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GREAT REFORMERS: LAO TZE

IT is perhaps inaccurate to call Lao Tze a "great reformer," for, so far as the historical record goes, there is no evidence that he reformed much of anything, except, possibly, himself, and of this we have only the implication of his philosophy. Taoism, it is true, is accounted one of China's "three religions," the other two being Buddhism and Confucianism. Historical Taoism, however, if we believe the scholars, has little to recommend it, and the influence of Lao Tze is to be sought rather in the unending stimulation to the human mind of the little book of some 5,000 characters which he is said to have written—the *Tao Te King.*

Of Lao Tze's life almost nothing is known. He lived in the sixth century B.C., the epoch of Buddha in India, of Pythagoras in Greece, and a generation before Confucius in China. According to Lionel Giles of the British Museum, "All that we know for certain is that, after having spent most of his life in the State of Chou, he set out at an advanced age towards the West, passed the frontier, and was never heard of again." Legend claims that he was born of a virgin who conceived him at sight of a falling star, that he wore from birth a venerable white beard, and that he wrote his book at great age, when, about to leave China, a watchman at the frontier urged him to leave behind a record of his wisdom.

Lao Tze presents a peculiar challenge to the western mind for the reason that he represents the antithesis of everything the West seems to believe in, and yet we cannot avoid the conclusion that he was a wise man. He seems to have gained his understanding by means which have nothing in common with the Western theory of knowledge. The European or American believes, with Descartes, that "clear and distinct ideas" are the criterion of truth. Lao Tze revels in paradox. The scientific mind demands precise definition and the proper use of terms. Lao Tze's meaning often undulates, serpent-like, through undermeanings and overtones. The West treasures its book of reference, its encyclopedias. Lao Tze would probably use them for firewood.

Lao Tze was not progressive. He invented the theory of *laisser faire.* He was opposed to public education. He was an isolationist. He was almost a pacifist; at least, he offered extremely impractical views on national defense. Here, for example, is Lao Tze's conception of Utopia:

> Were I ruler of a little State with a small population, and only ten or a hundred men available as soldiers, I would not use them. I would have the people look on death as a grievous thing, and they should not travel to distant countries. Though they might possess boats and carriages, they should have no occasion to ride in them. Though they might own weapons and armor, they should have no need to use them. I would make the people return to the use of knotted cords [the old *quipo* method of recording events, before the invention of writing]. They should find their plain food sweet, their rough garments fine. They should be content with their homes, and happy in their simply ways. If a neighboring State was within sight of mine – nay, if we were close enough to hear the crowning of each other's cocks – the two peoples should grow old and die without there ever having been any mutual intercourse.

How can a man who is against literacy and even the horse and buggy be called a philosopher? Perhaps we should say that all utopian works suffer by a literal reading, and need another sort of interpretation. But what would be the life of the people in Lao Tze's "perfect State"? First of all, they would have their health, both mental and physical. They would be self-sufficient, economically, and unperturbed by controversies over the monetary system or reciprocal trade agreements. If they listen to Lao Tze, they would strive for understanding of Tao, the Way of Nature. Desiring little, they would undertake no conquests. Unacquainted with luxuries, their habits would be good. The weapons of war would remain hidden and grow rusty. The people would have contentment.

This comes uncomfortably close to sounding like a tired radical's dreams. With no injustice to him, we may think that Lao Tze had become discouraged with civilization. Some years ago Edward L. Strecker, the psychiatrist, described a South American tribe of natives who live along the upper reaches of the Amazon. From time to time they are seen to squat upon the ground, motionless, and until a certain interval has elapsed no persuasion or threat will make them move. "We are waiting," they say, "for our souls to catch up with our bodies." Lao Tze's Utopia might have been designed for some such purpose.

One who travels in the United States, either by train or automobile, and sees the shoals of living quarters, massed in endless extension outside the great cities, without unity, great or small—mere appendages to the equally unrationalized overgrowth of modern industry—might be easily persuaded of the superiority of Lao Tze's arrangements. To be in a measure insensitive to the garish and the hideous is conceivably an advantage when life affords no other possibility, but a people so benumbed is also a people unaware of the meaning of beauty, of in what happy, harmonious community life consists. One cannot help thinking that, properly introduced, the Utopia of Lao Tze could become an El Dorado for millions of discontented, nervous, everlastingly tired and frustrated people of the Western world.

