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Those who have followed only casually the course of fashions in criticism are somewhat taken aback to find "humanism" suddenly a fighting word among the literati. Mr. Grattan is not likely to quiet the turmoil with his brilliant and caustic primer on the subject. His article reveals clearly why the fight has assumed, in New York at least, the aspects of a Corsican vendetta.

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## What Is This Humanism?

BY C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

THE field of literature is notoriously the home of lost causes. Almost any antique idea, no matter how dusty and fly-blown, can pass as legitimate currency in literary circles, if the proponent is sufficiently impressive, and particularly sufficiently hieratic in his manner. Literary men, as a class, are surprisingly ill-informed about anything but literature, and while they would be the first to resist the opinion of a scientist on literature, they are equally prompt to denounce a scientific idea that seems incompatible with their notions, derived from the study of past literature.

One of the most astonishing syntheses of discredited doctrines now titillating the minds of literary folk is called Humanism. To be sure Humanism is not new. In America its pedigree is rather impressive. Historically the line runs from Emerson through Lowell and Charles Eliot Norton to George Edward Woodberry, W. C. Brownell, Brander Matthews, and Kenyon Cox. Stuart Sherman *was* a Humanist at the beginning of his career, but apostatized. Contemporary Humanism derives chiefly from Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt. The disciples are Norman Foerster, Prosser Hall Frye, G. R. Elliott, Robert Shafer, Sherlock Bronson

Gass, William F. Giese, Barry Cerf, Samuel Straus, Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., P. H. Houston, and others. Their most sympathetic non-academic expositor is Gorham B. Munson, who is a sort of broker in the field of modern and ancient ideas, none of which, apparently, he examines very closely. Their organ is *The Bookman*, though occasionally their pronouncements appear in *The Forum*. Various other journals look on their works with a sympathetic eye.

For years the Humanists have been forced, by the exigencies of literary politics, to conduct their operations on the outskirts of the literary scene. But in exile they must have closely observed the "literary racket" and now they conduct their campaign in the most approved fashion. Mr. G. R. Elliott writes a book and Doctor Irving Babbitt reviews it favorably in *The Forum*. Mr. Frye writes his third book (his second received the accolade from Paul Elmer More) and Mr. Gass praises it in *The Bookman*. Mr. Allen Tate attacks More and Babbitt from the standpoint of religion in "The Hound and Horn," and Mr. Shafer, through the columns of *The Bookman*, assures the world that Mr. Tate doesn't know what he is talking about and that his touch is one that defiles. It is curious indeed to learn that

Messrs. More and Babbitt, both students of Hindu philosophy, have become "untouchables." But most astonishing of all the information about the Humanists is that derivable from a long editorial in *The Bookman* for January, 1930. The author of this piece metaphorically kicked down the back stairs into the ashcan most of the literary products of the nineteen twenties. Incidentally he tells us that the authors of these products were libertarians, worshippers of the "odd, the unorthodox, the subversive, the novel, the highly spiced." They wrote for "shady" magazines. They exhibited an interest in social problems, an interest only worthy of police reporters. They were bohemians. They were pacifists during the late war. They accepted "pseudo-science." They were, in a phrase, "paranoic newspaper reporters." All of which is rather amusing nonsense and a million miles from being a sane and critical account of the nineteen twenties. But by implication the Humanists, whose banner *The Bookman* now flies, are strict moralists, worshippers of the common, the orthodox, the respectable, the ordinary, and the flat. They write for respectable magazines like *The Bookman*. They have no interest in social questions. They are bourgeoisie. They were howling patriots during the late war. They accept only the most approved science. They are, in a phrase, normal college professors. All of which is amusing nonsense and a million miles from being a sane and critical account of the Humanists.

The arrival of the Humanists to a more central position has been made possible largely by the discontent which rages amongst the younger critics. It is freely alleged that the older critics, so efficient in destroying the encumbrances to a mature American literature, have signally failed to provide a mature phi-

losophy of literature. Furthermore, the younger critics have, in some way not clear to the writer, arrived at the conclusion that literature should serve as an all-around substitute for psychology, sociology, ethics, and culture history. It is felt that all these disciplines may best be apprehended through literature rather than through an intensive study of the best results of scholarship in the fields themselves. And literature is to provide a final answer to the eternal quest for certainty.

