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GREAT QUESTIONS: VIII

THERE are various historical mysteries—the age-long suffering of the Jews, the dark, self-devouring fate of the German people, the somnolent cycle of the Orient,—now come to a close,—and the extraordinarily impressive *group dignity* of fragments of ancient races and cultures. We do not know how to penetrate these mysteries, save by speculations which take unrecallable flight from the ground of present knowledge. A more urgent mystery, however, is closer at hand—the mystery of the dying out of natural faith—and this mystery we should like to investigate.

It is easy to be tempted by the lure of this exploration. All one has to do is to turn back a century, and read Thoreau, Emerson, and Whitman. The earth, the sea, the stars, the forests, lakes and rivers have not changed since Whitman's time. The root of the inspiration of these men has not died away. It is we who have changed, who have lost a living touch with the living essence of nature, who no longer hear the secret harmonies of the music of the spheres—whose hearts, like the Ancient Mariner's, have turned dry as dust; whose life, like Macbeth's, seems a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing.

The guilt of the present spreads like a primeval stain, darkening the hours before they are born. Our poets are men of despair, our patriots architects of destruction. Our prophets call upon sickly millions to repair to the worm-eaten stalls of ancient orthodoxy. These are the logics which find our reason receptive, not the dreams of minds unshackled by fear.

Yet, only a century ago, Walt Whitman turned the world into a glorious, helter-skelter cosmos, pregnant with every sort of god and hero. Here, indeed, is a great historical mystery: Why have we lost this grand capacity for optimism? What has become of such titanic imaginings? Whitman bore—he bore, not wrote—a great chapter in the history of the unfolding human spirit. He was a Buddha in the Yankee vernacular, a Spinoza of the mill and the threshing machine. Never was a poet so suited to the spirit of his age, and never did a poet give so much genius *to* his age.

Whitman spoke as a man of the masses, yet a man who was wholly free. In "A Child's Amaze," he wrote:

> Silent and amazed, even when a little boy,
> I remember I heard the preacher every Sunday put God in his statements,
> As contending against some being or influence.

And in "Laws for Creations":

> What do you suppose Creation is?
> What do you suppose will satisfy the Soul, except to walk free, and own no superior?
> What do you suppose I would intimate to you in a hundred ways, but that man or woman is as good as God?
> And that there is no God any more divine than Yourself?
> And that is what the oldest and the newest myths finally mean?
> And that you or any one must approach Creations through such laws?

Then, in "Walt Whitman":

> And I say to mankind, Be not curious about God,
> For I, who am curious about each, am not curious about God;
> (No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God and about death)
> I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand Got not in the least,
> Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself.
> Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
> I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then;

In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass;
I find letters from God dropt in the street—and every one is signed by God's name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know that whereso'er I go,
Others will punctually come forever and ever.

Some say that Whitman was an uneven poet, and so he was—but what would you from the nineteenth-century United States? His unevenness belonged to his age, but his vision belongs to the ages. It is the touch of his time in Whitman which makes his portal to eternity the more accessible:

All truths wait in all things;
They neither hasten their own delivery, nor resist it;
They do not need the obstetric forceps of the surgeon;
The insignificant is as big to me as any;
(What is less or more than a touch?)

* * *

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars,
And the pismire is equally perfect, and a grain of sand, and the egg of the wren,
And the tree toad is a chef-d'oeuvre for the highest,
And the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven, . . .

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained;. . . .
They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
They to not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
Not one is dissatisfied—not one demented with the mania of owning things;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago;
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole world.

Whole truths, one finds in Whitman, and here and there a half-truth to make his verses boyish, roguish, and amusing. But throughout all is the sonorous beat of affirmation—of strength, courage, and joyous honesty. Whitman is surely kin to the unknown ancient who shaped the great pantheistic song, *The Bhagavad-Gita*, who found the Protean touch of the Highest in everything in earth and in the skies; and he has a claim of descent, too, from the one who said,

I, Buddha, who wept with all my brothers' tears,
Whose heart was broken by a whole world's woe,
Laugh and am glad, for there is Liberty!

Whitman was a man without self-righteousness or the disease of pride. He could write, in 1860, "To Him Who Was Crucified," which is alone enough to rank him with the immortals, and in the same year declare his fellowship, as Jesus did, with "You Felons on Trial in Courts"—

I feel I am of them—I belong to these convicts and prostitutes myself,
And henceforth I will not deny them—for how can I deny myself?