There is a tradition that Confucius, when he was thirty-four years old, visited Lao Tze to ask his counsel, and that Lao Tze said to him:

> The men about whom you talk are dead, and their bones are mouldered to dust; only their words are left. Moreover, when the superior man gets his opportunity, he mounts aloft; but when the time is against him, he is carried along by the force of circumstances. I have heard that a good merchant, though he have rich treasures safely stored, appears as if he were poor; and that the superior man, though his virtue be complete, is yet to outward seeming stupid. Put away your proud air and many desires, your insinuating habit and wild will. They are of no value to you—this is all I have to tell you. Why do you not obtain the Tao? This is the reason—because you do not give it an asylum in your heart.

It is helpful, in attempting to appreciate the *Tao Te King*, to have read first a book like Ortega's *Revolt of the Masses.* Both books are intended for dismayed Progressives, men of good will who cannot understand what has gone wrong with the world. Ortega describes the behavior of vast populations—the masses—which are without any ideal of individual human excellence. "It is not," he says, "that the mass-man has thrown over an antiquated [moral code] in exchange for a new one, but that at the center of his scheme of life there is precisely the aspiration to live without conforming to any moral code." Ortega is among those few thinkers who are convinced that the humane culture which everyone wants, yet which is dying away, has its roots in individual character. Oretega and Lao Tze agree that no political incantations can conjure human excellence into existence. It has nothing to do with 60,000,000 jobs, a great industrial plant, radar, nor even the Encyclopedia Britannica. Human excellence is a self-produced achievement, on which the *Tao Te King* is a treatise, and one that has outlived several civilizations that neglected the principles it teaches.

The first Emperor of the later Chin dynasty asked if Tao could be of any use in ruling china. He was told by an adviser that "with Tao a corpse could govern the Empire." Kublai Khan ordered all the Taoist books burnt except the *Tao Te King*, which was an emphatic if curious way of pronouncing on its value. In the present, a time of vociferous and increasingly obtrusive government, Lao Tze's suggestions are both refreshing and apt:

> In the highest antiquity, the people did not know they had rulers. In the next age they loved and praised them. In the next, they feared them. In the next, they despised them.
>
> How cautious is the Sage, how sparing of his words! When his task is accomplished and affairs are prosperous, the people all say: "We have come to be as we are, naturally and of ourselves."

Evidently, to obtain rulers of this sort, the winning party must be one which takes for its platform Books V and VII of Plato's *Republic*, and in seeking support will urge, paradoxically, that "the State in which the rulers are most reluctant to govern

is always the best and most quietly governed, and the State in which they are most eager, the worst."

Lao Tze continues, showing that the lessons of Chinese history were not different from the lessons of European history:

> As restrictions and prohibitions are multiplied in the Empire, the people grow poorer and poorer. When the people are subjected to overmuch government, the land is thrown into confusion. When the people are skilled in many cunning arts, strange are the objects of luxury that appear.
>
> The greater the number of laws and enactments, the more thieves and robbers will there be. Therefore the Sage says: "So long as I do nothing, the people will work out their own reformation. So long as I love calm, the people will right themselves. If only I keep from meddling, the people will grow rich. If only I am free from desire, the people will come naturally back to simplicity."
>
> If the government is sluggish and tolerant, the people will be honest and free from guile. If the government is prying and meddling, there will be constant infraction of the law. Is the government corrupt? Then uprightness becomes rare, and goodness becomes strange. Verily, mankind have been under delusion for many a day!
>
> Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish [Don't overdo it].

The *Tao Te King* is a collection of aphorisms which have been variously rendered and variously arranged. Here, we have drawn upon the translation of Lionel Giles. A more recent translation, also excellent, is that of Ch'u Ta-Kao, published by the Buddhist Society in London. These versions seem possessed of both the vigor and the subtlety of Lao Tze's thought, and offer as well the best of Oriental scholarship. Giles' work in particular is valuable for its introduction, which helps the reader to recognize behind the apparently formless sayings of the sage the outline of a profound metaphysical view of life and of nature—but hardly a system, for the genius of Lao Tze lies in his art of intimation, in his refusal to offer rigid conceptions.

