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SANITY

An observer has to be sane to sanely observe.

This has been so far out in the society that the word “sane” itself has come to mean “conservative” or “cautious.” Or something you can agree with. The nineteenth-century psychologist decided he could not define “normal” and there weren’t any normal people. The fourteenth-century psychiatrist is the twentieth-century “authority” on sanity. Yet an examination of such shows them to be unable to demonstrate it personally or bring it about, much less define it.

Dictionaries say it is “health, soundness of body or mind; levelheadedness, reasonableness.”

Yet sanity is vital to accurate observation.

FIXED IDEAS

The “*idée fixe*” is the bug in sanity.

Whenever an observer himself has fixed ideas he tends to look at them, not at the information.

Prejudiced people are suffering mainly from an “*idée fixe*.”

The strange part of it is that the “*idée fixe*” they think they have isn’t the one they do have.

An example of this is the social “scientist” with a favorite theory. I have seen tons of these birds pushing a theory as though it was the last theory in the world and valuable as a ten-pound diamond. Such throw away any fact that does not agree with theory. That’s how nineteenth-century psychology went off the rails. All fixed ideas and no facts.

The physical sciences in Hegel’s time did the same thing. There was no eighth planet in the solar system, even when found in a telescope, because “seven is a perfect number so there can only be seven planets.”

History is full of idiocies—and idiots—with fixed ideas. They cannot observe beyond the idea.

A fixed idea is something accepted without personal inspection or agreement. It is the perfect “authority knows best.” It is the “reliable source.” A typical one was the intelligence report accepted by the whole US Navy right up to 7 Dec. 1941, the date of destruction of the US fleet by Japanese planes. The pre-Pearl Harbor report, from unimpeachably reliable sources was “the Japanese cannot fly—they have no sense of balance.” The report overlooked that the Japanese were the world’s greatest acrobats! It became a fixed idea that caused the neglect of all other reports.

A fixed idea is un-inspected. It blocks the existence of any contrary observation.

Most reactionaries (people resisting all progress or action) are suffering from fixed ideas which they received from “authorities,” which no actual experience alters.

That British red-coated infantry never took cover was another one. It took a score or two of wars and fantastic loss of life to finally break it down. If any single fixed idea destroyed the British Empire, this one is a candidate.

NORMAL SCENE

The reason a fixed idea can get so rooted and so overlooked is that it appears normal or reasonable.

And somebody or a lot of somebodies want to believe it.

Thus a fixed idea can become an ideal. It is probably a wrong ideal. Incapable Japanese pilots would be a wish for a navy. It would be wonderful! Red-coated infantry were supposed to be brave and unflinching.

In both cases the ideal is irrational.

A rational ideal has this law:

THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY MUST BE PART OF THE IDEAL ONE HAS FOR THAT ACTIVITY.

A navy that has an ideal that the enemy can’t fly is stupidly avoiding its own purpose which is to fight.

British infantry had the purpose of winning wars, not just looking brave.

Thus one can analyze for a sane ideal by simply asking, “What’s the purpose of the activity?” If the ideal is one that forwards the purpose, it will pass for sane.

There are many factors which add up to an ideal scene. If the majority of these forward the purpose of the activity, it can be said to be a sane ideal.

If an ideal which does not forward the activity in any way is the ideal being stressed then a fixed idea is present and had better be inspected.

This could be said to be a very harsh utilitarian view of things. But it is not. The artistic plays its role in any ideal. Morale has its part in any ideal.

An ideal studio for an artist could be very beautiful or very ugly so long as it served him to produce his art. If it was very beautiful yet hindered his artistic activities it would be a very crazy ideal scene.

A handsome factory that produced would be a high ideal. But its nearness to raw materials, transport and worker housing are the more important factors in an ideal of a factory. And its location in a country where the government made an atmosphere in which production could occur could be an overriding part of an “ideal scene.”

You have to look at what the area is for before you can say whether it is ideal or not.

And if its area is too limited to produce or too expensive for it to be solvent, then it isn't a sane scene.

URGES TO IMPROVE

Sometimes the urge to improve an activity is such that it injures or destroys the activity.

If one is familiar with the type of activity he must also realize that there is a law involved:

THE FACT THAT SOMETHING IS ACTUALLY OPERATING AND SOLVENT CAN OUTWEIGH THE UNTESTED ADVANTAGES OF CHANGING IT.

In other words, an ideal scene might be vastly different but the actual scene IS operating.

So the factor of **OBSESSIVE CHANGE** enters. Change can destroy with ferocity.