Literature, particularly criticism, has become a battle-ground for the most extraordinary collection of ideas ever assembled for the delectation of the connoisseur. But most of the dissident literary philosophies may in some sense be called Humanistic. Unfortunately no two Humanists agree on the tenets of their doctrine. Any critique of Humanism must, therefore, be a critique of a particular Humanist or a critique of the doctrines that run with a fair degree of persistence through the works of them all. In this paper the latter approach will be employed.

## II

The Humanist argument runs as follows: By a free will which is at once selective (and not causally determined) and a mechanism of ethical control, man is enabled to select his mode of life. There is a profound dualism between man and nature. Man, to be human, must live by values which are higher than anything deducible from nature. Man has glimpses of a higher reality behind the flux and flow of nature. On the basis of these glimpses he is enabled to formulate a code of values which is opposed to nature and therefore human, to guide him in living. The man who denies this higher reality and derives his

values from nature is a naturalist. The man who identifies higher reality with God is a religionist and accepts his code of values on the basis of divine revelation or from admitted authority exterior to himself to which he submits himself for guidance. But there is a medial position which, while opposed to naturalism, is yet not prepared to accept divinely revealed or externally imposed values. The man in this position seeks to formulate his values from a close study of those glimpses of antecedent reality discernible in literature and from life scrutinized through literature. Such a man is a Humanist.

The Humanist asserts free will as a fact. It is necessary for him to do so because he believes that man can by his own choice live on any level he desires. Thus, if there is no free will he thinks that there can be no Humanists. For one becomes a Humanist by cultivating values which are not naturalistic; values indeed which are opposed to the naturalistic trends in human personality; and one can do this only by exercising choice.

The difficulty here is the fact that the Humanists have failed to examine their concept of "free will"—they have left it hanging in mid-air so to speak. But having posited a dualism between man and nature (an idea which will be examined below) it follows that they consider the will to be located in the human aspects of the personality, not the natural. Their will, as has been remarked, is both selective and a mechanism of ethical control. Doctor Babbitt describes it as an "inner check" operating upon the expansive trends of the personality, and since it is ethical in quality it is alleged to be *indispensable to the practice of Humanism*. But, to quote C. J. Herrick, "The coinage of a high-brow name for an unknown factor is not an adequate

solution of a scientific problem, though this subtle device has at times retarded scientific advance for generations."

The Humanist will, then, is a metaphysical concept not to be defined, measured, or described in terms that are acceptable to the scientific mind. It is an arbitrary intrusion into the personality from the outside, not integral with it. Its action is not causal but arbitrary. It is a figment of the imagination, without validity to any one with an elementary knowledge of modern scientific thought on the subject.

The joke of the matter is that it is quite unnecessary in the accomplishment of the Humanist desire to arrive at so-called freedom of choice. Modern scientific determinism assumes the reign of law everywhere. "The scientific method," writes Doctor Herrick, "admits of no appeal to mystical agencies which do not knit into a unitary system of natural processes and of no logical arguments whose premises are not verifiable experiences." Man being continuous with nature it follows inescapably that the mind is as much subject to the rule of causal sequence as the rest of the body. There are no discontinuities in nature. We admit cheerfully that part of our conduct is controlled in the same fashion. Admitting this does not lead to fatalism or to subjection to the law of chance. For, writes Herrick,\*

our common and trustworthy experience is that mental acts (thoughts, emotions, volitions, and the like) are causative factors in human conduct. . . . When therefore, we say that conscious experience is a causative factor in human behavior it must be understood that we regard this experience as one part only of a protoplasmic activity involving structural changes in the nervous system, whether we know what these latter are or not. Thinking is a part of living and all living involves struc-

\*See "Fatalism or Freedom," by C. J. Herrick, the best modern scientific statement of this problem I have ever seen.

tural alterations of the vital substance. . . . Some of our experiences we objectify as external things; another complex of experiences we objectify as our own animal bodies; still other experiences we do not objectify at all and call them ideas, hopes, sentiments, aspirations, ideals, and so forth. These are just as truly functions of our body as is our breathing. They are natural events. Their causes are preceding natural events, some outside our bodies, some inside, some easily demonstrable physiologically, some known only introspectively. Their results are still other natural events, some mental, some physiological, some perhaps profound changes in external nature. . . . When . . . discrimination is made consciously in view of the probable future consequences of each of the possible ways of reacting to the situation we call the act a choice. . . . Whichever alternative I may choose it is clear that every step is causally determined in the same sense that my reflexes are said to be causally determined. . . . This power to choose, that is, to shape our conduct in view of one out of several possible future contingencies, is no supernatural or miraculous endowment which enables us to flout the laws of nature; it operates within the natural realm and in harmony with natural law.