The Tao of Lao Tze is the breath of all reality and the hidden source whence all reality has come. It is the Parabrahman of the Hindus, the Good of the Platonists, the One of the Neoplationists, and the Absolute of the Western metaphysicians. But for Lao Tze, it is no speculation, no ontological guess. It is that in which he lives and moves and has his being. Tao is the secret of the sage's insistence upon simplicity—the way of nature. At times it appears that Lao Tze demands a primitive absence of self-consciousness and that he longs for a pre-Promethean epoch of untried innocence. But we are persuaded that this is rather the subtle cipher of intense thought in perfect balance—the speech of one who uses obscurity as an artist, in order that other matters may be more luminously portrayed.

Lao Tze has been called "despondent," a sad pessimist in his view of the ways of men. But there is no real despondency in one who gives internal evidence of having penetrated deep into the core of the human situation, and of having discovered the same extra-ordinary surety that Socrates reveals in the *Phaedo*—that gives human greatness, wherever it is found, its stable foundation. Confucius, the codifier of Chinese tradition and universal teacher of the Chinese people, described Lao Tze to his disciples, thus:

> I know how birds can fly, fishes swim, and animals run. But the runner may be snared, the swimmer hooked, and the flyer shot by the arrow. But there is the dragon—I cannot tell how he mounts on the wind through the clouds, and rises to heaven. Today I have seen Lao Tze, and can only compare him to the dragon.

Of himself, Lao Tze wrote:

> All Men have their usefulness; I alone am stupid and clownish. Lonely though I am and unlike other men, yet I revere the Foster-Mother, Tao.
>
> My words are very easy to understand, very easy to put into practice; yet the world can neither understand nor practice them.
>
> My words have a clue, my actions have an underlying principle. It is because men do not know the clue that they understand me not.
>
> Those who know me are but few, and on that account my honor is the greater.
>
> Thus the Sage wears coarse garments, but carries a jewel in his bosom.

Letter from ENGLAND

LONDON.—In one sense there is a connection for the idealist between the reverence displayed, at least temporarily, for the late Mr. Gandhi, and the general interest awakened by the conception of a "Western Union" outlined in the British Foreign Secretary's speech in the House of Commons last January. Both attitudes are indicative of a deep desire by the divided human mind of the modern world for an integral unity—a tribute in the one case to the embodiment of a spiritual viewpoint that influenced many afflicted by torturing doubts and uncertainties in the direction of peace, in the other, a tribute to something beyond national isolation, something bigger and more important, sometimes called Western democracy. In both cases there is probably a recognition that neither ordinary human nature nor national patriotism is enough. The communal division of India is paralleled by the sundering of Europe into ideological camps. The phenomena are apt symbols on a continental scale of the prevalent schizophrenia of the human mind expressing itself in political or religious terms, and representing aspects of the unresolved conflict between the dual principles of right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism, that have characterized the historical span of some 1,900 years. Painfully, the human family gropes its way towards a solution of this dichotomy. The universal grief shown over the assassination of Mr. Gandhi, and the acceptance in "free" countries of the proposals for a Western Union of Europe, constitute a tacit recognition that racialism and sectionalism are obstacles to the achievement of peace as a result of a common effort towards unity.

Such hopeful signs as these, however, grant no permission to live in an "ivory tower," aloof from our duty toward a bewildered world. Even in what have come to be known as left-wing circles here, it is felt that Mr. Bevin made it clear that it was the policy of the Soviet Union to get Communist control of the whole of Europe, and that it was the first principle of British policy to prevent it from doing so. It would be dangerous foolishness for any idealist to ignore those two facts in his thought of the future. "In opposition to none—unless others seek opposition," wrote the London *Times* (Jan. 23, 1948), "and in friendship with all who will bring their contribution to the common task, this country intends to go forward with her neighbours in search of peace and prosperity." There is room here for practical work for practical objectives.

It is salutary at the outset to remember that Western civilization has always shown a tendency to assume virtues that are perceived to be quite impossible for anyone living in the world to practise in any unrestricted way. In the Western sense, a wise man is one who, in all essentials, is moved by self-interest—one who can most cleverly conduct the business of his life so as to ensure for himself the largest amount of material profit. That being said, it is perhaps unnecessary to add that to equate Western with Christian values is quite unjustified. We shall have to return to a broadly humanist view, if an acceptable definition is to be found. "The most fundamentally European of all moral ideas is that of individual responsibility," writes the *Times Literary Supplement* (Jan. 31, 1948), adding: "Those who speak of the dignity of human personality have in mind not the capacity of rational men to choose between cinemas and cigarettes, but the responsibility of rational men to pursue freely what is good."

