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Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

May We Emerge From the Dark Side

The Magnificent Voyage

It is commonplace to say that the magnificent voyage of Apollo 8 will be celebrated for as long as men honor the bravery and skill of other men. But beyond that we earthlings who have been dazzled by the epic achievement can only guess at the long-range significance of the flight.

Certain speculations seem sound, however. Not since the voyage of Columbus has any single exploration done so much to enlarge the horizons of mankind. Columbus and his crew epitomized the Renaissance triumph was unknown to all but a handful of the people who lived at that time, and that its real impact was a century or more in being realized. It may be hoped that the magic journey of Lovell Borman and Anders could have some such effect on a doubting and apprehensive humankind.

It is clear now that a manned landing on the inhospitable surface of the moon is well within the state of the art. In fact it seems a safe assumption that most of the people alive today will someday thrill to manned landings on the earth's neighboring planets.

Scientific knowledge, already growing by geometric progression, is sure to speed its rate of increase. Truly nothing that the mind of man can conceive seems beyond his grasp.

And surely the central lesson of Apollo 8 shines through clearly and unmistakably. If man can elevate his moral and ethical concepts to match his scientific achievements, then no problems of famine, disease or war are insoluble. And if he does not, the same power of science that we rejoice in today must certainly bring about the destruction of his civilization.

If this moral parity cannot be achieved by our generation, then history will be justified when it deems us a pathetically lopsided species—so full of promise, and so succubally bent on self destruction. It is the duty of enlightened mankind to see that this is not the verdict that future beings will find. Let the promise of space exploration help man emerge from the dark side of his nature and into the rich, humane future he is so clearly capable of reaching.

Well, After All, It's Their World

A Good Word for Youth

Thought we might as well start off this New Year by doing something real hard to do—praising today's youth.

Come to think of it, the worst are not too much wilder (or as wild, darn it!) as we were back in the Blazing Twenties. Remember, you old fogies when you pore your hair parted in the middle and slicked down with Vaseline so not even a fly could get a footing on it?

Remember, grandmas, when you danced the Charleston in a monkey for trimmed dress and snakeskin shoes? Remember those Chryslers with the rumble seats?

Some of the male members, to be sure,

This May Encourage You to Send It Back

Refusal of the Cunard Steamship Co to accept delivery of the new luxury liner Queen Elizabeth II is—at 65,000 tons—the biggest case of the customer "sending it back" in recent years.

With an estimated \$1.2 million in revenues lost from the now-cancelled maiden voyage to New York in January, Cunard is keenly disappointed. But the engines are not making full power and many staterooms are incomplete, so Cunard will wait until everything is shipshape.

We wholeheartedly endorse this insistence on getting one's money's worth (\$70 million in this case) and, even more, the reasoning behind it, as stated by the Cunard chairman with the inappropriate name of Sir Basil Smallpiece.

"In no circumstances are we in Cunard prepared to sail the QE II on a commercial voyage until we are satisfied that the standards she can offer are what she was designed for, what we have set out to establish and what we know she is capable of achieving."

Well said, sir, and how we wish that old-fashioned but now almost quaint principle could make a comeback in this country. Too often consumers just plunk down their cash without really looking the goods over. They accept a defect in a bruised tomato, a badly pressed shirt collar, a creak in a new car door without so much as a murmur. And though many times the manufacturer, repairman and salesman don't know there there is something substandard, sometimes, we'll vow, they do.

At the leathercraft shop at Colonial Williamsburg, Va., there are several shoes and tankards cut nearly in half. The craftsman explains that in early America any item flawed in the making would be slashed and a new one begun, with the reject put on display as a sign of the workman's integrity. And any shopkeeper who failed to make good on a customer's complaint about a shoddy product would face a public trial and a possible stiff fine.

We are not calling for a rebellion by housewives and other consumers. But the slots of the Elizabeth II and the recollection about early Williamsburg remind us of a double need: vigilance by buyers, and sense of pride in the product by sellers. Those are a pair of traditional virtues we'd like to see make a comeback.

