity for a spiritual person, had remarked also that it was natural for one to keep money and use it, if only for purchasing a railway ticket.

Pastoral communities that might survive in mountain seclusions like the Naga land where salt still takes the place of gold, may be supposed to live in a more or less self-sufficient economy of their own, in which currency in our sense may not hold good. Money, like everything else, is right in its proper place when used with proper human intelligence or wisdom. Economists like Adam Smith have also voted on the side of saints when they wrote such words as these:

"A rich country in the same manner as a rich man, is supposed to be abounding in money; and to heap up gold and silver in any country is supposed to be the readiest way to enrich it . . . Among the Tartars as among all other nations of shepherds who are generally ignorant of the use of money, cattle are the instruments of commerce and the measure of value. Wealth therefore according to them consisted of cattle

(Continued on page 120)

# The Columbia Controversy

By ROY JACOBSEN

This is the story of a single-handed absolutist at close grips with a relativistic system. The author who was a student of Columbia University, reveals, through his actual correspondence extending through an incredible three years, the evasive, almost unbelievable and extraordinary tactics of this "respectable" and "world famous" American institution. If you have ever been to school, you must read this! It is the introductory instalment of a remarkable documentation.

*The following correspondence, which extends over a period of three years, gives some indication of how one of the world's leading intellectual centers has been dealing with its students. Each letter is unabridged except for the headings after being given once.*

I spent my freshman year at Dartmouth College and then transferred to Columbia for the final three years. Here are some of the statements in the Columbia catalogues that appealed to entering students like myself:

"... a principal aim of Columbia College from the beginning: *It develops the whole man.*"

"Columbia, over two centuries, has considerably refined its techniques, but its aim remains constant: to foster in its students a desire to learn, a habit of critical judgment, and a deep-rooted sense of personal and social responsibility.

If you become a student at Columbia College, you will find its liberal arts course pursues this aim in five ways:

1. It brings you into firsthand contact with the major intellectual ideas that have helped to shape human thinking and the course of human events.
2. It gives you a broader acquaintance with the rest of the world.
3. It guides you toward an understanding of people and their motivations.
4. It leads you to a comprehending knowledge of the scientific world.
5. It helps you acquire facility in the art of communication."

In addition to such statements, many inscriptions appear on buildings at the University, representing the principles to which Columbia is dedicated. Here are some of them:

"In lumine tuo videbimus lumen" ("In your light we shall see light")—Motto of Columbia College and Columbia University.

"To ring out through the ages for truth, justice, and liberty"—Inscription on the University Bell at Columbia.

"Magna Vis Veritas" ("Truth is mighty and will prevail")—Inscription on marble archway in Main Reading Room, Butler Library.

"Wisdom dwelleth in the heart of him that hath understanding."—Inscription on frieze of St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia.

And here are a few more samples of the many statements made by Columbia College concerning its education. (From the Bulletin of Information About Columbia College.)

"A Columbia College education is designed to serve you throughout life. It gives you the training you want in your major field, plus a general background on which to draw for values that give your life dependable roots."

"Whether or not you decide to take advanced work on completion of your course, you will emerge from Columbia College with as fine a background in the liberal arts as is obtainable."

"And wherever they are and whatever they do, Columbia College students will become, first and foremost, good citizens."

"Columbia College knows its students as individuals. Success of the College's educational plan has depended on the enlightened advisory system accompanying it. The Dean's Office is the core of the system."

I am in full agreement with the aims and principles to which Columbia is dedicated. But see what the correspondence reveals.

Mr. Roy Jacobsen  
562 West 113th Street  
New York 25, N. Y.

Columbia College  
Columbia University  
Office of the Dean

2 April 1854

My dear Jacobsen:

I do not understand your mid-term record, which suggests that you have in fact withdrawn from the College.

It is necessary that you let either Dean Cole or me hear from you not later than 12 noon on Wednesday 7 April, at which time your status in the College will be decided.

Yours very truly,  
N. M. McKNIGHT  
Dean of Students

Dean McKnight was next highest to Dean Chamberlain in Columbia College.

I replied to his letter as follows:



562 West 113th St.  
New York 25, N. Y.  
April 6, 1954

Dear Dean McKnight:

