

ON BEING CREATIVE and other ESSAYS

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BY

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INTRODUCTION

Xi - In the last 2 centuries, primitivism has set up as serious philosophy and threatened to overthrow humanistic and religious standards.

They insist on a contrast between the artificial and the natural to make a full primitivism. Greeks, in their greatest revolt, never declined to be rational - though they discussed the will.

Xiii - The naturalistic type, alongside the followers of Rousseau, has given up the idea of the submission to will or the idea of grace. He does not grant that he needs to be humble.

Xiii - He wants to promote a positive and critical humanism. And, what religion can provide that normal humanism doesn't is humility. But, humanism can help those who cannot get religion. But when we lack religion, we have no teleology. It's just one darn thing after another, with naturalism.

Xiv - He wishes to defend a positive and critical humanism.

Xv - The primitivist wants to get rid of dualism because man is naturally good.

Xvi - Hegel said the westerner will find nothing in Confucius that hasn't already been said better by Cicero.

But Confucius does humility better than Cicero or Aristotle.

Xvii - Some say for a higher will you must go to God. No quarrel with them. But for many folks, that won't happen.

Xviii - Modern psychologists are almost entirely focused on the subrational and animal sides of man.

Xix- Lippmann said modern man has forgotten that "there is an immortal essence presiding like a king over his appetites." This puts a limit on lusts.

Xx – Materialism isn't bad, Lippmann says, but its spiritual accompaniment is.

He says there is a single romantic movement and it creates an opposition between imitation and spontaneity. It says creativity comes out of the latter.

Xxi - It preaches some feeling of love, that used to be associated with grace. It could be seen as a Christian heresy. But he deals with this, especially in Wordsworth, psychologically, not theologically.

He is critical to solve the problem of standards.

Xxii – Rousseau said there is no intermediary between everything and nothing.

Babbitt sets himself to the humanistic task of finding a medium. To be a humanist you must have an intelligent check on temperament in the name of some norm.

In the past, standards were associated with absolutes, so people will accuse you of that. Santayana attacked Babbitt on this. But, Babbitt wishes to show that even if one dispenses with absolutes, one may still retain standards.

Xxiii – We usually don't get oneness and then change. We usually get both. And internally.

Xxiii – And the change element makes it seem illusory. Hindus and Buddhists focus on this.

Xxxiii - Buddhism leads to saintliness without Christianity. But, it is like a flight of stairs going nowhere, "perhaps the most perfect image of pathetic futility ever devised for a religious teacher. And occidentals don't go for renunciation anymore, no matter what the source.

In his study of creativity, the Romantic view is based on a subrational overflow of 'love' that has been traditionally associated with grace, combined with a reverence for spontaneity. Herein we have a choice between something that is spiritually energetic and something that is slothful. Liberals of the modernist type look to "liberty in Moscow," and thus surrender their imaginations to ill-defined general terms, illusory ideals.

Xxiv - Goethe said, "Error stands in the same relation to truth as sleeping to waking."<sup>i</sup>

But, the truth shall make you free. But, Both Budhha's Maya and Jesus have their truth. For example, both have a belief in a higher will and make freedom depend on this will – though very differently.

Truth depends on will – primitivists have failed to notice.

Xxv – Mechanists and determinists virtually deny it. There is no harm in controlling the outer world. But, we must recall the inner.

The primitivist, though, often assails the scientific as well !

Xxvii – Like Pascal we can seek the infinitely small and large. But, as Pascal said, this is irrelevant in human values. Pascal distinguished three orders, material nature; the order of mind; the order of charity. To only the last did he give the name supernatural.

Xxviii – When science oversteps itself, it is a failure of humility.

The humanistic will is almost entirely instrumental. It is hard to find the higher will above it. Unity and diversity get separated by people and they fall into the metaphysics of the one and the many.

Xxix – SO science should not dismiss poetry as mere illusion, but it is useful.

Xxx – To get standards we need the imagination (which sees analogies and likeness); and analytic reason that tests in reference to experience.

These can be pressed into the service of what he calls ‘Ciceronian humanism.’

Xxxi – Christians will say, we need the teleological of orthodoxy. Scientists have been very unfriendly to ends.

