

INSIGHT.

Preface.

~~Rational self-consciousness stands over against~~
romantic spontaneity and the psychological depths, economic
determinism and social engineering, the disconcerted existential
subject and ~~the~~ ^{of} undeciphered symbols of the artist and the
~~Neo-Kantian.~~

Rational self-consciousness is a peak above the
clouds. Intelligent and reasonable, responsible and free,
scientific and metaphysical, it stands above romantic spontaneity
and the psychological depths, ~~economic~~ ^{historical} determinism and social
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undeciphered symbols of the artist and ~~of~~ ^{modernist,} the Neo-Kantian.

Yet if man can scale the summit of his inner
being, also he can fail to advert to the possibility of the
ascent or, again, he can begin the climb only to lose his
way. If then he knows himself as in fact he is, he can know
that he has been
no more than ~~one~~ cast into the world to be afflicted with
questions he ^{does not} ~~can~~ answer and with aspirations he ^{does not} ~~can~~
fulfil. For it is the paradox of man that what, ^{he} is by nature
is so much less than what he can become; and it is the tragedy
of man that the truth, which portrays him as actually he is,
can descend like an iron curtain to frustrate what he would
and might be.

Facts, it is said, are stubborn things. But
there is a sense in which, I believe, it is true to say that
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a development of potentialities that are no less real because,

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Replacement for original being
used in "detective" work.

F.C. June 1/87

~~For the original see file~~
original - now returned to
proper place.

F.C. Apr. 17/89

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like all potentialities they are latent, not only is ^{itself a} ~~a new~~ fact
 can be
 but also a permanent source of new facts that cumulatively alter
 the complexion of the old.

So it is that the present work is a program
 rather than an argument. It begins not by assuming premises
 but by presuming readers. It advances not by deducing conclusions
 from the truths of a religious faith or from the principles
 of a philosophy but by issuing to readers an invitation, ever
 more ~~more~~ precise and more detailed, to apprehend, to appropriate,
 to envisage in all its consequences, the inner focus of their
 own intelligence and reasonableness. That focus, it will be
 claimed, is insight. But to apprehend the focus is to gain
 insight into insight, to pierce the outer verbal and conceptual
 exhibitions of mathematics, of science, and of common sense ^{and to penetrate to} ~~to~~
 the inner dynamism of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection.
 To appropriate the focus is both to ^{know} know and to what it is to
 know one's own intelligence, one's own reasonableness, one's own
 essential and restrictedly effective freedom. To envisage the
 focus in the full range of its implications is to discover
 for oneself what is meant by being, by objectivity, by metaphysics,
 by ethics, by God, and by evil.

~~Frankly this program is ambitious~~

Frankly, even as a program, even as ^a ~~the~~ ~~indication~~
^{offers only to} sketch that indicates the detailed map that is needed, the present
 work may be reproached for excessive ambition. But if I may
 borrow a phrase from Ortega y Gasset, one has to strive to mount
 to the level of one's time. The twentieth century has been
~~described as the end of the Renaissance. The new world that~~
~~was projected by a new art and a new science, by new philosophies~~
~~and a new education, by new nations.~~

described as the end of the Renaissance. Some four centuries ago there was projected a new world: new nations had arisen in new political constellations; a new art was hatched with the promise of a new science; and new philosophies were disseminated through a new education. That new world has been realized,

^{but} ~~and~~ the ideas that fostered its genesis have been discredited ~~by its maturity. What was new has been become~~ old

by its maturity. What was so new has become so old. To have been educated is no longer a matter of speaking Latin and writing Greek, ~~see~~ Modern art would puzzle Rafaello, as modern technology would astound da Vinci. The new nations are not in Europe, and the issues of modern politics seem transcribed from the pages of Utopia. Einstein has revised momentarily the thought of Galileo, and E Heisenberg has contended that good Laplace, like Homer, nods. The novel outlook that is transforming the natural sciences cannot but affect profoundly

~~the methods that so sedulously were copied transferred from~~
 the methods that with so sedulous a fidelity were transferred from the natural to the human sciences. And it is hard not to refrain from scratching a logical positivist, lest one find a medieval syllogizer, an existential philosopher, ~~lest one find a theologian.~~

the methods that were transferred with so sedulous a fidelity from the natural to the human sciences. ~~Bozziszz~~ Not even Renaissance ridicule of the Middle Ages has been able to prevent a rebirth of interest in logic. Not even the Enlightenment's insistence on the autonomy of man has been able to prevent the recurrence of theological themes under the guise of existentialist philosophy.

So it is that a new world has been bequeathed us and yet we, the heirs of the Renaissance, have been denied its spirit of bold confidence, of venturesome assurance. For we know too much in too many fields, we have witnessed too much suffering ~~in~~ in too many unexpected quarters, to purchase confidence by an easy exuberance of feeling or to accept words of assurance without answers to our questions. Nor was the basic question missed, when the late Prof. Ernst Cassirer, ^{towards} ~~at~~ the end of a long and highly productive career, endeavored to communicate within a brief compass ^{some of} ^{main} the conclusions of his vast erudition and ever penetrating thought. Just what is man? ~~Views~~ ^{he remarked,} Answers have been worked out by theologians and scientists, by politicians and sociologists, by biologists and psychologists, by ethnologists and economists. ^{But not} ~~Not~~ only do the many answers not agree, not only is there lacking some generally accepted principle that would select one and reject the others, but even within specialized fields there seems to be no method that can confront basic issues without succumbing to individual temperament and personal evaluations.