Whole areas of London, jammed with small but customer-filled shops, have been swept away to make room for chromium high-rent modern stores which stand empty of buyers.

Birmingham, where you could get anything made, had all its tiny craft shops swept away and replaced with high-rent huge new buildings all on some progress-crazy psychotic break.

Possibly the new stores and the huge new shops fitted somebody's “ideal” but they did not match an actual operating environment.

It is this difference between an ideal scene and a practical scene which brings down many old businesses and civilizations.

Therefore, to have an ideal, familiarity with what works is desirable.

It is quite possible without any familiarity, to imagine a successful ideal. **BUT IT MUST NOT HAVE ANY FIXED IDEAS IN IT.**

It is the fixed idea that knocks a practical operating living environment in the head.

Do-gooders are always at this. They see in a row of old shacks, not economic independence and a lazy life but P-O-V-E-R-T-Y. So they get a new housing project built, shoot taxes into the sky, put total control on a lot of people and cave in a society.

The do-gooder is pushing the nineteenth-century fixed idea of the Comte de Saint-Simon—to gear the whole economy down to the poorest man in it. In other words to reward only the downstat. Everyone becomes a slave of course but it sure sounds good.

Newspapermen are probably the world's worst observers. They observe through the fixed ideas of the publisher or the prevailing control group. Their stories are given them before they leave the office. Yet their observations advise the public and the government!

The outpoints to be found in any contemporary newspaper brand most stories as false before one proceeds more than a paragraph.

Yet this is what the world public is expected to run on.

Naturally it distorts the scene toward raving insanity. This conflicts with the native logic of people so the public thinks the world a lot madder than it really is.

In two cities all newspapers were suspended from publication for quite a period. In both, crime dropped to zero! And resumed again when newspapers were again published.

The ideal scene of the citizen in his workaday world is vastly different than the scene depicted in a newspaper.

The difference between the two can make one feel quite weird.

Thus there should not be too wide a difference between the ideal and the represented scene. And not too wide a difference between the ideal and the actual scene.

R (reality) consists of the is'ness of things. One can improve upon this is'ness to bring about an ideal and lead the R up to it. This is normal improvement and is accepted as sane.

One can also degrade the R by dropping the representation (description) of the scene well below the actual. In the black propaganda work traditionally carried on by many governments this latter trick of corrupting the R is the means used to foment internal revolt and war.

Both actions of upgrade and downgrade are outpoints when reported as facts. “We made £1,000 in reserves this week” is as crazily outpoint as “the government went broke this week” when either one is not the truth.

When the report says, “We should plan a higher income,” it is leading to a higher ideal and is not an outpoint mainly because it is not representing any fact but a hopeful and ambitious management.

FIVE POINTS

When none of the outpoints are present, yet you do have reports and the scene is functioning and fulfilling its purpose one would have what he could call a sane scene.

If all 5 points were absent yet the scene was not functioning well enough to live, it would be such a departure from the ideal that that itself would be outpoint in that importance was altered. What is out here is the whole situation! The situation analysis would be instantly visible.

But in practice this last happens only in theory, not in practice. A collapsing situation is forecast by outpoints in its data.

Organisms and organizations tend to survive.

A decline of survival is attended also by outpoints.

SANITY IS SURVIVAL

Anything not only survives better when sane but it is true that the insane doesn't survive.

Thus survival potential can be measured to a considerable degree by the absence of outpoints.

This does not mean that sane men can't be shot or sane organizations can't be destroyed. It means only that there is far less chance of them being shot or destroyed.

So long as men and organizations are connected to insane men and organizations, wild things can and do happen unexpectedly.

But usually such things can be predicted by outpoints in others.

When sane men and organizations exist in a broad scene that is convulsed with irrationality, it takes very keen observation and a good grip on logic and fast action to stay alive. This is known as "environmental challenge." It can be overdone! Too much challenge can overwhelm.

The difference between such happening to a sane man or organization and to the insane would be that the failure did not itself become a fixed idea.

INSANITY

The 5 primary illogics or outpoints as we call them are of course the anatomy of insanity.

In their many variations the insanity of any scene can be sounded and the nucleus of it located.

By locating and then closely inspecting, such a point of insanity can then be handled.

When you know what insanity really is you can then confront it and handle it. One is not driven into a huge generality of "everything is insane."

By detecting and eliminating small insane areas, taking care not to destroy the sane things around it, one can gradually lift any situation up to sanity and survival.

By seeing what is insane in a scene and seeing why it is insane, one has by comparison also found what is sane.

By locating and understanding outpoints one finds the pluspoints for any given situation.

And that is often quite a relief.

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