These correlated passages make it abundantly clear that in dismissing the Humanist "free will" (in both its aspects) as a metaphysical concept of no validity or worth, we do not fall into a paralyzing worship of fatalism nor into a drifting world of chance. Quite the contrary. All that we dismiss is a metaphysical concept of no use whatsoever. Its utility as an illusion is another matter entirely.

Equally dubious is the Humanist assertion that there are three distinct levels of experience. These levels, they say, are in an ascending scale of excellence. Since any hierarchy of levels of living is quite arbitrary in origin and invidious in intent, overemphasis of what may perhaps be justified on the plea of expedience is dangerous. It is hardly necessary, when you have no ulterior motive, to assign a higher and lower position to modes of life. It is best to recog-

nize that they are different approaches to the problem of living. Furthermore, such invidious distinctions soon lead to an attitude of patronage or glorification toward the mode not practised. In this fashion any critical examination of the alternative modes is precluded and, indeed, the accepted mode becomes so self-contained as to make impossible co-operation for common ends.

The Humanist classification is revelatory of the distinctions they draw in discussing the modern world and modern literature. The lowest level is the naturalistic. On this level living proceeds on the basis of mere unregulated animality. It is in no way given significance by a discipline of values. It is expansive and materialistic. It is expansive because on the emotional side Rousseau is its prophet and Rousseau emphasized the free play of natural impulses at the expense of an imposed discipline, and materialistic because of its allegiance to the Baconian cult of science.

On the Humanistic level, on the other hand, the emphasis is on discipline—on control through the ethical will. Humanism is a doctrine and a discipline of aspiration without being a religion. According to Doctor Irving Babbitt the great Humanistic virtue is "decorum, or a sense of proportion." In other words, Humanism enables man to discipline his natural impulses in the interests of finer living. It is, in Humanist eyes, an athletic discipline, not supine and drifting, but resistive and aspiring. While the Humanist recognizes that man is after all an animal and subject to natural laws—a product of evolution and an integral part of nature—he asserts that man has glimpses of a state higher than the natural to which he aspires. The formulation of his aspirations gives him knowledge of what is *human*. Human law is not in any way subject to the

natural law of the universe. It is, indeed, opposed to the natural. Doctor Norman Foerster writes: "Humanism assumes . . . that the essential elements of human experience are precisely those which appear to conflict with the reality explored by naturism." Humanism, then, is a scheme of values above man. To practise these values he must suppress his naturalistic self.

Assuming a medial position, the Humanist tacitly admits that the religious plane of living is either higher or complementary to his own. Doctor Foerster characterizes religious experience as "the supreme level of life." Doctor Babbitt writes: "The honest thinker, whatever his own preference, must begin by admitting that though religion can get along without Humanism, Humanism cannot get along without religion." It is this hospitality toward and deference to religion that is carrying so many young Humanists over into religious sects. Humanism is merely a point of rest on the threshold of the church. Yet the Humanist is prevented by his inability to accept any revealed truth, from progressing to the highest plane. But experience is proving that that inability soon breaks down amongst the disciples of Humanism. It is no wonder that Doctor Foerster did not meet the challenge of T. S. Eliot's remark: "There is no avoiding that dilemma: you must be either a naturalist or a supernaturalist." The Humanist prefers to rest in the position of an ally of dogmatic religion. As long as the "inner check" is in good working order he can resist the cries of T. S. Eliot and G. K. Chesterton inviting them into their respective ponds with the plea that the water is fine! It is not unjust to say that Humanism is a refuge for those persons who want to be religious without assuming the responsibility of defend-

ing a dogmatic orthodoxy of the conventional kind. They want the moral elevation without the supernatural sustention.