It thus becomes obvious that new conceptions of ends and means must be formulated if the current discussion of moral value is to have any real meaning. With relief we turn to some fruitful ideas contained in a recent broadcast here by Mr. L. L. Whyte. Many will share his view that the essence of the present human plight is that mankind possesses no universally acceptable and effective system of ethics, and that the supreme need is for new principles—"a new

way of thinking which will by its own impetus lead man to think appropriately not only about nature, but also about himself and society, so that he can establish greater harmony both in his own person and in his world community." When unity of process replaces the old dualism of being in a deeper sense we shall approach the solution of many of our present problems, and the science of the atom, the science of life, and the science of mind, will be seen (as Mr. Whyte asks us to see them) as merely three aspects of a unified science. Meanwhile, we do well to remember what the Aga Khan told us in the London *Times* (Feb 5, 1948) about an interview he had with Mr. Gandhi at Poona in 1946, when Mr. Gandhi remarked "that a society's civilization should not be judged by its powers over the forces of nature, nor by the power of its literature and art, but by the gentleness and kindness of its members towards all living beings."

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
PERIODICAL REVIEW

A PROFESSOR of English literature, Howard Mumford Jones, of Harvard, casts a balance on the past thirty years of American history, and finds little to admire. His article, "The Vultures of Peace," in a recent *Saturday Review of Literature*, is one of those rare discussions which view human affairs with an uncompromised idealism, and has, besides, the peculiar virtue of endowing the principles it sets forth with moral reality. Regarding the present foreign policy of the United State, Prof. Jones says:

> What Europe hungers and thirsts after most deeply is moral and spiritual strength; what our policy insists upon giving Europe is materialism – a materialism which, whether you want to call it the Marshall plan, or the cold war against Russia, or the restoration of doubtful governments, or bolstering European currencies, springs from an erroneous concept of the uses of victory. We have lost an American point of view, and we have been infected by a European one—by the obsolete nineteenth-century notion that balance of power is a greater force in the international order than spiritual calm.

This analysis is psychological and moral, not political. And because it grows from an impartial spirit it is able to reveal the emotional tragedy of Europe with a clarity impossible to merely political investigation. The appeal of Fascism, Prof. Jones shows, was to the deep hunger of the spirit of European man; that its promise of "Spiritual calm" was illusory, its premises false, its consequences horrible, in no way destroys the fact of its character, nor the abyss in human life which remains unfilled with its defeat:

> The fact that Fascism is a defeated cause has blinded every American leader—most of them mere "practical" men—to the central truth that the problem in Europe today is not Communism but loneliness. We have stripped away the illusory peace of Fascism, but we have given nothing in its place.

Prof. Jones reminds us of the chaotic Twenties, when the forces which in the Thirties catapulted the world to war, were in the making. In those days, "observer after observer returned from the tragic continent to tell us the truth—that health is found in the souls of men, not in their banking systems." People who understood Europe better than any diplomat—the artists, writers and others who, being able to participate in the flow of European culture, *felt* what was wrong—"told us that what was breaking down in Europe was not so much an economic order or international currencies as man's confidence in himself and his fellow man." Again and again, these people

> implored us to speak that necessary word of confidence in the soul, that reassurance that the great new nation of the West truly believed in the dignity of the individual and the brotherhood of man.

But the United States was otherwise concerned in the Twenties.

Someone will doubtless ask, What, exactly, does Prof. Jones want us to do? He wants us to practice the idealism we talk about, but which we ignore in action. He wants a foreign policy based upon something different from the fear and suspicion which undergird the present-day "security" program.

> The irony of our pretensions to religion and democracy [he says] is underlined by the cosmic disharmony of a Nobel Prize awarded to American Quakers while American arms, ammunition, and officers are shipped in vessel after vessel to Turkey and Greece. To Europe, therefore, American belief in the soul presents itself as a consignment of machine guns in the best Bismarkian manner. The greatest American of the twentieth century may prove to be a Hindu who held no office whatever.