There is a reason for my absence from most of my classes, and I hope you will try to understand. Ever since I can remember, I have been acutely concerned with what my life's work will be. My friends throughout school were going to be businessmen, lawyers, teachers—but I felt somehow that I could never be satisfied with any of the routine professions. I felt as though I had been born invisible, and that neither I nor my work would ever be seen; on the other hand I felt great curiosity about the things I saw, and I wanted to understand them and perhaps improve them. I was aware I always had a terrific drive, and I didn't want to waste my energy on work that would be comparatively unimportant. That was why I discarded my youthful ambition of being a civil engineer; I felt a much greater attraction to man's deepest problems and his ultimate destiny. So while I was in high school I became interested in social work and related it to my religion, thinking this approach would be of most help to man's condition and his longing for truth. But through reading I was exposed to other "truths," especially in religion, and I was so troubled I neglected my social bent and became absorbed by philosophy. By the time I entered Dartmouth my religious beliefs were demolished, and I clung to philosophy like driftwood in the sea, hoping it would lead me to a promised land. But I drifted more and more, and was thoroughly disappointed by the futility of academic philosophy. I craved something more positive than the dead-ends of that subject. Therefore, while at Dartmouth, I changed my major to physics, with the hope of someday investigating the universe and all its components to their very foundations. I never told my friends about my ambitions, because I had little in common with them: they also were interested in the world's greatest problems, but they were going to become businessmen, lawyers, and teachers . . .

The environment at Dartmouth was even worse for physics than for philosophy. Of the previous graduating class of 700, only two had majored in physics. The laboratories were also inadequate, so I transferred to Columbia, giving up a four-year full tuition scholarship to do so. But again my hopes were washed away, because I found that the physicists with whom I would be associating for the rest of my life were not interested in the ultimate nature of the universe, nor the origin of it, its destiny, nor the basic truths about man and his problems—all the physicists I met or read about were interested in far less interesting things, as far as I was concerned. So over the period of a year and a half at Columbia I gradually turned toward English, though I was anything but pleased by the prospects of becoming a scholar or an English professor as a means of earning a living. I hated most of my English lectures as much as I hated my physics and math classes, because the instructors and students were so involved with their own subjects they ignored truths that would have been common sense even to a layman.

Soon after I left Dartmouth I began writing a novel in my spare time, but after a while I became more and more interested in it, until

finally I realized I enjoyed creative writing more than any subject in college. The more I wrote the more difficult it became for me to endure my classes. Yes, I have a true desire for learning, but I'm not going to have that desire stifled by dull instructors or students who show off their knowledge in class. I regret to say that I am disappointed with Columbia College in general. Only one professor has given me what I consider a genuine intellectual stimulus, and he is Prof. Van Doren. The rest of my instructors, from Prof. Trilling down to Mr. Friedrich, were limited scholars or monotonous beginners. My CCB1 class last semester was the most boring class I ever had, and it was doubly unbearable for me because it was "required" and was conducted on a high school level. French was also required, but I didn't mind that because I do want to learn how to speak and write the language. But I soon found it was a waste of time to go to class: there were about 25 students in my section and I was lucky if I had the chance to recite a sentence a day. Even Dartmouth had a better arrangement—no more than 10 students to a language class. No matter—I'll never learn French until I go abroad.

After I had dropped French and failed CC last semester, I saw I wouldn't have enough points for graduation this June. I couldn't take a heavier program because I have to work part-time to support myself. So I decided to be completely honest with myself in my final semester, and do only what I wanted to do, not what I was required to do. My greatest interest is writing, and that's what I've been doing with most of my time. I chose the most interesting courses I could find that would leave me plenty of time for writing, but I was disappointed—the classes were either dull or elementary. My oriental religion instructor spends 10-15 minutes a day calling attendance, and another 10 discussing remote subjects for term papers, or something similar. I consider that a sacrilege for a subject that has so much to be learned. Prof. Nobbe's English 4 is interesting, but hardly helpful. I avoided English 71-72 because I don't want any criticism of my novel until it is entirely finished. I've been working on it more than three years now, I've discarded four drafts because my outlook and my style have been changing. I'm now working on the fifth draft, and I hope it will be all I want it to be. It is partly autobiographical, it deals with man's problem of finding himself—as to his faith, his relation to others and to the world. I can't help what I write, I have to express my thoughts and my feelings. I hope to have the book finished by the end of the summer, by which time my draft board will want me. If I were discharged from college now, however, I would be called immediately. You say I have "in fact withdrawn" from the college, but I say no: I sincerely believe I am doing that which the college should in fact inspire—original work in the arts and sciences, with complete freedom of mind and action. I still attend lectures when the material is promising, and I usually come late to my oriental religion class so that I don't have to sit through the roll call and the preliminary discussion. But I have absolutely no interest in examinations or term papers, and this is one semester I feel courageous enough to rebel against them. What good are they? Will they make me a better author? Do they inspire extra work and independent thought in anyone? No. They

are merely a system whereby children can be graded for future reference.

The free time left to me before I am drafted is so precious that I don't dare waste it. Perhaps I will never become a great author, perhaps it is foolish of me to cut classes in order to write. But I know nothing about the future. All I know is that I want the chance to develop this one interest which I have at last discovered at such a great cost. Someday, after my service in the army, I expect to continue my formal education; theoretically it should continue for the rest of my life, since education is supposed to mean learning. But I hope I will find graduate work more stimulating than college—I usually find more stimulus in one good book than in all the lectures and discussions of a whole semester. I want to learn, but I must do it my own way.