But "the central assumption of Humanism," writes Doctor Foerster echoing Doctor Babbitt, "is that of a dualism of man and nature." Doctor Babbitt's famous work, "Rousseau and Romanticism" is devoted in considerable part to the assertion of this dualism. One of his main indictments of the naturalists, whether Rousseauistic or Baconian (the writer of this paper is undoubtedly what Doctor Babbitt would call a Baconian), is that they deny the duality of man and nature. This duality is an idea developed before the experimental technic was applied to man. It is an idea held in common by the Greek philosophers and the Christian theologians. The difficulty is to determine in what particular the human mind (for the duality arises in the mind) is subject to a power outside of nature. To achieve duality one must introduce from the outside of nature and arbitrarily something that is not naturally there. "There is no separate 'mind,'" writes Doctor John Dewey, "gifted in and of itself with a faculty of thought; such a conception of thought ends in postulating the mystery of a power outside of nature and yet able to intervene within it. Thinking is objectively discoverable as that mode of serial responsive behavior to a problematic situation in which transition to the relatively settled and clear is effective." This position, which accords with the findings of science,\* entirely elimi-

\*See Herrick, *op. cit.*, page 40: "There is abundant scientific evidence . . . that thinking is a function of the body (and of the brain more particularly) just as truly as walking is a function of the body (and of the legs more particularly). Both of these functions have well-known, definitely assignable organs, and the scientific evidence for relating the function with the organ is of the same sort and equally convincing in the two cases."



nates the possibility of a discontinuity between the human and the natural, for the "human," it must be understood, resides in the mind—according to the Humanist. Such a discontinuity as Humanism demands can only be based on the idea that the mind is a "spectator"; or that it runs parallel to the body in some undefined way; or that there is an interaction with no causal relation between mind and body. None of these positions is tenable. For as a matter of fact organic acts are an integral part of all mental processes. "Man is continuous with nature."

The Humanist feels it necessary to posit this dualism because he relegates science to an inferior position and seeks to aggrandize Humanistic and religious values. By such aggrandizement he hopes to save his values from scientific (experimental) scrutiny. Indeed he glories in the fact that his values are not naturalistic but "human" and as such in opposition to the naturalistic. This opposition leads to what Joseph Wood Krutch has called the "paradox of Humanism," which is that most of the values which the Humanists glorify are values which are least human in the ordinary sense. Instead of realizing that values which are to gain general allegiance and have an important part in practice must grow naturally out of life as the mass of cultivated mankind lives it, the Humanist demands that values require a deliberate effort of a hypothetical free will acting arbitrarily, for their achievement. He is thus demanding that the discontinuity between ideals and practice be perpetuated. The Humanist fails to see that life is not so ascetic an affair that men may brood on ethical "choices." They have not indeed, under modern conditions of living, time to engage in abstract spiritual exercises of any kind, and if the values which are

to be regarded as valuable to man and society do not have a natural and inevitable continuity with action, they are bound to remain unobserved and consequently trivial and unimportant—noble and amusing anachronisms.

Humanist values, it will be recalled, are derived from glimpses of higher reality—of the antecedently real. In the eyes of the Humanist the apprehension of the antecedently real is what gives man knowledge. Doctor John Dewey's latest and most important book, "The Quest for Certainty," is in part devoted to a devastating critique of the doctrine. Doctor Dewey points out that the idea of an antecedent reality was first developed by the Greeks and was adapted to Christian epistemology by identifying the universal with God. It was the idea common to all variations upon the doctrine that behind the shifting appearances of this world there was a pre-existent perfect scheme. Man progressed in knowledge insofar as, by the operation of his intellect, he apprehended this scheme. In seeking to provide a philosophical basis for modern science, Sir Isaac Newton borrowed this Greek idea and made it the purpose of science to reveal through the experimental method the pre-existing scheme. In this way he grafted an antique anachronism upon what was an entirely new and remarkable method for arriving at knowledge. He subverted his most original contribution to human thought to the most powerful and perverse idea that had survived from the era before experimental science became a possibility.