Xxxii – Science and Aristotle look at beginnings. His un-moved mover is a mere abstraction. And, P E More has dogged him relentlessly for this. He used to think of it as a source of vital repose. But, he is right, it is a poor substitute for a conscious and purposive deity.

In Asia we have religious virtues without a purposive deity.

xxxiii – More has recently likened this Buddhist vision as a flight of stairs that leads to nowhere. The most perfect image of pathetic futility ever devised for a great religious teacher.

But if you set out to be a Buddhist you’ll be in conflict with some basic tenets of our civilization (Christianity too is in conflict with modernism).

Christianity has a strong oriental element.

More is dismissive now of Buddhism, more than before. But we need a mobilization of the sages.

Xxxv - You can get purpose without ultimates and absolutes in the fashion of Aristotle.

xxxvi – The good life is not known, but willed.

I do not ask to see

The distant scene – one step is enough for me.

He embraces some eclecticism.

Xxxvii – He wishes to find a spot between the romantics and the neo-classicists in terms of the qualities of imagination.

Xxxviii – In a Socratic mode he acknowledges that imagination governs mankind.

Xxxix – When Pascal speaks of the heart, he means grace and ‘the order of charity.’

Rousseau means expansive feeling. Rousseau’s heart is a protest against original sin. And, discarding original sin has meant the loss of something so essential that on its recovery in some form may hinge the very survival of our civilization.

Xl – This makes the difference between the man who is spiritually energetic and one who is spiritually slothful.

Buddhism and Socrates see will. Christian theology means you must affirm will. This means we can have an eclectic defense of Christianity.

Xli – The humanitarian idealist is pseudo-religious. The true humanist wants justice to take precedent above all other virtues. The humanitarian wants peace to take primacy, but this belongs to the individual.

Xlii – When dealing with liberty, we must deal with the spiritually supine and stenuous. Rousseau wants to throw off chains, not take them on. Not strap the Devil, as Carlyle.

Xliii – Many weep their liberty in Moscow. This is to surrender your imagination to ill-defined general terms. As Burke said of the French National Assembly, its improvements are superficial, its errors fundamental.

The benefits of humanitarians are largely illusory. They make neither for poise or peace.

#### ON BEING CREATIVE: ONE

2 - Even those who are reverent in church and humanistic virtues do not apply their standards to art and letters, they think genius should be unimpeded. This is an error. Diderot said that poetry called for something barbaric and savage. This is an error

3 - Creativity is not something over which the artist has little control. This, and the search for novelty are post neo-classical.

5 - There is an emphasis on invention which may be prompted by sciences prolific inventions. At bottom the primitivist recognizes only one form of enthusiasm, his own. Plato just thought of poetry as a cheap mimic. Aristotle said it could be ideal or creative. It

becomes creative in direct proportion as it succeeds in rendering the universal through the particular.

12 - If you are taken to the universal, you are purged of the petty and purely personal. The neo-classics tried very much to follow Aristotle's formula, and illuminated via imitation of models, not 'imagination.' The exploratory, passion model has also forced a "drift towards eccentricity."

15 - And some surrealists feel no need to communicate at all! Wagner and great artists of the past, did not excrete art like a chicken laying an egg, with something inside him that had to come out - it was work. It wasn't to self-express, to gyrate in front of his fellow man.

19 - We should aim at "the standard of high seriousness and truth to the universal."

20 - (not just intensity) This doesn't mean we don't print detective novels. But, we cannot put it on a level with masterworks. It doesn't need to aim at edification, merely, but it does have to have a centrality of vision, that is be disciplined by some truly human norm.

23 - Good literature can be defined as literature which combines, "excellence of form with soundness of substance."

The coordinating principle has as a rule been supplied by tradition.

27 - But, the modernist is not only untraditional, he is anti-traditional. He hopes to base his originality on "certain enormous repudiations." (co27) A true modern (not a modernist) holds that tradition is indispensable. Goethe is one.

We must ask: a) What has the writer proposed to do: 2) has he succeeded; 3) Was the author's plan reasonable and sensible?

28 - Goethe was fighting rigidity; we have to fight over open-mindedness. To rehabilitate judgement, we must make a frontal attack on the doctrine of spontaneity.

31 - The stormy emancipation from tradition is personified in Goethe's Faust.