I realize my behavior is nonconforming, but in these times when there are so many forces that demand conformity I hope I will find Columbia willing to grant some freedom to a student who wants to be a literary artist. I have always found guidance scarce, and inspiration is even more scarce, but I don't mind having to make my own choices and struggling under my own power. But I do need the opportunity to do so, I do need the chance to plant all my seeds when the ground is plowed by conscience.

Sincerely,  
ROY JACOBSEN

In reference to Prof. Van Doren, I must add that I was later disappointed by him too; I read his book on liberal education. He is an amiable person who usually gives thought provoking lectures, but in class he never gave the answers to the questions he raised, and when I read the answers he attempted in his book, I realized that intellectual stimulus is not enough.

At any rate, this is the reply I received from Dean McKnight:

13 April 1954

My dear Jacobsen:

I have your letter of 6 April which I have read with careful attention. Perhaps there are arguments in favour of pursuing one's education on the unorthodox basis you describe, but it is a little hard to see why one would pay tuition fees or register for specific courses.

Since you are now in your final semester of residence in the College we are willing to grant you the freedom you request. I regret, however, that you will not qualify for the degree.

Since your measurable scholastic accomplishment this year has been so low it is necessary that you be placed on academic probation. A copy of the customary form letter is enclosed.

Yours very truly,  
N. M. MCKNIGHT  
Dean of Students

In other words, Dean McKnight is saying that except for getting a degree, a liberal arts college education is unnecessary. And he is quite right: if a liberal arts college does not develop self-reliance it does not develop anything. A person who already has some self-discipline can get a better education by reading and evaluating the "required" books on his own initiative, and discussing them with his friends if he cares to. Better, because the qualities necessary for carrying out such a program would become firmer than they were, and would make the person better prepared to employ his education for whatever purpose he chooses, with better chances of overcoming obstacles. Many people go through four years of college quite intensively, and then as soon as the requirements are over they relax and deteriorate intellectually. They are unable to build upon and utilize the education for which they paid so much. They become dependent on other external forces, other "requirements," namely governmental laws, religious codes, demands made by nagging wives or husbands, demands made by employers, and so forth, without which they cannot function. By surrendering their own judgment and their own personal requirements, they find themselves in conflicts which they do not want and cannot resolve. Their "peace" is as poor as their attitude.

Dean McKnight enclosed the following mimeographed form letter, to which only the date and my name were added:

(13 April 1954)

My dear (Jacobsen):

I regret to inform you, on behalf of the College Faculty, that, in view of your recent scholastic record, your status as a student in good standing has been withdrawn and you have been placed on academic probation. The status of probation has two aspects which it is essential that you fully understand.

The first, and most important, is that under the policy of the College, loss of good standing is the first step toward complete separation. I must warn you that if, after taking all relevant factors into account, your record at subsequent marking periods continues to indicate inattention to your academic responsibilities, I am under instruction to ask you to withdraw from the College without further formality.

The second point relates to participation in student activities. students who are on probation are not permitted to represent the College or University, or otherwise to participate in any athletic contests, musical

or dramatic productions, publications, or other extra-curricular activities included in the system of eligibility certification. Members of Student Board or other representative bodies, or of Van Am, Blue Key or other College clubs or societies must consult the undersigned concerning their status.

I trust that you will allow nothing to interfere with careful attention to your college duties. In case the conditions under which you are trying to do your college work make satisfactory achievement unlikely, you should make an immediate, earnest effort to change the conditions. While you may and should secure advice from your instructors, your adviser, and the Dean's office in regard to planning your work, success or failure in carrying out the program depends primarily on your own judgment and determination.

I hope that your next report may be entirely satisfactory, thus enabling your name to be removed from the probation list.

Yours very truly,  
N. M. McKNIGHT  
*Dean of Students*

The standard probation notice does not apply justly to all cases. It is an example of mechanized treatment though the catalog claims that Columbia knows its students as individuals. No doubt the administration is efficient. But for what purpose? If not for helping the student, it must be for earning money. The scholastic failures must improve or be removed so that the school's reputation and earning power will not be impaired. The truth of this is verified by all that follows in this controversy.

The letter made me even more disappointed with Columbia than I already was at the time; I felt it was an injustice to me to be lumped together with the ones who failed their examinations through dissipation or laziness. I had had a good record in high school and at Dartmouth; at Columbia my scholastic record was good to begin with, but declined each year as my disillusionment increased. Now Dean McKnight thought a probation notice was what I needed, and saw fit to exclude me from all the extra-curricular activities in which I had been engaged. This punishment only served to convince me how little understanding there was behind the statement, "perhaps there are arguments in (your) favor." Yet when Dean McKnight retired early in 1957, he was lauded by Dr. Grayson Kirk, President of the University, as "a man of great wisdom and understanding." Praise is justified when it is true;



but here it is only a case of cooperating in the widespread game of backslapping.