In the midst of this ^{widespread} ~~general~~ disorientation, man's problem of self-knowledge ceases to be ^{simply} the individual concern inculcated by the ancient sage. It takes on the dimensions of a social crisis. It can be read as the historical issue of the twentieth century. If in that balance human intelligence and human freedom are to prevail, ^{there must be known} ~~then, we must~~ ^{There must be known} ~~both~~ both what they are and that they exist. ~~we must know~~ ^{we must know} the conditions under which they are operative and the range within which they are effective.

intelligence and reasonableness, human responsibility and freedom, are to ~~be~~ prevail, then they must be summoned from the dim and confused realm of latent factors and they must burst forth in the full power of self-awareness and self-possession.

~~I believe, Such, then, is the urgency of a personal appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness. Such is the excuse I would allege in asking forgiveness for venturing upon an over-ambitious program and then saving my modesty by a reassuringly mediocre execution.~~

If such is the urgency of personal appropriation of rational self-consciousness, the difficulty of achievement should not discourage attempts at making a beginning. If the extent and the complexity of modern knowledge preclude the possibility in our time both of the uomo universale of the Renaissance and of the medieval writer of a Summa, at least the collaboration of many contains a promise of success, where the unaided individual would have to despair.

Still a collaboration has its conditions. It supposes a common vision of a ~~set~~ common goal. It supposes at least a tentative idea that would unify and coordinate separate efforts in different fields. It supposes a central nucleus that somehow could retain its identity yet undergo all the modifications and enrichments that could be ~~collected~~ poured into its ~~plans~~ capacious frame from specialized investigations.

It is with the conditions, preliminary to an effective collaboration, that the present work is concerned. For in the measure that potential collaborators move towards a ~~personal~~ personal appropriation of their rational self-

consciousness, in the same measure they will begin to attain the needed common vision of the common goal. In the measure that they discover in themselves the structure of developing intelligence, in the same measure they will share a tentative idea that can unify and coordinate separate efforts in different fields. In the measure that they reach the invariants of intellectual development, in the same measure they will possess a central nucleus that retains its identity through all the ~~total~~ possible developments of human intelligence.

Prof. Cassirer has told us that, from the viewpoint of a phenomenology of human culture, the explanatory definition of man is animal symbolicum rather than animal rationale.

But in the measure that men appropriate their rational self-consciousness, they re-establish in fact the animal rationale and they supplant phenomenological method with a procedure, at once direct and trenchant, that can discount individual temperament, criticize personal evaluations, and weld into a single view the many, disparate reports on man that come from experts in many fields.

consciousness, not only do they re-establish the animal rationale but also they break through the phenomenological veil. For, *as will be argued, they can* ^{universal} ~~they have reached~~ a viewpoint from which individual temperament can be discounted, personal evaluations can be criticized, and the many and disparate reports on ~~man~~ man, emanating from experts in various fields, can be ~~welded~~ welded into a single view.

But if I believe that man's self-awareness and self-possession can add a further, over-arching, ^{component} ~~dimension~~ to Prof. Cassirer's portrayal of man, it is not to be overlooked that a possibility is ~~was~~ claimed and not an achievement. I could not convey my meaning without venturing into many fields, into mathematics and physics, into the subtleties of common sense and depth psychology, into the processes of history, the intricacies of interpretation, the dialectic of the philosophies, and the possibility of transcendent knowledge. I ~~cannot expect~~ would not wish anyone to entertain the ~~far~~ ^{authority or even} fanciful nonsense that I can speak with competence in so many fields. I do not expect many experts to ~~find~~ recognize ~~my~~ their science in the formulations that suit my purpose. Yet, perhaps, I may hope that there will be some that share my preoccupations and interests, that will divine what I am endeavoring to say and will proceed to say it more adequately, that will grasp how my ignorance and oversights can be remedied without completely invalidating the fundamental structures that make possible a common vision of a common goal. Finally, ~~in the measure that that hope is fulfilled~~ ~~if in any measure, however slight, that hope is fulfilled,~~ ~~then there will have begun the collabot collaboration whose preliminary conditions~~ ^{relative} if in any measure that hope is fulfilled, the ^{relative} isolation of my efforts will have ended and the preliminary conditions ^{merely} will begin to be fulfilled for the collaboration I would initiate.

THEIR

It is customary to conclude a preface with an acknowledgement of one's indebtedness. Naturally I am inclined to think in the first place of the teachers and writers who have left ^{their} ~~there~~ impress upon me in the course of the twenty-seven years since first I was initiated into epistemological issues. But so long a gestation contains too many half-lights, too many detours, for me to indicate in a brief yet intelligible fashion my proximate sources. So it is that I must be content to restrict my expression of gratitude to the staffs of the Jesuit Seminaries in Montreal and Toronto, where I enjoyed the freedom to undertake the underlying studies of St. Thomas Aquinas' thought on Gratia Operans and on Verbum and to compile the present volume; to the Rev. J. Wulfange of West Baden College, and the Rev. J. T. Clark~~s~~ and the Rev. N. Clarke of Bellarmine College, Plattsburg, who read the manuscript and helped me greatly with their comments; the Rev. P. M. Plunkett of Guelph, Ont., who labored ^(to my shame, rather vainly) to reduce the solecisms of my style; ^{and to} the Rev. Eric O'Connor of Loyola College, Montreal, who was ever ready to allow me to ~~draw upon his knowledge~~ draw upon his knowledge of mathematics and of science, and to a ~~friend that carried~~ friend that carried the enormous burden of providing me with that insists on anonymity for the ~~good deed of~~ good deed of securing ~~me~~ ^{was in a position to} typewriting my manuscript, and to a friend that insists on anonymity for the long labor of typing out my manuscript.]