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Comment

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Comment by the Editor

LINES

I wonder who first thought of a line. Perhaps the idea began in contemplation of the horizon, for the horizon is a visible line though without substance. Every line, like the horizon, is without end, for it either forms a circle or extends through space to infinity. A line is only a mental concept: the sky does not really meet the earth.

There is something paradoxical about lines. Being without substance or dimension, they are used to mark limits. The world is immeshed in imaginary lines — parallels, meridians, political boundaries — all devised to indicate parts, yet demonstrating the reality of the whole. People are divided into groups by fictitious lines, the transgression of which is penalized. He who lives across the road can not vote in our precinct; the jurisdiction of a nation extends to a line three miles beyond the shore; a slave once won his freedom by moving from Missouri to Iowa. Boundary lines are really artificial, transient makeshifts — badges of human incapacity to distinguish between temporary differences and ultimate unity. The time may come when a realization of the brotherhood of man will convert national bounds into human bonds.

People yearn for continuity, yet in their thoughts they seek conclusions, finality. Thinking of the end of the world they hope for life eternal. Is it because the mind is finite, whereas the soul is of the essence of time and space? The spirit within gropes endlessly, like a river flowing. Maybe life itself is a line, endless and without substance, denoting unity, eternity, immortality.

J. E. B.