It also points out the inadequate understanding I had: I felt the injustice but I was unable to do anything about it. I did not even realize I was doing more harm by allowing the injustice to stand uncorrected. I merely accepted it and thought I could forget about it.

During my three years at Columbia I was not earning enough to pay my expenses. My application for scholarship at this college had been rejected. I did have an additional four-year scholarship from the Leopold Schep Foundation, a private philanthropic organization in New York City, but this stipend plus my part-time and summer earnings were still not enough to carry my costs. My parents could afford to give me only enough to cover some of my personal expenses.

Therefore I applied for and was granted loans from the University, to pay for my tuition. My parents signed as co-makers on these loans, which meant that they would be held responsible in case I failed to meet my obligations. With each semester my debt became greater, so that by the time I left Columbia in June, 1954, I owed about \$1400. I was drafted soon thereafter, and in the following two years I paid about \$300 of that debt.

After my discharge from the army I met Mr. Harry Jakobsen—no relation to me except for Norwegian background—and became a student at the Gurukula in New Jersey where he teaches. I was still making payments on my debt to Columbia, and each payment I made reminded me that the education I had received there was not worth the money, but there seemed to be nothing I could do about it.

Then one day I received in the mail a mimeographed newspaper put out by the Class of '54—the Bicentennial Class which commemorated the 200th year of Columbia's teaching. Among the articles in this newspaper was the following letter from Dean Chamberlain. The major-concentration program to which he refers was instituted the semester after I left. When I was a student at Columbia it was not obligatory to specialize in a particular field, though most students did so anyway; the requirements then called for passing certain prescribed courses and any

other courses in the College until the fixed number of credits for graduation was reached.

Note especially the last paragraph in the letter.

## A LETTER FROM THE DEAN

What has happened during the two years since your graduation? Some of you have exchanged single blessedness for marital bliss. Others have rearranged the letters in that last adjective and have entered a marital state that is probably not bliss. Wherever you may be we hope that the ties that bind you to Columbia grow steadily more steadfast.

What has happened here since your departure? Well, still no Student Center but we have made encouraging progress and we are hopeful of attaining our goal before this school year ends. This is not quite a promise but it is a well-justified expression of optimism. While on the subject of physical improvements let me report that by next September Columbia College physical education and intra-mural teams will play their touch football and softball games on a spacious new athletic field located in Morningside Park between 110 and 113 Streets. This new development represents one part of a new community service program about which you will hear more in future years.

But how about the College's core—its curriculum? The new Upper College program which requires every student to major or concentrate in a selected department is now at the half way mark. As I write this Sophomores are rather grimly facing the ordeal of making irrevocable program selections for their final two years. The atmosphere is noticeably less relaxed than that which normally accompanies the first week of Spring registration. Sophomores, who customarily postpone their registration chores until the final days, are exhibiting a punctuality that their faculty advisers had never suspected. Whatever its ultimate outcome may prove to be the immediate effect of the new major-concentration requirement is notably galvanic. Upper College requirements have taken on new meaning. So far so good!

There can be no doubt that your successors in Columbia College are confronted by junior and senior requirements that are more demanding than those you knew. We hope you will not feel that you were shortchanged. If you do we shall be glad to readmit you as Sophomores and permit you to repeat your final two years. Do I hear any takers?

LAWRENCE H. CHAMBERLAIN

I took.

[Yes, he "took", but don't think he got re-admission! Here the real controversy began, and whether we regard it as a great JOKE—or take it really seriously, it makes fascinating reading—and remember, every bit of this is REAL—so—look out for the continuation of this true record in next month's VALUES.]

as according to the Spaniards it consisted of gold and silver. Of the two, the Tartar notion, perhaps, was the nearest to the truth." (p. 324, *Wealth of Nations*)

**Wisdom from Myth and Fable:** Much wisdom about gold is enshrined in mythology, fable and parable. The gold disc that is said to hide the face of Truth is mentioned in the *Isa Upanishad*. It refers to the false relativistic value which can hinder the vision of the Absolute Value behind it.

The *Hiranya-Garbha* (gold-germ) which represents the supreme value of the Vedic hedonistic context is the ontological and hierophantic counterpart of the disc of gold hypostatically referred to above. Between them they may be said to touch the two poles of value in the world of gold.

The golden ladder of Jacob's dream in the Bible (Gen. xxiii, 12) which touches heaven and earth values, and where angels with wings, who are supposed to be wiser and holier than ordinary men, go up and down the ladder, refers to the same two aspects of values as in the Gita (xv, 2) where branches of the great fig tree turn up and down also.