## THE PRIMITIVISM OF WORDSWORTH- 2

Critics of late rely too much on biography. It is nearly Freudian. In old dotage Wordsworth became orthodox Anglican!

36 - He said all one needed to relish and comprehend his poems was in them.

39 - Whether or not he succeeded depends on what we think of his philosophy during his prime years. There was a preparation for 18<sup>th</sup> century primitivism. It was a reaction against the classical and the Christian. Decorum and the taint of formalism made the classical tradition suffer a bit.

40 - And Calvinism had made theology about constant humility and a bit of a theological nightmare.

42 - People were saying the key to rehab was 'sympathy' and emotions. But, the people writing about this were outside of the 2 big moral traditions.

44 - Sentimentalists denied the transcendental in man. The Rationalists like Locke were found to be unsatisfying, as they did not satisfy immediacy. So they looked to nature. He liked Berkeley and the capacity for wonder. They were into the universal regeneration of the French Revolution – its potential. The disillusionment made him anti-intellectual and anti-scientific in his primitivism period. Coleridge taught him to transcendentalize these impressions.

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe” starts his introduction to a skating party.

51 - Plants have their joys and sorrows; they live and feel; they speak a language which the poet should strive to understand and to interpret” Wordsworth said!

52 - Neoclassicism aimed at elegance and nobility. And, so its relation to language was mechanical, like a garment to a body, not vital. Wordsworth’s solution to artificiality is primitivism to the last degree. We must look to the bottom of society, to the peasantry. Not to great masters, like Christ, Buddha, Aristotle or Plato.

55 - Nature for Wordsworth is not red in tooth and claw, but a source of love and pity. Those who have not fallen away – ie children – have an artless unconscious wisdom. He not only theorizes about spontaneity, but does it. That’s why there is a big gap between his best and worst poetry.

57 - “Matthew Arnold, who has done more than any other one person to mould our conception of Wordsworth.”

58 - Arnold didn’t like much his philosophy. But praised him as an ‘uplifter’.

60 - His philosophy is “the most complete denial of culture in Arnold’s sense to be found in literature.” trees and grass will teach us.

Coleridge and crew wished to avoid the charge of having replaced thought with emotionalism ran to German metaphysics.

And, the poetic mind, in its primitivism, takes on the aspect of religion.

64 - Even Wordsworth, though, came to have doubts that getting morals from a communion with nature. He goes to stoicism and then to traditional religion.

But his ‘wise passivism’ makes a problem of the will. Should we, though, ignore philosophy

and just enjoy the poem. Well, Wordsworth's lifelong project was to find happiness, (in the age of the melancholy romantic). Gloom follows upon sloth.

69 - Rousseau builds up the contrast between the hard-hearted rich and the innate goodness of the poor.

71 - Milton was inspired by a devout prayer to the eternal spirit. Wordsworth, a country dance. Wordsworth has imagination in the sense of vivid vision. Dante, looking at the problem of man's will to God's.

Perhaps no poet ever saw life less dramatically than Wordsworth. He looks on London as a still life from a bridge.

73 - All must be made into emotional tranquility.

Imaginatively, a poet who looks on the humanistic or religious level seems to deserve a higher rating than the poet who is engaged in an imagined return to nature.

77 - But he is not merely pantheistic. He does 'at-one-ment' not atonement. And, "primitivism of this kind may do very well as a weekend and holiday attitude." But not more. Rather than mysterious duality, we get a single life that rolls through all things.

To see things religiously or dramatically, we need tension, we need to go to Milton or Macbeth. It is nice escape, but just that.

The soul knows God without the support of the outer senses. Against this we see in Wordsworth a clash of first principles. Contrasting these views can help rehabilitate criticism.

### THE PROBLEM OF THE IMAGINATION: DR. JOHNSON - 3

80 - Philosophers like Descartes and Spinoza objected to imagination as it was a hinderance to truth, to be found via abstract reasoning.

Critics, slightly different, said you could get all by good intuitive sense and that imagination threw you off center.

For example, if you read chivalry romances as a youth, you could have trouble settling on a profession.

83 - Aristotle speaks of fable or myth, but not imagination. In poetics, he says, the poet is closer to truth than the historian because he isn't caught up in specifics.