HONG KONG DISOVNS FLU

In Hong Kong, city councillor Huang Mong-hua issued a stern denunciation of foreign newspapers and foreign health authorities for naming a certain current malady "A2 Hong Kong 68."

That name has given the colony a bad name, Mr. Huang protested. Why not tell it like it is, and call it the "China flu?" he asked. This disease developed in central China and was brought to Hong Kong last summer—and then to the United States.

Well, we wouldn't even wish the flu on Chairman Mao. Fact is, we wouldn't be surprised to see a news item out of Peking shortly claiming the bug flew in from across the border and is really the Russian flu. It seems nobody wants it. But nearly everybody's got it.

Ernest Lyons' Column:

Well Anyhow, He Has Oldest Fish in Town

IF YOU want anything intensely enough, somehow you will get it, but that's no guarantee it will be good for you.

THE HIGH VOLTAGE of your desire produces the results. Weak wishes get nowhere. Back when I used to enjoy catching plain, ordinary fresh fish, (Chuck Schilling called up one Saturday morning and said that he was bringing Jason Lucas to my home that evening "so you can get acquainted. You know about Jason of course."

"OH, SURE," I said. "He's on the staff of Sports Afield. Greatest authority on black bass in the United States, probably the world. Catches them in those big western impoundments. Catches them in Minnesota when it's freezing and no one else can. I have his book. Love to meet him!"

BUT IN TRUTH, I was seized with an awful wish. I suddenly desired to catch a bigger black bass than ever before in my life—maybe not bigger than Jason had, but one that would give him a run for his money. While I was running around getting my tackle ready, my wife noticed the gleam in my eye. "You're wishing again?" she accused. A high-powered wish can no more be hidden than the evil eye. "And whatever it is," she said sadly, "it's not going to do what you think it will."

I BRUSHED her aside. My desire pulled me with the intensity of a laser beam to a small little backwoods pond covered with bonnets. I paddled out in a tiny bateau only seven feet long and two feet wide—the sort in which you have to part your hair in the middle to keep it from capsizeing. Linnerring is. I pushed my way through the bonnets to the edge of the only clear hole in the mass of vegetation.

I SAT QUIETLY for five minutes by the edge of that hole, which was not much larger than a dining room table, knowing that it held the big bass I was going to catch. It would be impossible of course, to check the run of a large fish once it started off, though that made the hunt more difficult. What's impossible? I took one last, the surface of the hole welled up in a tremendous strike and I struck back. The giant bass leaped in air two feet from the bateau and I grabbed it by the jaw in mid-leap.

I SAT ON it all the way back to shore. A monster bass, over 22 pounds, not under 14 (I never weigh my bass) just exactly what I had wished for. While we were sitting in the living room that evening, I artfully led the conversation around to how small bass would occasionally strike plugs. Jason Lucas agreed. "Why just today," I said, "a little old minnow-sized bass bit my plug and gill-hooked itself so deeply that there was no use releasing it. I brought it in to show you."

I WENT to the ice box, walked back into the parlor and held that giant fish under my guest's nose. "Did you ever in your whole life," I asked, "see a smaller bass than this bit a plug?"

WELL, I made my point all right, but my wife remarked later that she didn't think I had made a hit with Mister Lucas.

BUT IT proves, I said, that if you want something bad enough you can get it. Like if you were stranded on a desert island and you really, really wanted some ice cream, a yacht would come along, rescue you and the first thing you would get would be a big, heaping dish of ice cream."

AND IT would probably make your teeth ache," she said. "As long as you're wishing, why don't you wish for something important, like a beautiful home on the river, a big bank account or an income for life?"

"BECAUSE it won't work if you're selfish," I replied. "It has to be something of peculiar value only to yourself." She said she couldn't see any difference, but I can. I wished real hard for two early editions of Jonathan Dickensons' Journal. Within a week, two sixth editions showed up, printed in archaic English around 180 years ago. Then I wished real hard for some Cape of Good Hope triangles for my British Colonial collection. A dealer in London wrote that he was liquidating a philatelic estate and sent me a dozen for practically nothing.