Though Newton thus provided philosophy with a method for reconciling scientific advances with the necessities of its pre-experimental position, he effectively cut off any chance for science immediately to contribute to philosophy a new theory of knowledge. For,

while experimental science proceeded to advance knowledge by one method, the philosophers continued to say that it was advancing by another. The issue was the so-called Newtonian World-machine. The fault of evolving this monstrosity, if fault it was, must not be laid at the door of the scientists, but at the door of the philosophers, who by insisting that experimental science was revealing a pre-existing scheme of the universe, provided the basis of the whole idea.

Doctor Dewey discards this outmoded notion and evolves a theory of knowledge from the methods of experimental science. He states the experimental method of arriving at knowledge thus:

While the traits of experimental inquiry are familiar, so little use has been made of them in formulating a theory of knowledge and of mind in relation to nature that a somewhat explicit statement of well-known facts is excusable. They exhibit three outstanding characteristics. The first is the obvious one that all experimentation involves *overt* doing, the making of definite changes in the environment, or in our relation to it. The second is that experiment is not a random activity but is directed by ideas which have to meet the conditions set by the need of the problem inducing the active inquiry. The third and concluding feature, in which the other two receive their full measure of meaning, is that the outcome of the directed activity is the construction of a new empirical situation in which objects are differently related to one another, and such that the *consequences* of directed operations form the objects that have the property of being *known*.

But while the Humanists profess to derive their values by the apprehension of the universal elements discernible behind the flux and flow of experience, they really derive them from the study of past literature. To be sure a Humanist of the order of Doctor Babbitt is chiefly famous for the destructive criticism he has levelled against the writers and schools of writers who have sub-

verted his values, notably Rousseau and his derivatives and abettors. But Doctor Foerster, who is somewhat of a missionary, has told us frequently that the true Humanistic values are to be found in what is known as classic literature (not necessarily the literary classics, by the way) and above all in Greek literature.\* The point here is: the Humanistic values are derived from past formulations, and particularly from formulations arrived at in a primitive society where the authors could not conceivably imagine many of the most vital and complex problems of modern living. Even if we accept, as the Humanists apparently do, the idea that literature is in a certain sense a criticism of life, it is impossible to accept this method of deriving values for living. Doctor Dewey has a passage which clearly defines the quality of values to be derived from literature, since literature is a projection of experience, criticised, if at all, on a non-scientific basis.

"Experience" once meant the results accumulated in memory of a variety of past doings and undergoings that were had without control by insight, when the net accumulation was found to be practically available in dealing with present situations. Both the original perceptions and uses and the application of their outcome in present doings were accidental—that is, neither was determined by an understanding of the relations of cause and effect, of means and consequences, involved. In that sense they were non-rational, non-scientific.

Our quarrel is not with values as such. It would be an indefensible position to maintain to deny that values are necessary to civilized living. None of us has quite resigned the hope of some sort of good life. "The problem of restoring integration and co-operation between

\*It should be pointed out, however, that Doctor Babbitt derives his doctrine that the ethical will takes primacy over the intellect, from oriental sources.

man's beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about the values and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of modern life," writes Doctor Dewey. Our quarrel is with the method by which Humanist values are derived. Since this is our objection to them it would be pointless to engage in an extended debate over the particular values to which Humanists give allegiance. For it is impossible to accept them on the Humanist say-so, since they were arrived at by a method which is open to the condemnation of being unscientific. Humanistic values, indeed, cannot be regarded as ends in themselves. They are rather data to be used in arriving at valid values. "... the conclusions of prior knowledge are the *instruments* of new inquiries, not the norm which determines their validity."

Values, to present a definition, are "whatever is taken to have rightful authority in the direction of conduct." To be useful they cannot be prohibitions against certain ways of living, nor can they be idle hortatory injunctions in favor of certain modes of conduct. They, above all, cannot rely for their authority upon an alleged agreement with a hypothetical antecedent reality.

It is utterly idle, as the Humanists do, to think that one can transfer the values of one social congelation, imperfectly apprehended through literature, to another social congelation and expect them to be absolutely relevant. We must reach a more fundamental basis for the construction of values than this. Agreeing with the Humanists that it is impossible to accept values imposed by external authority or divine revelation, we must go a step beyond the Humanists and demand that the values to which allegiance is finally to be given, be arrived at according to the scientific meth-

od in co-operation with true æsthetic appreciation.