A universal poet like Whitman has to be read like the Book of Nature, with an eye to paradox and hidden meaning. If this were not so, then all the truths the world needs to know would be spread around as copybook maxims, and the great, struggling, teeming earth long since have been swallowed up by an impatient Nirvana which found intolerable a Creation in which self-discovery was only a matter of turning pages.

What of the "mystery"? Whitman seems to have taken up all our space. This, perhaps, is just as well, for mysteries cannot be bidden to unravel themselves. Yet there is something to think about in the conjury of ideas that even a little reading of Whitman produces. For ourselves, we confess to the fancy that Whitmans cannot be born only once—the breed is too precious to mankind. A man who can make a living structure of his dreams and then live in it as a habitable place is a man who can help to reform an age. Such men have lived in the past, and they will, we think, be born again. If this is only an echo of Carlyle's "Great Man" theory of history, we are willing to accept the charge, so long as there be added

Whitman's doctrine of the greatness that abides in every man or woman. This, then, makes the mystery, that we have learned to hate, instead of to love, ourselves; and hating ourselves, we have done hateful things to one another, so that we no longer feel en rapport with lovers of men like Whitman—Whitman and all the others. To love one another is no easy thing. It is only easy to talk about loving one another. Really to love, one must adopt other planks found in Whitman's platform, to re-create our lives out of a living faith in one another.

Letter from
CENTRAL EUROPE

VIENNA.—Austria's economic circumstances have never been favourable since 1919, but they became even worse when National Socialism took over the German government in 1933. The fact that German industries gained new vitality from this change had the effect, for instance, of reducing Austrian exports to the Balkan countries. But the main reason for the Austrian crisis was probably the intention of the German government to isolate Austria. Because Austrian officials did not obey the orders of the Germans, the latter passed an ordinance requiring everyone wanting a holiday at an Austrian skiing center or summer resort to pay an extra 1000 Reichmarks before leaving Germany. No wonder the Austrian tourist towns and hotels remained empty, for most of the visitors had been German.

The more German economic life improved, the more some members of the Austrian population blamed their government for the calamity. Finally, the leaders of the Christian-Social Party, seeing no hope except in copying part of the National-Socialist dictatorship, sought a semi-autocratic government. In place of the SA and SS in Germany, they established battalions of storm-troopers, and the Socialist (Marxist) Party answered with the formation of similar volunteer units. Soon they were fighting in the streets. It is said that the leader of the Christian-Social battalions, Prince Starhemberg, not only outlawed the Socialist units, but declared some of the "Socialist rebels" guilty of high treason and had them shot.

When the National-Socialists assumed power in Austria in 1938, they had no sympathy for either of these parties. Prince Starhemberg departed from Europe, and the National-Socialists confiscated his properties.

The point of repeating this "past history" lies in the fact that the present Austrian Government—after the capitulation of the National-Socialist Germany in 1945—enacted a law providing that all those who had been robbed by the Gestapo or other Nazi authorities were to have their possessions returned. In due course, the Austrian State Court decided a few weeks ago that Prince Starhemberg, like anyone else who had lost his property to the Nazis, is entitled to have it back. This decision was accompanied by a declaration that the Court had taken every possibility into consideration, concluding that its decision was the only possible one.

Ordinarily, most Austrians would probably not have taken much notice of the matter, since Prince Starhemberg has for many years been living somewhere in South America and has become a rather uninteresting person. But the Socialist Party, since 1945 in coalition with the Austrian *Volkspartei* (a development out of the former Christian-Social Party), made the sensational charge in its newspapers that the decision of the Court was a slap in the face, and that the Party would leave the government, sending its members into the streets to demand new elections, unless this court ruling were anulled. Actually, it was anulled, for practical purposes, through a compromise reached by the two parties in power. They created a "Lex Starhemberg," establishing that the Prince receives his properties only theoretically—in practice, he will not be registered as owner; and that a public manager will administer the Starhemberg estates in his behalf, with registration to depend upon a special decision of the Government, and only in the public interest'

The quarrel as to whether Starhemberg was a good man or a bad one (as politician) has not yet ended in the Austrian press. But for the impartial observer, this is not the issue. Most important is the fact that the clear intent of the law has been frustrated by a new law, devised by political parties, to make an "exception" in the case of Prince Starhemberg. This is the sort of expediency which both these parties once fought to the last, when it was practiced by Dictators.

There is an amusing irony in the comment of a socialist paper on the whole affair, which declared that, after all, this expropriation may be regarded as fully legal, since the private property of every single German, invested in any country, was taken from him by an Allied Ordinance, with the special sanction of the government of the United States, and where will be found a more democratically thinking nation than the U. S. A.?