Neo classic critics did not get Aristotle's truth through illusion idea. They put truth on one compartment and illusion or fiction in another. Dr. Johnson is one. He never tires of telling us that poetry should not aim at the particular, but at the general.

Dr. J does not set fiction and truth against each other. And religious truth and fiction were very different. He also was happy about the, now tritely abused, Greek myth being rejected, as it was manly. And, Dr. J hated the pastoral.

87 - The idyllic imagination got more important with Rousseau. He is very worried that illusion will turn into delusion.

88 - But perhaps he worried too much. People are let loose to “an invisible riot of mind.” Who cannot distinguish between labor of thought and the sport of musing.

92 - The dreamer retires and makes new world's arise. People as diverse as Pascal and Napoleon have noted that ‘imagination governs mankind.’

93 - “If there is to be any important advance in criticism at the present time a first step would seem to be to overcome the neo-classical and romantic opposition between reason and imagination and seek to recover the Aristotelian idea of a cooperation between the two.” To get this going, we need to start to really define the word ‘imagination.’

94 - Wordsworth loved the idea of imagination, but he just used it to mean intuition.

The word romantic has held its integrity since the Middle Ages. Not so for the word real (or realism) and imagination.

We must define real and imagination separately and in relation to one another.

#### THE PROBLEM OF THE IMAGINATION: COLERIDGE - 4

97 - Scientists and those in the modern movement care about origins. Aristotle wanted to know about the end of all things.

And we seek to know of our selves by looking into pre-history (and deep history). We look into the subliminal to find ourselves and childhood for mature visions.

99 - One critic says the subconscious is the real origin of creativity. The purposeful has been diminished since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

100 - Art is said to only be successful, in fact, when it has no aim. Kubla Khan is not got much conscious shaping. It is subconscious.

101 - And Ancient Mariner does not have the same imagination as high-serious art

102 - In the past ‘imagination’ was used to refer to sense impressions.

103 - The association with fantasy is perhaps why Aristotle doesn't use it, because he deals with serious art that aims at the universal, and so says we must depict human actions with



reference to some sound scale of ethical values. Therefore it is necessary for great poetry to have some probability. We hunger for wonder, says Aristotle. So some is not bad, provided it still tells us something of the universal.

104 – So one-sided over the top wonder made people not trust imagination.

But Voltaire said, 'illusion is the queen of the human heart.' Neo-classical inadequacy on this point was a chief factor in the rise of the romantic movement. Spontaneity became king.

For Wordsworth, "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" the source of which is most likely to be found in nature or in peasants.

Wordsworth did not do drama. He was indebted to Coleridge who was indebted to the Germans.

108 – Coleridge mocks Wordsworth saying peddlers are not usually sublime. This is possible but not probable. As a child of 6 is not a 'mighty prophet'.

Excellence of speech is the product of conscious culture, Coleridge holds.

Wordsworth may have been right to reject gaudiness and inane phraseology. But there is true decorum too.

WW in some sense lacks imagination.

111 – He just projects his moods onto objects. It is just a new and fascinating mode of escape.

112 – And escape is alright. It is only dubious when it purports to be idealism or even religion. Rousseau soared in rapture. But, his soaring satisfied neither the scientist nor the humanist.

Coleridge too lives in dreamland. He has a religious vision, but it has no grounding and can't, like him, even decide which side of the garden to sit in.

114 – He is enthralled to childlike wonder. But greatness appears in the power to impose on life a masculine purpose.

Coleridge aimed at what Pater called a 'part of the long pleading of German culture for things behind the veil.'

115 – Like his age, Coleridge groveled in the ghastly and wallowed in the weird. Apart from the shooting of the albatross, the Mariner does not do anything.

Poe too.

“Intense emotion, especially under the stress of unique experience, is isolating.” The Ancient Mariner captures the romantic motif of solitude.

117 – And it mixes with confession. The Mariner must spill. Catharsis.

It is miraculously good, in its own way, yet we must judge it.

There is no way to extract any serious purport from the Ancient Mariner.

121 – If we see it as related to prayer, this is not just wonder – and the whole set up becomes grotesque when Wordsworth is seeing miracles in mice.