The language of myth is not meant to be realistic or logical. Myths are to be understood with the help of intuitive imagination which can enter into the spirit of the situation, which even the shrewdest of financiers are not usually capable of doing in any thoroughgoing sense. In the Indian legend Prahlada suffered because he would not worship Hiranya (gold personified). There is the famous fable of king Midas whose object is to bring out the difference between the gold to be possessed as a thing and the gold that is a mere symbol of possession. The boon of the golden touch became a curse because of the *adhyasa* or false attribution of reality to the wrong aspect of gold in the mind of the king. Normal human relations with his own daughter were thereby frustrated. It is the distinction between the real fatted calf and the golden calf set up for worship, which annoyed Moses.

This confusion between the perceptual and the actual object is a fecund cause of error by which even very worldly wise financiers can make grave mistakes in calculations which concern the everyday happiness of millions of human beings who come under their money-power. False and true credits are hard to distinguish except through the highest kind of dialectical wisdom. Even such wisdom is not for its own sake but for the real happiness of mankind which is the resultant of the correct dialectical treatment of human values which refer to the good of all and the general good at once.

**The Two Worlds of Gold:** The Midas mystery of gold is what economists recognize as Gresham's Law by which it becomes important to balance the exchange and utility values of coins put into the open market. The slightest tilt in favour of the utility side of value in a coin can make it disappear from view altogether into the unknown domain of financial virtuality.

Thus possessions can belong to two mutually exclusive worlds of value, which, when wrongly handled, can spell double gain or double

loss to the persons concerned. When carefully studied between the lines, the parables of the Bible reveal this subtle reciprocity between the two worlds placed between which the "certain rich man" of the various parables touching gold or coin teaches this wisdom in the name of Christ. Whether dealing with the wages for the workers of the rich man's vineyard, the good and faithful servant who used gold rightly, or the prodigal son who was dead to one world of economics in favour of another and was found again by a parsimonious father who feted his return to the first world of economics, or of the rich man who was the rival of Lazarus who suffered in the "other world" while the latter suffered only in the world here, we have rare dialectical wisdom secrets involving property values recorded for human guidance. To this day however, humanity remains deaf to such wisdom teaching.

### **Lack of Wisdom about Gold in Economic Statistics :**

Modern economic investigation has fallen back on the normative method of statistical studies in arriving at laws, rules and controls to be applied to gold and economic policies. Here however, the great drawback is that economics has not yet been brought properly under a normative science. The picture of a wealthy or prosperous state or individual which should be the norm in economic thought has not been clearly stated. The two worlds of gold or wealth, one of which aims at "abundance" and the other which has mere "opulence" as its ideal, have not been treated with any correct methodology.

While parables and fables guided the older generations in these matters, the modern man relies on statistics which have no better status in reliability. That statistics prove nothing and, if at all they did prove anything, they could prove either side of a question that involved the "pro" or a "con" of a proposition indifferently, has become a modern joke. F. H. Le Guardia as lately as 1933 observed: "Statistics are like alienists—they will testify for either side." (*Liberty*, May, 1933). Then there is the famous pleasantry about statistics attributed to Disraeli by Mark Twain which says, "There are three kinds of lies; lies, damned lies, and statistics."

• Even if these sweeping statements are not to be taken seriously, we have in the official publication of the Chase Manhattan Bank of New York, perhaps one of the biggest financial houses of America, the following on "Economic Statistics" with the subtitle "Economic Pulse-Takers Need Better Information" (Official Report No. 10 of 1956):

"Mark Twain, having listened to widely varying estimates of the length of the Mississippi River once marvelled 'at the fascination of a science where one gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such trifling investment of fact.'

"... only a quarter of a century ago, the same could be said of economics. The subject dealt heavily in abstractions and was short on actual facts against which to check the theories. Economists often disagreed because they had no accurate measurements.

"Economists have devised new and better methods for measuring the trends of our economy. As a result the Federal Government spends about \$40 million a year on compiling

economic statistics to-day."

It is not clear to the layman of common sense who scrutinizes the above paragraphs, whether facts or statistics are given primacy to prove what is vaguely referred to as "trends of our economy." Text-books on economics openly declare that there is no agreed explanation as to the cause of fluctuations, and that five theories have been put forward, namely, (1) the Over-Production Theory, (2) the Under-Consumption Theory, (3) The Monetary Theory, (4) the Psychological Theory and (5) the Climatic Theory; up to 1940 (cf. Silverman: *The Substance of Economics*, London, pp. 276-282).

Whether more statistics will tend to prove the validity of any one of these theories or help to make more theories instead, is not certain. The same statistics may be used to prove the sides of both the parties concerned in a controversy. The proper use of statistics in such matters is itself to be questioned, because many generalizations based on statistics like those of Malthus have signally failed. Thus proof, the fact which is to be proved, and the theory on which actual data are to be collected and interpreted, leave room for so much vagueness and conjecture, that the common man stands confused in regard to the correct way of applying economy to his own personal life. Men have to be clear first about what they want before theorizing or proving.