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
PERIODICAL REVIEW

WE are sometimes persuaded that the West has become either too brutal or too intelligent to be called a "Christian" civilization. But then, recalling the Christian wars of the past, one can hardly complain of brutality as "unchristian"; and, turning the pages of the *Christian Century*, that estimable weekly of the Protestant faith, one finds so much both Christian and intelligent that to suggest that Christian attitudes are being outgrown may sound more than a bit arrogant. In any event, the *Christian Century* is certainly representative of much that is best in modern Christian thought.

The May 7 issue, for example, notes quietly but disgustedly that the behavior of the American servicemen in Japan is leaving an aftermath of humiliation and sorrow in many thousands of Japanese homes. Recently, the *CG* editorial relates, Mrs. Tamaki Uemura, "probably the best known woman in Japan aside from the empress," addressed a letter to Mrs. Matthew B. Ridgway, wife of the commander of the U.S. military forces in Asia, pleading that something be done to end the seduction of Japanese girls. There are staggering figures, such as the fact that "Japanese girls seduced by American soldiers have borne 200,000 illegitimate children and deserted many of them." The letter was published in the largest Japanese monthly, so that it could hardly be ignored.

This is not remarkable, of course, nor a peculiarity of only American young men. It probably would have happened with any army of occupation. Nor is the birth of illegitimate offspring a major tragedy in itself, judging from the attainments reached by some *natural*—a fitting adjective—children. What is peculiarly awful in this situation is the brutalization of both men and women (many of the children were deserted by their mothers—from shame or indifference, one supposes) by the mixture of barracks standards of relations between the sexes with the mental attitudes of subjection and compliance so often found among a conquered people. And in its response to matters of this sort, the wholly barbarous character of the military is revealed. "The Army," of necessity, takes such things "for granted." A shrug, a masculine grin, perhaps, will be the only honest reaction of the military authorities. One recalls with wry feelings the extraordinarily righteous arguments of those who defended a war to extinction with Japan—with anybody we might have to fight: "What would you do if someone attacked your sister, mother, grandmother?" There was no end to the sacredness of womanhood, in those days. . . . "Attack" and "seduction" are not the same, of course, but, thinking it over, what has happened in Japan probably proves the case of those people, who would doubtless insist that this is what the war with Japan prevented from happening here. . . .

Is there so great a difference, whether it happens there, or here?

This is not a very nice question to ask, especially in the United States, which has had long practice in the double standard of racial morality. The brave and gallant South boasts a legendary regard for the virtue of its women—a regard which always comes to mind when some industrious sociologist produces figures on the number of "Negroes" who have so much white blood that they are able to "pass" over into the white population without anyone knowing it. The number of such "Negroes" has been conservatively estimated at 10,000 a year. Naturally, this raises the question of parentage, and the matter of the virtue of "black" womanhood. Curious, isn't it, that for a black man to father a white woman's children is regarded as the most hideous crime imaginable, in some states in the Union, and the thought of marriage between the two only adds an equal portion of speechless rage to the defender of white womanhood, while for a white man to father the children of a black woman is felt to be no more than "natural"—at least it has been natural for a century or more, judging from the extensive infusion of white blood in the Negro population.

All of which points the question: Where in the world will the bold, spirited, and free Americans come out, when the moral law of compensation is done with them? Miscegenation is the least of the problem, for this may be simply part of a long-term

biological transition—a mingling of the races in the production of some new stock of a future humanity, a better stock, perhaps, if the prowess of Negro athletes is any indication of the hereditary characteristics of their race. At any rate, marriage and procreation are personal matters—that is, matters of personal responsibility—and no judgments other than personal ones are in order.

The hypocrisy of the double standard, however—this is a social and racial crime of immense proportions. Think of the state of mind and feeling of those Japanese girls, of the Negro girls and women. And think of the feelings of their men, their sense of impotence, and of the indifference, finally, to which their impotence may lead them as to matters that once were thought to involve a crucial issue of self-respect. Further, think of the children. The children will belong to another generation, of course. Whether their mixed blood will be worn as a lifelong scar, or whether it will be forgotten in a world which has learned to ignore such distinctions remains to be seen. But unless the people of the United States make dramatic progress in the direction of a world that ignores such distinctions, the sufferings caused to these children by social condemnation will be on the heads of the people of the United States. The United States claimed it was fighting to preserve civilization, and the United States won the war. Even the *Christian Century*, tragically, but insistently, claimed we had to try to win the war.