122 – We cannot disdain spontaneity. But genius in the unconscious is too much. When we create consciously, we create value; by cooperating with reason in the service of a higher will.

Technique must be consciously acquired.

He chooses a subject that sets him apart and so writes of devils and witchcraft. Chaucer writes of people of this earth. And Dante’s religious purpose makes him higher than Chaucer. But, Coleridge is lost in this company.

125 – We should not sacrifice substance to spontaneity.

And, the same goes for the idea that we must be unique to be creative. Both lead to sheer unintelligibility.

127 – The blades of grass are not different.

Every ass that’s romantic believes he’s inspired.

129 – Just because something is enthralling doesn’t mean it has substance. Otherwise detective stories would be high literature.

The romantic exalts himself to a deity before making sure of the validity of his imaginings apart from his own emotion.

130 – Wordsworth also disparaged science.

131 – We are, though, to live in exploratory bedazzlement. Wonder is a sorry substitute for the law of measure of the humanist or for the religious virtues.

Arnold said the creative activity in English literature through the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had something premature about it. And, we see this in the romantics failure to deal critically enough with the idea of creation itself.

132 – 3 Primitive denial of reason is dangerous. To end this heresy, we must recover a psychological sense of dualism.

#### SCHILLER AS AESTHETIC THEORIST 5

135 – Schiller's French fame comes from 'the Robbers.' And, so they offered Schiller the title of French Citizen.

According to Goethe, liberty is the dominant idea in Schiller's writing, and it underwent purification. It was explosive, but under the influence of Kant, he came to consider good and evil.

139 – There was a failure, in neo-classicism, to do justice to the imagination. And, this was accentuated by the Enlightenment.

There is moral beauty.

140 – There was an effort to minimize the sense of beauty, and to separate it from morality, to base it purely on sensation. Burke's Inquiry looks at beauty as a sensation. This was setting the stage for beauty, and aesthetics, to become something independent of morals.

143 – Arnold said that reason and imagination cooperated in the Greeks. Sophocles showed 'imaginative reason.'

But do they work together perfectly without subordination to higher power, a quality of will peculiar to man, based on the supersensible? And, Kant puts beauty in the noumenal world and says it is free while the phenomenal world is absolutely determined. Reason is thus put in with bloodless categories.

144 – But you need to retain reason. You cannot make it separate and secondary, if only to discriminate between different orders of intuition.

And, higher will and expansive emotion are different. And, we may have an intuition of the higher order or an ethical will.

146 – Schiller took refuge from the dry categorical imperative in emotional immediacy.

Neo-classical folk also failed to integrate imagination and reason. Johnson disparaged imagination in favor of reason.

147 – We need to give imagination scope without emancipating it from direction and purpose.

Kant said genius and imagination are incompatible, and that genius exists only in so far as it is not subordinated to any end. We want the free play, irresponsible.

148 - Schiller took over the play theory, but even more eliminated purpose.

149 – Nietzsche said proportionality is strange to us. We are only in our highest bliss when we are in most danger.

150 – We understand liberty in relation to form; which is the imposition on raw experience of some pattern.

There is a beauty to do with the shaping, the architectonic shaping, of raw nature. It is an excellence of form. This is active and human. Finding it in nature is feminine, making it, masculine.

Too much beauty is dangerous as it can make you passive:

Thy dangerous glances  
Make women of men;  
New-born, we are melting  
Into Nature again.  
- Emerson

153 – His ‘Man is only free when he plays’ vision, leads to asceticism. [Yes. It is true that man in this world is less free. But, he cannot be totally in the air. This is ‘imagined’ freedom. Real freedom is fought for.] So, anyone who understands that imagination needs to be disciplined will reject Schiller’s vision on first principles.

155 – The best known partisan of play theory in England is Herbert Spencer. It is in Francis Bacon. The scientist is to look at reality, the poet free play. And, Schiller holds there is an incompatibility between reason and imagination.

156 – Schiller splits aesthetics free and unfree purposed rationality in nature. So either imagination will be tied down by reason and lose all aesthetic quality; or reason will give way to imagination and there will be no gain for morality. And, in the middle, you risk losing all.

157 – But if you ditch reason, you get the highest good.

158 – This leads to the romantic movement.

159 – It is better to strive through ‘kulture’ than via ‘nature.’

