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GROWING in Paris, cultures brought back from Mexico by Heim produce mushrooms in his laboratory. These are *Psilocybe mexicana* Heim.

MUSHROOMS CONTINUED

destroy the sense of time. On the night that we have described we lived through eons. When it seemed to us that a sequence of visions had lasted for years, our watches would tell us that only seconds had passed. The pupils of our eyes were dilated, the pulse ran slow. We think the mushrooms have no cumulative effect on the human organism. Eva Mendez has been taking them for 35 years, and when they are plentiful she takes them night after night.

The mushrooms present a chemical problem. What is the agent in them that releases the strange hallucinations? We are now reasonably sure that it differs from such familiar drugs as opium, coca, mescaline, hashish, etc. But the chemist has a long road to go before he will isolate it, arrive at its molecular structure and synthesize it. The problem is of great interest in the realm of pure science. Will it also prove of help in coping with psychic disturbances?

My wife and I have traveled far and discovered much since that day 30 years ago in the Catskills when we first perceived the strangeness of wild mushrooms. But what we have already discovered only opens up new vistas for further study. Today we are about to embark on our fifth expedition to the Mexican Indian villages, again seeking to increase and refine our knowledge of the role played by mushrooms in the lives of these remote peoples. But Mexico is only the beginning. All the evidence relating to the primitive beginnings of our own European cultures must be reviewed to see whether the hallucinogenic mushroom played a part there, only to be overlooked by posterity.

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