This, then, is one of the things we were fighting for; at least, this is a by-product of our civilization and our victory. The *Christian Century* editorial suitably concludes: "The Uemura letter hardly suggests that the American occupation, for which such great things have been claimed, is ending 'on a note of triumph'."

The *Christian Century* is also often good on theological issues. We are not what you would call devoted students of modern theology, but a passing notice of what the theologians are talking about—or fighting about—may be worth the time it takes. In the issue for April 9, "Simeon Stylites," the *Century's* quizzical, whimsical, and often amusing columnist, discusses what he calls "Western Union Theology"—meaning the Easter sentiments devised by Western Union for cut-rate telegrams to one's loved ones. Simeon comments:

> I was struck by the fact that not one message in the whole list of thirty conveyed the slightest idea of what Easter is all about. Not one. Easter was watered down until it was merely a carnival for the telegraph company. Now, of course, why shouldn't there be forms for sending best wishes for Easter, done up in the most glamorous adjectives? It's a natural thing, a convenience. No need to have an outline of Christian theology. Granted. Still, the wonder comes up whether this is not a visible symbol of the growing secularization of Christian holy days, the degradation of holy days into holidays, in which the original meaning is completely submerged.

Simeon's point seems well made, but if his argument does not make it, his sample "message"—"Here's hello from your Easter bunny. May your day be bright and sunny"—completes the picture.

Simeon is wise, it seems to us, in refraining from caustic remarks about Western Union. He is simply mournful about the whole affair. If a non-Christian, however, may put in a word, it is surely important to go further in fixing responsibility for the inane sentimentality which has grown up around the great religious festivals of the West. Simeon complains about Western Union Theology, but in other departments of this issue of the *CC* the editors complain about the theology of the delegates to a recent conference of the U.S.A. Member Churches of the World Council of Churches—or, more accurately, they complain that the outcome of the conference, which was held to consider ways of communicating to the lay public the theme, "Jesus Christ as Lord, the only hope of both the church and the world," was pretty much of a failure. After the meeting was over, the *CC* editorial correspondent reports—

> the only thing that was dear beyond dispute was that the churches deeply disagree on the meaning of Christian hope. Unless that disagreement can be resolved as it has not been resolved to date, the question as to how the message of the churches can be unitedly presented answers itself.

> Here is a state of affairs whose seriousness it is impossible to exaggerate. If the churches have become an impassable obstacle to the world's discovery that its only hope is in Jesus Christ, what reason have they for existence? Is it possible that in this fateful hour of history, when despair creates such fear that frantic men .plunge to their ruin seeking hope in illusory secular utopias, the Christian hope is so overlaid with controversy that as of now the churches have no essential common message to give mankind?

The *CC* editorial writer now proceeds to explain—or to attempt to explain—the sources of the disagreement and the origins of the confusion. We confess an inability, as much an unwillingness, to trail along, for more or less the same reason that Henry P. Van Dusen, president of Union Theological Seminary, gives in respect to what he says is the third of "the three main ideas" involved in the conception of Christian hope. This third idea is "the specific expectation of the second coming of Christ to fulfill God's plan for the world." Mr. Van Dusen, the *CC* writer relates,

> declared that while he and W. A. Visser't Hooft, the general secretary of the World Council, have worked together for 25 years, "I haven't the slightest idea what he means when he speaks of the second coming."

Can you altogether blame Western Union for its folksy little Easter program?

The two other ideas, in Mr. Van Dusen's summary, are (1) "What Christians believe as to the immortality of individual souls," and (2) "what the regnancy of Jesus Christ means concerning the fate of the world, of the historical order in space and time." We, also, are interested in the immortality of individual souls (less so in the "regnancy of Jesus Christ"), but it is not easy to determine what the churches or Christians really believe about immortality. The *Britannica's* Christian authority (14th ed.) says simply: "What ultimate harmonies, if such there are in store, will come in God's good time; it is not for us to anticipate them, or lift the veil where God has left it down." Turning, however, to the ever-useful *Christian Century*, we find its Easter editorial more certain. It starts out by noting the prevalent reference to "nature cycles"—the rebirth of Spring, etc.—at Easter time. It remembers Plato's discussion of the soul, calling his arguments a "frail raft," then turns to the supposedly more reliable "word of God." Thus:

> In the thought of Greece the keyword is immortality. In the New Testament the keyword is resurrection—not a bare dogma of the survival of some vague and intangible essence, but the re-establishment of personal life on the farther side of the grave, the conviction that the total personality, invested by God's gift with a perfect organism, passes on and encounters God. This is the substance of the Easter faith. It meets a deep, even if inarticulate, craving of the Easter spirit. It acts like a tonic, lifting life to loftier levels of dignity and meaning and inspiring all who share it with courage and hope.