160 – Schiller says he was born in arcadia. Babbitt wants to know if he ever got out!

161 – But the Germans and Schiller are not primitivistic in that they do not disparage the intellect – free playing. They aim at the indolent imagination at play.

163 – His view of nature is nostalgic, not real.

Naturpoesie comes from a people's unconscious. Kunstpoesie doesn't and so is painfully imitative. This contrast is becoming obsolete. It is also harmful.

165 – Emerson and Schiller make the Greeks out to be unreflective children!

167 – This led some, like Schlegel, to go Medieval – who had a sense of the simple and the infinite – supposedly. The Greeks were said to be classical and the mediaeval, romantic.

(The opposition between art and life, posited by Kant and Schiller, was ridden to death by the escapist, Schopenhauer.)

171 – This leads to art for art's sake.

Which has led to us not finding any middle ground between moralism and aesthetic irresponsibility.

172 – The late Stuart Sherman said “Beauty has a heart full of service,” but this was not necessarily rotarian.

173 – With the decline of the idea of divine service, with art not looking beyond itself, - as it should in faith – it becomes a servant of the senses.

Herein is an amazing Tennyson poem,

Art for Art's sake! Hail, truest Lord of Hell!  
Hail, Genius, Mater of the Moral Will!  
'The filthiest of all paintings painted well  
Is mightier than the purest painting painted ill!'  
Yes, mightier than the purest painted well,  
So prone are we toward the broad way to Hell!

Tennyson

174 – This art for art's sake, leads to pure science, pure history, pure poetry, etc. it for its sake.

177 – It is not true, as Baudelaire says, that the only option to pure beauty is being a puritan or philistine.

Beauty is not just imposing unity on variety.

Beauty tied to the universal is no longer free and so refutes, Schiller.

Relativistic beauty is meaningless.

181 – Great lit, Longinus tells us, must have inner elevation and formal excellence.

182 – Burke says the beautiful is small and the sublime is vast. Kant is less sensationalistic and psychological than Burke, and more metaphysical.

185 – Longinus says the two enemies of the sublime are love of money and love of pleasure.

186 – In seeking primitivist solutions to problems that can only be solve by humanist or religious lines, he got caught in intellectual and emotional sophistry.

#### JULIEN BENDA - 6

188 – Benda is one of the most interesting who oppose, the modern movement. He is against Begson's anti-intellecualism and surrealists.

191 – Women have been encouraged to think they have more intuition than men, and have contempt for masculinity. Here we have the industrialist who bows down before his wife because she gets up at noon and plays a little Schumann on the piano.

192 – Himself a Jew, he attributes decadence, in part, to Jewish influence. Henri Bergson was Jewish.

194 – Bergson sees two types of French philosophy; Pascal's intuition and Descartes rationalism.

195 – The most subtle peril to Christians is the lust for knowledge.

197 – Our thinkers and writers have engaged in a great betrayal.

199 – But Babbitt says Benda fails because the opposite of the subrational is not the rational, but the super-rational.

#### THE CRITIC AND AMERICAN LIFE - 7

202 – People now aspire to be creative, not critical. And both have eliminated any standard above temperament, that might interfere with their expression.

204 – A serious critic wants to achieve a correct scale of values and so to see things proportionately, more than self-expression.

205 – The standards with reference to which men have discriminated in the past have largely been traditional.

So it is sad that, rather than Socrates, we have Mencken.

Constitutional democracy is the best thing. Direct democracy leads to a loss of liberty and then rise to some form of despotism.

The partisan of direct democracy is a idealist connected to the romantic movement.

207 – Mencken is a type that rails against all established.

208 – He asserts that Puritans were never sincere, but only hypocrites.

209 – And, as we have moved from service for the sake of God to service for humanitarian reasons, the inner life has disappeared, along with the control it implies.

210 – This has led to the growth of outer controls. Instead of the Puritan, we have humanitarian legalists who pass innumerable laws for the control of people unable to control themselves.

211 – The church is failing because it has forgotten original sin. The Christian knows of the Old Adam in himself and so has humility.

Mencken, on the other hand, produces sneering pride, ultimately based on flattery, wherein the reader can sneer at boobs.