Admittedly we are here advocating the use of the scientific method in a field where it has been least active and consequently least successful. Furthermore, little has been done in the field of æsthetics of conduct in relation to scientific findings, though Havelock Ellis has done notable pioneering. The disparity between the knowledge we possess about the physical world and that which we have about man and society is what gives the Humanists their chance. Since our scientists have been, by the nature of the society in which they have worked, more inclined to develop those phases of knowledge which can be used in their applied aspects for the pecuniary aggrandizement of individuals, the other phases have been neglected. At the present time, however, we are witnessing a progression from the physical to the social sciences. To be sure a great deal of what is called social science to-day seems grotesque and may eventually prove to be worthless, but since science is a progressive development, that is not reason to reject its findings altogether. Furthermore science in the social realm can never, in all probability, be so exact—the control can never be so perfect—as in the physical realm. The imponderables are more in number and less easy to control.

Nevertheless, if we are to have values which are to have any reasonable finality for living, they must be the product of the application of the scientific technic. In arriving at scientifically approvable values past formulations will serve as data. Not only will the scientists utilize the Humanist formulation as a tool, but they will also be prepared to use religiously supported values, those cultivated by sophisticates as well as rustics, and indeed any values, in the same fash-



ion. What the final formulation will be no man can say. It is sufficient to observe that the values which science will approve will not be in contradiction to the natural constitution of man and allegiance to them will not be predicated upon any metaphysical free will nor upon any recognition of the unprovable allegation that there is one law for nature and another for man.

### III

But really it is a perversion of literature to make it a source and support for moral dogmas. Humanism is based upon a fundamental misapprehension of the purpose of literature. Literature is not a source of moral precepts; nor a source of a pseudo-religious discipline; it is a phase of experience. It is not the whole of experience, but one aspect of it. For any complete life-experience it is indispensable, because in literature we have a most satisfactory technic for clarifying and organizing the meanings of life. Literature (and all art) concentrates experience. Literature suggests, realizes and embodies meanings. It has this quality in common with the other arts—painting, sculpture, music. The right use of literature will assist us in “clarifying further perceptions and enjoyments.” In this approach to art “appreciation is the intelligent apprehension of what is significant and meaningful in a picture or a poem in pictorial and poetical terms, what emotions are relevant to that æsthetic impression, what light or meaning it throws over other experiences including those not popularly regarded as æsthetic.”\* In this sense literature is knowledge—in a broad sense scientific knowledge. “Anything that may be called knowledge,”

\*Irwin Edman, *A Philosophy of Experience as a Philosophy of Art*, in “Essays in Honor of John Dewey.”

says Dewey, “or a known object, marks a question answered, a difficulty disposed of, a confusion cleared up, an inconsistency reduced to coherence, a perplexity mastered.” And “taste . . . is the outcome of experience brought cumulatively to bear on the intelligent appreciation of the real worth of likings and enjoyments.”

This conception of the purpose and use of literature relieves it of the impossible burden of supporting a quest for certainty on the basis of a discredited theory of knowledge. It places it squarely where it belongs in the total life of a person, none of whose attributes have been stunted in their growth by the urgent demands of modern life. For better or worse, mankind is committed to the experimental programme. It is the height of idleness to demand, as one Humanist (G. R. Elliott) recently did, that poetry return to the moral scheme of Milton in order to acquire a humanistic “centrality.” Milton’s art represents a brilliant æsthetic and moral synthesis of a world that is dead beyond recall. His “Paradise Lost,” says A. N. Whitehead, is “the swansong of a passing world of untroubled certitude.” From certitude in this sense to orthodoxy to tyranny, the progression is inevitable. For those of us who have given allegiance to science “certitude . . . consists . . . in nothing more nor less than high degree of relative probability.” Such a conception allows for endless development in a changing world. It allows us to use whatever technics we may master to clarify and deepen our understanding of life as men live it.