Like other Americans, Prof. Jones reveals his deep attraction to Gandhi—so much that he claims him for a countryman. Gandhi, it seems, is demonstrating the truth of Paine's dictum that "An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot." Gandhi's death did not diminish his appeal to men of ideals in other lands, but increased it. Gandhi's conquest is proceeding, slowly, peacefully, but invincibly, around the world. It is not too much to say Gandhi united

indivisibly the "practical' and the "ideal" for countless thoughtful human beings, of whom, perhaps, Prof. Jones is one. We offer the following passage in evidence:

> If idealism is not good sense, why do our statesmen continually employ the language of idealism? If lofty phrases which conceal coarse aims are the homage that vice pays to virtue, the hypocrisy indicates at the least that men are most profoundly moved by noble images. The noble image of democracy, truly presented, brings in its train relief from tension, inward peace, a pervasive and generous calm. But a country which, possessing the atom bomb, through the mouths of its rulers also demands for the first time in its history universal military training cannot impress upon Europe an image of nobility, but only one of fear. We admire Gandhi; I wonder whether we dare to imagine him in the White House? Yet this dreamer did more for millions of men than any Secretary of State has done.

The leading editorial in the Spring, 1948, *Retort*, a quarterly of social philosophy and the arts, deals with the traditional radical idea of the "general strike" against war. Noting that mention of this idea has become increasingly rare, the writer says:

> The general strike against war is a natural corollary of the fundamental assumption underlying all genuine radical thought: that the working class is capable, under certain circumstances, of acting according to its own interests. If after a hundred years of radical agitation, circumstances still do not permit one to believe in the possibility of the workers acting to prevent so self-evident a catastrophe as another war, then clearly the whole basis of radicalism is seriously challenged. It is a matter of considerable importance to discover why the general strike against war has proven so unrealizable.

After some discussion and review of history, the writer concludes the workers are too habituated to authoritarian control—whether by employers or labor leaders—to dare so drastic a measure as a strike against war. The prescriptions is simple:

> The workers should be encouraged to withdraw gradually from industry into a new, decentralized, self-governing economy. In this economy—a real "new society within the shell of the old"—the workers would provide their own needs, and it could serve as the material base and spiritual fountainhead for a *permanent* strike against the whole industrial system.

It is worthy of note that most of the original thinking in the radical movement today is in this direction. Again, the solution proposed is in form a close analogue of Gandhi's program of economic independence for the Indian peasantry; it also reminds the reader of the concluding observations of Carlo Levi in *Christ Stopped at Eboli.* Ralph Borsodi's *Flight from the City* shows that the white-collar worker may realize a similar emancipation, and the community movements in both England and America also seek the roots of freedom in decentralization and economic independence.

In these several converging tendencies of thought one may recognize a common spirit and objective, and enough agreement, also, on the means to reach that objective to provide for a loose alliance in motive among them all. From the viewpoint of the mass-society of the present age, such tendencies are no more than germinal beginnings, but they represent, nevertheless, the as yet unbetrayed movements of the human spirit toward freedom in our time; and they are all movements *for* mankind, and against no nation, race or class—a fact which distinguishes them from previous libertarian programs.

COMMENTARY
THE COMMUNITY IDEAL

IT is a relatively easy matter to build a closely-knit community around a special religious revelation. Under the unifying influence of their peculiar religious ideas, the communal society of the Shakers lasted for over a hundred years. The Oneida Community, too, achieved a comparative success which continued so long as its original inspiration. The founder of Oneida, John Humphrey Noyes, himself observed that he did not believe such a community could survive without the integration of a common religious faith.

In contrast, the more "intellectual" society of Brook Farm had little stamina. The determination of the Mormons in the face of adversity put the New England transcendentalists to shame. As though realizing something was missing, Emerson did not join the Brook Farm experiment. Likewise Tolstoy, while he inspired the founding of Tolstoyan communities, never joined one. He felt that they missed the main current of life.

The economic communities fared no better than the "cultural" ones. Robert Owen's New Harmony in Indiana was a disappointing fiasco. It lasted hardly as long as the grandiloquent "Age of Reason" established by the French Revolution. On a larger scale, we all know what has happened to the "classless society" promised by Karl Marx.

It seems that the ideal of common material benefits is insufficient to sustain human cooperation to the extent demanded by a community which does not recognize private ownership. The religious idea of non-material benefits, on the other hand, has worked, but creates a spiritual egotism that is noticeable among the "saved" of every time and place, whether in communities or not.