**The Best Use of Gold:** The fraction of gold implied in a penny is a principle that we recognize through dialectical reasoning as when we say that the value of the gold dollar inheres in the cent and *vice versa*. The unit copper coin of any country like the bad penny that turns up again and again in everyday human affairs, has only a negligible practical value in human terms.

Gold thus enters human life more as a figure of speech than as an actuality and, when it does enter mentally in this manner, it has two distinct aspects. One of these is usually that of Mammon, and the other that of God's kingdom. The gold at the tip of a fountain pen or in its cap is valuable only to the extent that something sensible is written with it. Again, we are called upon to distinguish likewise between what is to be rendered as a tribute to Caesar and what is due to God. The worship of the golden calf also refers to some wrong attitude to gold which ancient writings have condemned. Gold representing true or false value has entered into wisdom literature in various ways and forms of rhetoric. Eternal values are compared to the phoenix which burns itself at the altar to be reborn with its golden plumes at once. The fattened calf may be contrasted with the golden calf, which latter is associated with Mammon worship which is the same as what Washington Irving called "the almighty dollar, that great object of universal devotion."

High finance is known to be a gamble in which the loss of both cash and credit makes speculators jump off the skyscraper window. To see through the contradictions involved requires high common sense or rare wisdom. The virtue of the Golden Mean recommended by king Cleobulos of Rhodes and developed later by Aristotle really implies a man with gold or goodness in his heart, Economists recommend frugality of a certain kind which can be tilted in favour of stinginess on the one side or prodigality on the other. A golden rule or line may be imagined



here to separate the world of abundance from the world of opulence. The most important matter for one to make up his mind about is whether he wants one or the other of these, because as a rule they are mutually exclusive by their very nature. Rousseau in his famous essay on the Government of Poland presents two types of states to choose from. One he describes with the following epithets "noisy, brilliant, redoubtable, influential over other nations"; and the other he describes with the epithets "free, peaceful, wise, fearless of anyone, self-sufficient and happy." Then he gives us the unequivocal warning against trying to combine the two in any single state. He writes:

"Above all do not try to combine these two projects; they are too contradictory; and wanting to be related to both by a composite way of progression is to want to miss both."  
(translated from the *Contrat Social*, p. 384, edition Garnier, Paris).

**Gold and Goodness Interchangeable:** Between the language of myth, fable or parable and the graphs or pictorial representations of economic trends or situations found in modern magazines or books whereby the common man is called upon to wade his way through such concepts as "surplus value", "trade cycle," "economic equilibrium," "sound finance," "stable exchange," "conditions in the foreign market", "currency restrictions," "creation of credit," and "the inverted pyramid of credit" in order to live his life in the light of common sense or wisdom, a more direct and simple way has to be found at the present stage of man's education or progress.

Of the three schools in economic theory distinguished as the classical, neo-classical and the dialectical, the last-mentioned has at present succeeded in catching the imagination of the masses in many countries. Meanwhile great controversy and polemics rages on such questions as the theory of rent value, interest, capital, and even on the initial definition of wealth. National wealth and international wealth have not yet been clearly distinguished. Every professor of a university who writes a textbook on this highly abstract subject starts with a different intellectual formation nurtured on academic soils which differ widely from country to country, and as between the Old World and the New. Each develops a set of anecdotes or examples in his mind for the use of teaching and, as between Adam Smith, Karl Marx or Marshall, the variety of rival theorization is so great that one has to cry halt and begin to think for oneself with the help of common sense and general information.

The first dictum we can arrive at immediately is that economics is for man and not man for economics. If it yields general satisfaction and works in experience, it must be acceptable, and if it reaches out vainly from one theory to another, it has to be discarded. As a science it is not an "experimental" one or no experiments are needed here, as common experience contains the elements of experiment.

If it is to be treated as a "normative" science rather than as an experimental one, the norm of human happiness has first to be fixed in terms of economics. As neither of these seem to be done at present we make bold to adopt a method where intuitive imagination is brought in to help us to see more clearly what economists are talking about.

**A Simple Economic Situation :** Time-honoured wisdom language is only being admitted by the front door to save us from the confusion of tongues in which we find ourselves at present. It will be seen that this unitive way of approach is the same as what has been called the "dialectical approach" though not in the limited sense of post-Hegelian dialectics, but in a sense in line with what is known as perennial wisdom the world over. It has ever had an apodictic quality which humanity has always recognized whether in the Chinese, Indian or the pre-Socratic context. (Some attempts at bringing the language of this ancient way in a modern form to bear upon such subjects as economics, education or government have been made already in the pages of VALUES.)