### IV

The remedy for the present situation is not less science but more science. The extension of the experimental technic

into the human and social realms is bound to be the most fruitful adventure of modern times. But it must be clearly understood that we have as yet no way of measuring what will be the effect of a general adoption of a scientific attitude by those with influence upon society. It is not now a part of the equipment of any group except an infinitesimal and usually uninfluential minority. Even those men who have mastered the scientific attitude as applied to some special branch of knowledge—for example, physics—frequently betray in other fields the fact that they are not completely scientific. What we need is not more courses in science in the universities, but a greater effort to get the scientific *attitude* firmly planted in the minds of those who subject themselves to higher education. Though certain “philanderers upon the outskirts of knowledge” are now engaged in a revival of the old disparagement of science, they direct their criticism at courses about science. We, let it be admitted at once, do not need more courses of this sort, but if in some way the essentials of the scientific attitude could be freely communicated it would be a marked advance. “. . . science,” writes Doctor Dewey, “has been taught too much as an accumulation of ready-made material with which students are to be made familiar, not enough as a method of thinking, an attitude of mind, after the pattern which mental habits are to be transformed.”\*

\*This same position has been taken by other distinguished proponents of the scientific attitude, e. g., Bertrand Russell, the essay *The Place of Science in a*

Even if the courses in science as now conducted are continued there are several common errors that can be corrected. Doctor Foerster states that “In its true function, science is merely descriptive.” Nothing could be more inadequate as a definition of the “true function” of science. Charles Singer, a leading authority on the history of science, has written: “Nor is the advance of science to be measured by the vast accumulation of observations but by the degree to which these observations are brought under general laws. The function of science, we must repeat, is to classify, which is simply and intimately to unify.” Science is, in its essence, an art of control. If it was “merely descriptive” it could control nothing. When such misapprehensions of what science actually is and does prevail with a man who presumes to define the place of science in the intellectual scheme, it is no wonder that J. B. S. Haldane can exclaim in despair that “There has been a complete failure to integrate into its [society’s] intellectual structure the scientific ideas which have furnished its material structure.” The prevailing intellectual dilemmas can mostly be traced to the failure of this integration. When the integration is accomplished it will not mean the triumph of what old-fashioned sentimentalists call materialism. It will mean that mankind will in some sense gain possession of the intellectual heritage which is rightfully its own.

*Liberal Education*, in “Mysticism and Logic.” And the English biologist J. B. S. Haldane writing in *The Realist*. Also Charles Singer in *The Realist*.



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*Atmosphere of New York—  
and a Beau Geste to Love*

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## Gesture

BY FRANCES TAYLOR PATTERSON

THAT would have to do. It wasn't very sparkling, but then how could you write sparkling stuff when you were tired half to death? Wearily she took the paper out of her typewriter. "Reconsidered First Nights." There seemed to be so many of them when you bunched them together like this. Life was getting to be just one first night after another. There had been a time when she had been awfully thrilled at covering a *première*. Bob had been City Editor then. After the edition had gone to press they would go out together and get sandwiches and coffee at some little all-night stand. They would talk glitteringly about their careers, his and hers. Well, they had both made the grade. He was now a successful publisher, and what Mary Weatherell said about a play was important to producers; she influenced the box-office. But it was no longer important to her.

She put her hand to her side as she leaned over to get a Manila envelope from the lower drawer. The pain was bad to-day. She really ought to see about it, go to a doctor or something. But she hated to take the time. If there were any spare minutes she wanted to use them on her novel. She looked down at the manuscript folder as it lay on a shelf under the desk. It was thick with dust. She hadn't touched it for weeks. If only she

weren't always so tired. It was a pity when she had so much stunning material. Ten years of Broadway. The things that went on back stage; the things that went on in producers' offices. Men. She knew men. And women. She knew one woman. Bob's wife.

No use going back over all that now. What was, was. And that was all there was to it. She addressed the manuscript to the editor who had commissioned this "Reconsidered First Nights." He would be disappointed with it. He had particularly asked that she be witty. And she hadn't been able to manage it. Words had gone stale on her tongue. They tasted like sawdust. He would probably get Billy Chase to put in two or three "wise cracks." Once that would have hurt her pride. She had always maintained that Billy had no wit, just a low comedy line. To-day she didn't care. Wit seemed to have gone completely out of the world, if indeed there had ever been any in it.

She looked dully at the letters she had brought home from the office to answer. The same old thing. What did she think of Shakespeare? What did she think of Shaw? What did she think of . . . Oh, hell! She threw the whole bunch into the wastepaper basket, knowing that later she would conscientiously fish them out and answer every last one. She lean-