This, then, is the problem of the social idealist: to find a way of generating a spirit of cooperation that does not rest upon hope of exclusive rewards, either in this world or the next. There have been individuals animated by such a spirit, but no *self-conscious* communities of this sort, that we know of. The beginning, perhaps, should be made, not in laying out a townsite, nor by planning a credo for choice spirits, but by recognizing the community of idealism which already exists, where we are, as we are, and giving its pattern a more conscious and imaginative expression. Perhaps we are not ready for salvation, on the terms we want and will accept it. Utopia, it may be, is a condition which must be unsought before it can be attained.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

THE recent supreme Court Decision invalidating the "released time" program for pupils of public schools in Champaign, Illinois, focusses interest on the problem of teaching moral codes and values to the young. There is no doubt whatever that many parents are justified in feeling that the "scientific" tone of public instruction has tended increasingly to discourage in children a respect for religious values—which may be defined as all counsels for the subordination of self-interest to the end of establishing a universal brotherhood or communion among men.

The parent who vaguely states that he wants his child to have "some" religion usually means that he wants the child to have a wider view of life than one circumscribed by purely personal desires. Such a parent is typical; he may not insist on a special denomination; he only wants his child to be encouraged in the development of "ideals" for which he will courageously sacrifice and which in the long run may bring him more happiness than power or wealth. When the churchmen of a community unite to provide week-day opportunity for the child to receive a little religious leavening in association with his regular studies, such a parent will probably feel that released time for religious instruction is "a good thing." And a number of school boards have apparently felt the same way, for such programs are being carried on in nine states of the United States and Hawaii. But the Supreme Court has decided that this is not a good thing at all but a bad thing—and the Supreme Court, we think, is right.

A child does not learn to love, respect and sacrifice for others by becoming affiliated with a religious denomination. He may feel a temporary sense of identity with those who attend his church, and he may be told by his religious teacher that Jesus commands us to love all men because all men are like unto each other, but what he actually *sees* is that he is not like all men because not all men belong to his church. His embryonic efforts to embody religious precepts in daily activity will be soon confronted by the dilemma fostered by all Christian sectarianism—the clash between the "Christ-life" and the conceits of exclusiveness and self-righteousness.

Racial problems are very closely allied to sectarianism. In his or her earliest years, a child is never conscious of racial divisions until informed of them by parents. Black, brown, red, yellow and white are treated alike. Each is a distinct individual and appeals to the child according to attractiveness of personality. (Here we have, perhaps, the clearest example of the fact that children's attitudes are often superior to social attitudes.) With sectarianism it is the same. It makes no difference to a child what denomination claims the allegiance of a playmate's parents—unless and until attitudes at home give him the feeling that differences of religious faith erect certain barriers to mutual trust and appreciation. So it is possible that the parents and the School Boards who translate their high-minded concern for the child's introduction to "transcendental ideals" into such mechanisms as the released-time program are unwittingly providing the seeds for divisive social attitudes. This is particularly true in those cases where the parent informs the child that "*We*" are Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, or some other. The "we" is dangerous because the child in such instances may affiliate himself with a certain sect through institutional or parental pressure.

Concurring with the majority decision, Justice Frankfurter raised considerations that have important bearing on education. He observed: "In no activity of the State is it more vital to keep out divisive forces than in its schools. . . . 'The great American principle of eternal separation' . . . is one of the vital reliances of our Constitutional system for assuring unities among our people stronger than our diversities." It is clear that the Supreme Court recognizes that the original intent of the framers of the United States Constitution

was to *discourage sectarianism.* In the mind of Jefferson, for instance, the essence of all American education should be the development of a non-denominational attitude toward every phase of life. The prohibitions which he designed to prevent any possible alliance between church and state were not alone to keep a particular religious sect from controlling the cultural life of the majority, but also to uphold the ideal of non-sectarianism. The greatest religion of all is the affirmation that all men and women and all children are brothers. This religion is preached by those who refuse to recognize the value of separatism in religion, and practiced by seeking to rid one's own mind of the tendency to think in institutional terms.

It is true, however, that modern secular education lacks a rational basis for idealism. There is no answer to this problem except the one which will be forthcoming when more men and women are impelled to become truly "religious" *as individuals.* And until the strength of non-sectarian religion is made manifest by the majority of teachers, parents and pupils, there will be many who are unable to see why it is not a "good thing" to hand over the matter of "religion" to some respectable sect. Here we can come back again to the word "soul"—the soul, which in its most enduring aspirations, speaks a universal language. No sect, as such, has ever been able to speak that language. If we were to begin by allowing Gandhi's principle of "no religion higher than truth" to permeate our own minds, we would see ample reason for applauding the Supreme Court in its Champaign, Illinois decision. And we would perhaps seek to embody the same universal ideal which Gandhi embodied in action before the world. This is the solution, and the only solution to the problem of materialism and self-aggrandizement as reflected in the shallow perspectives of so many of our teachers. They, in turn, are "shallow" precisely because they are the victims of long centuries of a sectarianism which uprooted all *natural* religion by stultifying the philosophizing and idealizing faculties of the human mind.