With gold as a symbol of wealth and as a central notion of value, we shall try now to focus our attention on a simplified economic situation, in order to see the subtle aspects which have contributed to make gold a mystery. A simple question may be asked by the layman as to why gold should not be left in mines if it is only brought out to be "reserved" in the banking areas of the great capitals, buried again in vaults, as an elusive presence. Could not hoarded gold elsewhere be treated at least as equally respectable and justified?

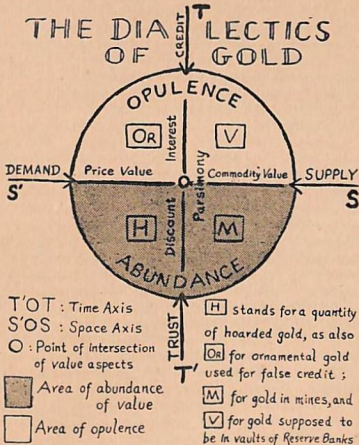
Let us then enter intuitively and freely into a simple economic situation which will serve as a pattern for the understanding of other value-factors involved in economics, both in its static and dynamic aspects. Closed and open economic situations may also be distinguished with the help of this simplified pattern of everyday life in our minds.

An absent-minded professor of economics goes for a walk towards the countryside and comes to a crossing of roads fringing on a forest reserve where a monkey happens to live. On the diagonally opposite corner of the road crossing is a vendor of bananas and peanuts exposing his wares for sale. The professor being a frugal and kind-hearted man living apart and alone from the busy world of getting and spending, just happens to have an old unit coin of small change in his pocket. Seeing the monkey eyeing the nuts hungrily, he wishes to make the best of the situation by offering his coin to the vendor to induce him to give a handful of nuts to the hungry monkey. Before accepting it, the vendor examines the coin. He hesitates, first because that coinage was one officially withdrawn from circulation but, having been minted when gold reserve covered credit better it thus had a price-value which is to his advantage in spite of its low exchange value and no face value. He therefore gives the nuts to the monkey and the professor returns to his room as a satisfied representative of the human race.

The various aspects of gold value involved here can be schematically represented in the following diagram.

**Explanation and Conclusion :** Here the abstract regulating economic norm or principle of gold value is the central notion to be kept in mind. We can readily distinguish four aspects of gold value which meet at the central point where values change-over or interact in a subtle dialectical manner. The vertical axis represents transactions where time is the primary consideration. Interest and discount rates which are always balanced in any country, operate along this vertical axis.

# THE DIALECTICS OF GOLD



The horizontal axis would represent actual exchange as between price and commodity. These take place in the present but have the two sides of actuality or virtuality involved. The price value of a banana is virtual, while the banana as an actual product of labour is an actuality which is more specific and presents more contingent variety. Need is hidden in the man like hunger in the monkey and is a virtual instinctive disposition from which man suffers in the present or the eternal present. The price we pay for getting rid of hunger, which itself is a necessary suffering, is negative as compared with a positive pleasure which money or gold might command. Thus price value meets commodity value from opposite sides in this situation. The horizontal world of events, things, movements or activities has to be distinguished from paper transactions through bankers, which belong to a world of tokens or symbols.

Here again credit and debit, interest and discount, interact to make business thrive. The banker has to be trustworthy and stable. The bank manager has to be parsimonious and have certain virtues of not being carried away by outside events too easily. He has to be just and keep to the golden mean of value without being involved in false lending or borrowing. He must have credit vis-a-vis other bankers and clearing houses must honour his cheques and to that end his accounting and book-keeping must be on sound lines. Above all he must have an address in his official capacity at least. The gold reserve somewhere in a vault is

the nominal or actual credit for all bankers in a given area. This thin golden line of credit value may be said to go past human affairs as a vital line of life in which the kind man has to play his role in the name of the happiness of humanity as a whole. Reputation, goodwill, kindness, integrity and stability and sound credit are all involved here. They are qualities whose fund man must increase by all means for his happiness. It is thus important for man to have a heart of gold.

To revert to our example. We have to remember above all that there are distinct sectors which represent economic compartments or worlds which cannot interact directly. There is no use having the monkey borrow the bad penny from the professor. The vendor has behind him the plantation and the labourers, while the monkey has behind it at best, living regions of fruits and leaves. The mercantile nation and the pastoral nation cannot thus be correctly related except through a very wise arrangement of economic inter-dependence. And finally, it is important to see how money must circulate, if it is to serve life at all. Hoarded gold might increase the wages of mining labour, as Professor Jevons says, but it would not be playing its legitimate role in human affairs, because as we have said, money is meant for man and not man for money. Similarly, the burning of food products for the sake of better prices as we hear of sometimes, is an absurdity of wrong economics. The contrast between opulence and abundance is also a matter for the imagination of man to visualize as belonging to one or other of the sectors represented in our diagram. As Rousseau points out, it would be unfair to ask a poor hardworking peasant to pay his tribute of tax or rent to the money-lender or to the government in the form of money which does not belong to his economic sector or world at all. The farmer belongs to the world of abundant actual produce while the money-lender belongs to the opposite world where wealth is merely a symbolic token. Increase of tokens may not agree with the produce in hand, and might produce economic crises which experts are still explaining. Caesar's domain and that of God should not be mixed up.