214 – The decline of traditional controls has been followed by a lapse into the naturalistic level. Present evils come from ducking the law of measure, not the tyranny of taboos.

Goethe noted, everything that liberates the spirit without corresponding growth in self-mastery is pernicious.

215 – Realist of the current type are intimately allied with psychologists – glandular, behavioristic and psycho-analytic – who unite under determinism, and so clash fundamentally with religious and humanistic realists.

The immediacy of consciousness is evaded in favor of a metaphysical dream.

216 – The question is “Is man a responsible agent or the plaything of his impulses and impressions?”

Dreiser’s American Tragedy has no purpose. We just get animal behavior.

217 – Fatalism of the naturalistic type is responsible in large measure for the atmosphere of futility and frustration that hangs over contemporary writing.

218 – Sherwood Anderson says if we are crude our literature should be crude too. But we should not be too immersed in the passing moment and trends if we want to make literature of lasting importance.

219 – They probably won't survive as literature, but as fodder for sociologists, who want to see life as it was. They use so much slang, they will require a glossary in a decade. They lack pattern and are incoherent.

221 – Modern books are “jazzy” and the triumph of creative advertising. We get French literary fads 50 years late.

223 – The most original thing you could do now is question the theory of originality.

A genuine critical survey is necessary to see the unsatisfactoriness of our creative effort is due to a lack of standards that culture alone can supply.

224 – Democracy has led to lower levels of students studying lower levels of classes.

People get blanket degrees, about nothing in particular.

We need a Socratic look at the concept of ‘service’. Franklin’s views are already humanitarian, Edwards is religious.

228 – Real humanism and religion require an inner life. Without that we just get utilitarianism and the cult of material efficiency.

If we cannot return to Puritanism, we still might return to having an inner life.

229 – The Problem of the inner life is bound up with 1) The problem of the specialist and 2) the problem of leisure.

231 – With free time, the opposite of the Philistine is not being a Bohemian or superman, but a man of leisure.

233 – Before having an American literature, we must have an American criticism. To those who say we need more creation and less criticism, we need to examine what passes for creation today.

#### ROMANTICISM AND THE ORIENT - 8

235 – Groups have contact more than ever. And, too many occidentalists think the West has nothing to learn from Asia.

236 – Asians, are much less willing to concede our superiority after the War.

237 – And we must specify which Asians we're talking about, when we use the term.

238 – Some turn towards the East to avoid our raw material, mechanical obsession.

Matthew Arnold:



The East bowed low before the blast  
In patient, deep disdain;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in thought again.

She heard it, the victorious West,  
In sword and crown arrayed,  
She felt the void that mined her breast,  
She shivered and obeyed.

Asia is selling its Buddhas off as curioses.

241 – And our interpretation of Asia is often just romanticism. He thinks Buddha is the ultimate Oriental.

242 – Some romantics see Asia in terms of escape. This is very Rousseau and Schlegel and Schopenhauer.

248 – Buddha's doctrine may be summarized, "Do not raise a thirst." Their education involves memorizing certain texts. – This in Burma.

249 – Yoga is the art of Yoking yourself.

250 – Asoka's view of the saint was not so different than that of the Christian.

251 - It is at the opposite pole from Bergson's elan vital. Is Ghandi a true Mahatma or a Tolstoyan utopist?

252 – Like Tolstoy he indulges in a vicious confusion between things of God and the things of Caesar. Rousseau has had an impact on the East too.

254 – Zen seems to have a strong Taoist infusion; it is pantheistic and not so dualist.

They are getting rid of action for sheer inaction (Wu Wei). They thereby hope to conjure up their lost arcadia. This may be debilitating.

256 – It's like Voltaire said of the friars – They had made a vow to God to live at our expense.

Emerson protested energetically against the Buddhists in a way any normal European or American does – someone said.

257 – Modern man doesn't vow to renounce anything, and still hopes to get the peace and brotherhood, Buddha and Christ both say requires renunciation.

258 – Nowadays Christians are more crusaders and ‘up-lifters’. The idea of an inner life is not only religious, it is also humanistic. We don’t even know what inner life or meditation means.

The greatness in both is having produced a Christ and a Buddha.

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<sup>i</sup> Babbitt, Irving, “On Being Creative,” (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1968), xxiv