FRONTIERS
THE PEACE WE NEED

IT is the custom of thoughtful men, after a great war, to sum the total of destruction in lives lost, wealth and resources dissipated, cities ruined, and to attempt to measure somehow the aftermath of famine and disease. In 1940, a statistician was quoted by the New York *Times* as estimating that the loss of life due to the first World War was somewhere between 25,000,000 and 35,000,000—fatalities of which only about half occurred in battle or from wounds, the rest being caused by the ravages of disease related to the war, notably the pandemic of influenza. In world War II, battle deaths alone reached the staggering total of 10,000,000 and the accompanying destruction and starvation, both East and West, were—and are—almost incalculable.

But these statistics are not cited in order to enlarge upon the tragedy of war. This task, it may be expected, will be carefully and adequately performed by sociologists whose final computations will not be different in kind from the warnings given to the nations of the world a few years ago, before the last war began. We are here concerned with suggesting the effects of an entirely different sort of conflict—one that is seldom thought of in connection with war at allÑyet a conflict which involves casualties that may be even more costly to civilization than the physical deaths, so easy to tabulate, of modern war.

We speak of the conflict between science and religion—a struggle in which every victory seems finally to turn into defeat. In the intellectual war between science and religion, science has clearly been the aggressor since the sixteenth century. The first great scientific triumph was in the demonstration by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton that all physical events are capable of accurate mathematical description. The second march of progress took place in the nineteenth century, with the victory of the doctrine of evolution over the theological version of creation. Finally, in the twentieth century, the theories of Freud, Einstein, and various psychic researchers have combined to confuse the simplicity of both the theological and scientific viewpoints, and neither the impact nor the meaning of their discoveries is sufficiently understood to make brief generalizations about them of any particular value. Our present interest is to suggest that the inability of modern thought to assimilate the scientific contributions of the twentieth century is due in large part to the fact that progress in science, from the sixteenth century on, has been "progress" only from a technological viewpoint, and that religiously and philosophically, it has been an ideological *war*, with all the disaster, mutilation and impoverishment that war entails.

The antagonism of the Church to the pioneers of modern science was solidly based on recognition that a description of natural phenomena which depended upon mathematics—instead of upon the irrational will of God—was a direct challenge to the theological doctrine of power (it all belongs to God) and the preferred position of the Church in administering that power. What had once been simply a theological controversy, a thousand years before, between Augustine and Pelagius, was now revived in much more threatening form. Pelagius had dared to claim that power was distributed equally among all men, through his doctrine of free will—a dangerous teaching which logically eliminated the institution of the Church as the dispensary of God's power to give salvation. Augustine fired his theological salvos at Pelagius, condemned him as a heretic, and increased God's power to the sole and absolute force in Nature. For the millennium that followed, the Church remained in this position of supreme authority. There was God, the All-Powerful; there was Matter, the inert stuff from which all independent energy and life had been subtracted and handed to God; and there were all the creatures of the earth, made out of matter by God, themselves innately powerless, helpless without divine favor, which was, of

course, obtained only through the intermediary of the Church. When the ideologists of modern science found themselves successful in discrediting the theories of physical causation taught by the Church—Ptolemy's astronomy, Aristotle's notions of motion—it was easy for them to free themselves of all religious authority by dropping God out of the cosmos entirely and devoting their attention to what was left—dead, inert matter, and the mathematical formulas of Galileo, Kepler and Newton.

The issue between the Church and the early scientists was never a question of spiritual idealism versus materialism as the "true" philosophy. The issue related to freedom and power. If the Church, by an obliging act of self-destruction, had sided with Pelagius instead of with Augustine at the dawn of the Middle Ages, there would have been no theological tyranny, perhaps no Middle Ages, and certainly no anti-scientific dictatorship in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And there would have been no scientific opposition to the practical pantheistic religion implied by the heresiarch Pelagius, had he been able to resist the institutional authority of Augustine. As it happened, the war of science with theology, while it began, not against the universal spirit but against spiritual monopoly, ended with anti-spiritual atheism and the amoralism of nineteenth- and twentieth-century biology.