[END]

### **A Nice Walk on the Razor's Edge—**(continued from page 101)

of what they called bourgeois morality (which was also, what they forgot, but what we now know to be also proletarian morality). Their irrefutable analysis of respectability got them into much more trouble than their economic views. Relativism is not the monopoly of the bourgeoisie. Otherwise what might have been a fine absolutist society would not have become just another powerful rival among relativistic states.

Alas what people think to be absolute is entirely relative—these absolutely true religions, absolutely sovereign states, absolutely correct moralities, absolutely final economic systems. What is absolute about them is what they are absolutely relative.

How is an absolutist to communicate with a relativist? Their answers are bawling abuse and unproved charges. Well we can see through that game.

**We shall be charged** with being rude. Ladies and gentlemen,

an absolutist is neither a lady nor a gentleman. We are neither respectable nor holy enough, is that it? We respect what is true; we are as holy as existence is holy, star and pebble, ant and elephant, the cow-pat and the gold ingot, and as every human being in humanity is holy. Our relative parts are yours for keeps. *Fais ce que voudras*, as laughing Rabelais said. Do what you will. Ah, the abbey of Thelema!

Hi ya! What about that nice little walk along the razor's edge? Don't get all bogged down in this mush of relativism! Don't be a human caterpillar. There's a fine world of another dimension, flatlanders!

Be aerial! global! stellar! cosmic! universal! infra-and-ultra galactic! super-nebulous! Roll it up and where are you? Have you ever been anywhere at all? Squirrel-cage dimensions of point and circle ... wire-netted life ... Open that cage! Cage? What cage?

Of course there's no real cage. And even the grossest relativist has his absolutist moments. After all, he has been a child and all children, little children anyway, are absolutists.

Negation of prejudices one with another — the too familiar with the unfamiliar — cliché with neologism — playboy as a sneer word, a smear word, and *Playboy* as a smart-set dream-world magazine. The tragic artists with their absolutist victories, deaf Beethoven and blind Milton, and the harrying of gentle Spinoza, the outrage of making Blake, Burns, Van Gogh and Shelley and above all the Bible, Quran and Gita respectable ... "If you insist on whisper-shout-print we shall engage the thought-police to outlaw this chain-reaction stuff. We shall hire the secret police to watch the secret police, spies for spies, and the law that defeats the law. For we are determined to keep you all, policeman and criminal, inside the space-time bubble of the relative." So they say — BUT — thought-controllers — BUT.

**There are absolutist moments:** Absolutely free moments when eternity-happiness-value pricks the bubble.

Telling the judges and psychiatrists where they get off ... Refusing to sign on the dotted line ... Insisting on the application of the law even when it is not in one's favour .... To go on painting a picture when the wife is working and the kids bawling .... To agree to be outcasted as if it really mattered anyway.... the exposure of greediness even in your best friend.

Just sitting in the sun .... or for no reason at all climbing that mountain .... or rescuing an unknown child from drowning .... or sending a hundred dollars to somebody you don't know who's doing a fine thing ... and refusing to attend a party because it's expected of you ... and marrying the girl you love in spite of social protests ... and kissing the woman you love now whether she's your lawfully wedded wife or not ... and attending conferences all over the world that the Big Shots think are too idealistic and impracticable .... and refusing to be swindled into commitments by the awful kindness and goodness of people .... and being able to change your mind and leave everything at a moment's notice ... and turning down honours with strings attached ...

Shining absolutist moments of ecstatic free decision!

The non-relative radiance of the Absolute!

[END]



## THE DANGER OF RELATIVISTIC THOUGHT

(Continued from page 106)

The young person of this world is just about 100 per cent sceptical of well-meaning but vacuous phrases of the "safe and sane" elders. In fact, the elders are neither safe nor sane preaching from pulpit, rostrum and soap-box what they do not and cannot practice. This Declaration of the Commonwealth is *revolutionary* in principle and content since if one self-claimed World Citizen refuses to go along with the State in toto, and he must refuse if he is a World Citizen since no State or community of States can protest his rights as a human being, then he is running counter to all authoritarian State Law. In fact, he is "outside" it either by becoming "stateless" through going to prison or "stateless" by being excluded from State Law. This exclusion — and here is the point many miss — does not exclude him from natural obligations to his fellow men guided by ordinary common sense. Though I am stateless, I must still obey ordinary rules of conduct. It is when I am confronted with absurd rules which do not conform to simple common-sense that I "break" the law. This is what you refer to when you say "flouting of authority."

This authority must be flouted else there is no World Citizen . . .

Yours as ever, in one world,

GARRY DAVIS.

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