MY HORIZONS widened. I announced that I deeply desired a fossilized fish. "Of all things," said my wife, "and why would you want a fossilized fish? What earthly good would it be?" I replied that the important thing was wanting it, that I was wanting it harder and harder every day—and pretty soon it would appear.

IT DID. All wrapped up neatly in a package from the Collector's Shop at the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History, a gift from a special friend of mine up there. There was a little note. "Twenty-five million years old was the best I could do. Thanks, Beano, you don't know what this means to me."

MY FOSSIL FISH is from the Green River Shales of Wyoming. Its silvery body fluttered down in a long-ago-bashed sea mud was in the Oligocene Epoch. Its bones are delicately impressed in this slab of rock on my desk, imprinted atoms before the appearance of primitive man on earth—Nature's tip-off to Gutenberg.

SOME DAY some fisherman is going to come into the office bragging about his catch, and I am going to ask him, "But how old was your fish?" I can't help it. I've got to do it. I've resisted so far, but one of these days I will completely, absolutely floor whoever it is. Else what use is there in having the oldest fish in town?

wear their hair longer than, let's say, the average Rotary Club member. So what, it's their hair. When it comes to communicating, sometimes we do not dig the current academic-jargon, and sometimes the flagrantly profane words come in only too clearly.

But it is when young people start voicing their complaints, about "the system," the country, and the world, that we get into substance. And hence our good word for our youth. Because by and large the things so many of them rail against—war, the gap between rich and poverty, racial injustice, authoritarianism, hypocrisy—are worthy targets of their scorn.

It doesn't often come out articulately, but what the youth seem to be saying by their long hair, costume-clothes and "new" morals is that they are different from us older types. They do not want to be held as accomplices in the communis, national and global messes we have made for ourselves—and them—at this juncture in history. In that, you have to admire their taste.

Maybe that is what hags us adults so much. This fast-maturing, best-educated generation refuses to swallow the guff we hand them about the maturity, experience and wisdom of the senior generations. They take a look around and see it is a sham, and say so. We resent this disrespect, and retaliate by calling them "oddballs" and pointing as proof to the tiny minority of ultra-militants who, come to think of it, command very small followings among their own contemporaries.

In exasperation, we oldsters snap back. "All right, so what's your program?" Usually there is no coherent answer—which enables us to feel one-up again. But should these youngsters have systematic solutions? It ought to be enough for now that they are in rebellion against such malevolences as the mass-killing of war, social injustice, exploitation of humans by other humans and blind self-satisfaction by those who have "made it."

Deep inside our youth's discontent, disgust and impatience—it will perit that deeply—is an insistence on peace and social justice and the free expression of individuality, and those are worthy causes enough.

From its inception, America has been nourished by its young people. There have been the voices of dissent, which more often than not have been the spur to change, which is the indispensable ingredient to progress. So (at the risk of offending some of the more outraged of their numbers), we say the great majority of our youth are a source of pride. We accept your complaints, and we like your zeal. We will be counting on you, needless to say, more and more. Because, after all, it's your world.

Librarian Beauty One for the Books

Those who think of librarians as mousey ladies of uncertain years and querulous disposition who say "Shhh!" can only be delighted by Miss Penelope Plummer (35-24-35).

Miss Plummer, 18, a zings librarian from Australia, has been acclaimed "the most beautiful girl in the world." She won the Miss World Beauty Contest in London the other day.

Besides rescuing her sister librarians from unfair stereotype she no doubt has significantly advanced the cause of scholarship. All sorts of previously unbookish young beauties henceforth are likely to lurk around their local libraries on the off chance that a potential Miss Plummer may be in charge.

And while they're hanging around they may even read something.

Kindness is a virtue that never hurts anybody of anything.

Great men are simply honest.