There are many ways to analyze or evaluate the conflict between science and religion, but none, we think, of any importance except that which begins with the proposition that human freedom is the highest good, and judges all history and conclusions on this ground. It is, perhaps, the one self-evident truth of both individual and collective experience. Throughout the past, whenever a theory of life, a religion or a science, has attempted to restrict human freedom and to locate final authority outside the individual man, rival theories and revolutions have been the result. Ideologies, whether religious or scientific, ascent to dominion over the minds of men in the name of human freedom; but when they are found to betray this cause, they are rejected and cast down and new social institutions, believed to be more favorable to liberty, raised on their ruins.

This process, it will be said, is inevitable, and so it may be, but what ought to be questioned is whether or not the excesses in destruction and suffering which seem a part of the process are equally necessary. In the present century, for example, the wars of irreligion have been as inexcusable, as bloody and immeasurably more destructive than the wars of religion. The tyranny of unbelief is as arbitrary and brutalizing as the tyranny of belief. The aimlessness of modern life, the heartbreaking loneliness of human beings massed together in both war and peace, driven from accidental, unwanted birth to unmeaning, inevitable death—animated solely by primeval instinctive drives, beset by conditionings—condemned without choice by the doctrine that the universe is without purpose, informed that the voice of intuition is a dead echo of cultural accretions, that freedom of the spirit is a witch-doctor's invention: where, indeed, is the "progress," scientific or otherwise, in this?

Within the year, a thoughtful critic of the scientific world-view has asked: Why, if our men of science are so firmly opposed to the idea of miracles, to any sort of divine intervention in the processes of nature and the affairs of men, do they insist upon picturing for us a world in which neither Nature nor man can get along without miracles? Why, by this distorted and impossible account of scientific "reality," do they *invite* the fanatics of irrational religion and psychic emotionalism to regain their authority over humanity's will to believe? Why not a Philosophy, a Religion of Nature, instead?

It is time for a fundamental reform in the teaching of science, if we are to avoid the catastrophe of a blind return to dogmas which men have been made to believe are the only alternatives to the moral sterility of scientific

theory. The folly of teaching scientific materialism as though it were revealed religion is everywhere evident, and if the schools and higher educational institutions will not undertake this reform, it must be done by individuals, by parents and by teachers who see beyond the horizons of academic orthodoxy, and who will teach and explain science in its true terms of the striving of the human spirit to know and, most of all, to be free. There have been such teachers of science, as for example, Henry Fairfield Osborn, on the subject of Evolution. He wrote:

> Evolution takes its place with the gravitation law of Newton. It should be taught in our schools simply as Nature speaks to us about it, and entirely separated from opinions materialistic or theistic, which have clustered about it. *This simple direct teaching of Nature is full of moral and spiritual force, if we keep the element of human opinion out of it. The moral principle inherent in evolution that nothing can be gained in this world without an effort; the ethical principle inherent in evolution is the evidence of beauty, of order, and of design in the daily myriad of miracles to which we owe our existence.*

Almost none of the truly great scientists were materialists. Copernicus and Galileo were inspired by Phthagorean mathematics, Kepler was a mystical cosmologist, Newton pervaded his thinking with the idealism of the Cambridge Platonists and the religious philosophy of Jacob Boehme. Lyell and Darwin conceived their labors for evolutionary theory as acts of piety. These men and others like them intended no harm to the spirit of true religion, nor would their discoveries and theories ever have served the purposes of materialism had the defenders of dogma been able to see in the new unfolding knowledge of Nature the manifest of universal soul. It was the war against scientific discovery which in time infected the zeal of the movement for natural investigation with the same crusading spirit as its intolerant enemies, and at last made of the search for truth a partisan struggle on behalf of atheistic denial.

This is the war which has corrupted mankind with a low opinion of itself, which has schooled scholarship and research in opportunism, which has degraded the genius of free inquiry and enslaved scientific truth-seekers to the new totalitarians of the State. On every hand, we hear it said that men are in bondage to fear, that they long for "security" but do not know how to get it and are beginning to believe that it is not to be had. We hear, in short, the latest version of the Original Sin, of the absolute sovereignty of outside powers—the doctrine that human failure and impotence are rooted in the nature of things. And if, as the title of a recent book suggests, "ideas have consequences," what can we expect of a race of men who acquiesce in this ignominious dispensation?

What are the casualties of a war which takes our lives compared to the casualties of a war which destroys our capacity for idealism? If we can end the war between science and religion, we may discover, happily and wonderingly, that there is nothing left to fight about at all.