We can hardly begrudge the *CC* editors the inspiration they find in the idea of "total resurrection," even though, for others, the idea may be somewhat more difficult to grasp. Perhaps, like Tertullian's, their faith grows the stronger because its source is so very hard to understand. And here, perhaps, is a clue to the "secularization" of the holy days of Christianity and the resort of Western Union to formulas more comprehensible, even if less profound. In any event, we would just as soon have the resurrection left out of greeting cards and telegrams, and, by a parity of good taste, may thank our stars that Plato remains unknown to the Western Union poets.

The outcome of reflection, here, seems to be that the Christian faith, as represented by its most intelligent and scholarly and well-intentioned protagonists, finds itself so deeply involved with medieval and pre-medieval concepts, that to make it make sense to the common man, or even to Christian theologians is a wholly impossible task. Christianity has sublime ethics to offer, but no metaphysics worthy of the name, no profound philosophical principles, no deep inspiration to afford to the *hungry minds* of our time. We say this with the greatest of sympathy and respect for the men who write the *Christian Century*, from whose honest and searching words these conclusions are very largely drawn.

COMMENTARY
ALIEN LAND LAW REVOKED

THE OPEN FORUM, organ of the Southern California branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, in its May 10 number reports the downfall of the California Alien Land Law, which has been declared unconstitutional by a decision of the California Supreme Court. The high court ruled against the Land Law despite earlier favorable decisions by both the California Supreme Court and the Supreme Court of the United States.

The California Land Law made it illegal for persons ineligible to American citizenship to hold title to land in California. Passed in 1920, its purpose was then openly explained by the Attorney General of California as "to prohibit the enjoyment or possession of, or dominion over, the agricultural lands of the State by aliens ineligible to citizenship—in a practical way to prevent ruinous competition by the Oriental farmer against the American farmer." The basis of the Act was quite candidly said to be "race undesirability." It struck at the notable success of alien Japanese in farming California land.

The present decision of the California Supreme Court, removing this law from among California's statutes, is a notable victory for justice, due largely to previous efforts of the American Civil Liberties Union. The Court admitted that the Act is irreconcilable with recent decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court—including decisions in cases brought to the Supreme Court by the ACLU—and concluded that "the statute violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment."

The majority opinion of the California Court declare d

> The California alien land law is obviously designed and administered as an instrument for effectuating racial discrimination, and the most searching examination discloses no circumstances justifying classification on that basis. There is nothing to indicate that those alien residents who are racially ineligible for citizenship possess characteristics which are dangerous to the legitimate interests of the state, or that they, as a class, might use the land for purposes injurious to public morals, safety or welfare. Accordingly, we hold that the alien land law is invalid as in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment.

While, ironically enough, the provisions of the Oriental Exclusion Act (barring immigration) no longer apply to Chinese and certain other Asiatic peoples, it does apply to the Japanese for the reason that this Act was amended during the war with Japan. The present decision, however, affords a measure of economic justice to the Japan-born farmers who have contributed so much to the progress of agriculture in California.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WE have often written, here, of the failure of parents to show sufficient respect for the capacity for responsibility in their children. Now we feel an obligation to preach *against* setting standards of conduct for the young so high that the children tend to feel themselves failures if they cannot consistently keep up to them. The word "consistently," we think, is the crux of the matter, and offers a way of escape from the theoretical dilemma involved in the suggestion that parents sometimes expect *both* too much and too little from their children.

Each child, we might say, comes to maturity through a series of cyclic surges of deepening perception. Just as the tiny baby may look "wise as the ages" in one moment, and as but another animate creature in the next, so children have moments of great maturity and other moments of irresponsibility. When we read to children, we may hope that they will grasp some of the more profound meanings of worth-while literature, but we can hardly expect that just because a child at one time assimilates a complicated and subtle thought, or senses a moral reality, he must then be held up to censure if he cannot immediately embody his new-found knowledge in each one of his daily actions. The child's maturity is never complete, for it is not underlaid by the sort of consistency and balance which the discipline of experience brings.

How like children we ourselves are in this respect! We, too, though perhaps less unpredictably, resemble prisms in the changeable way in which we reflect the light of ideas. Just a turn of the hand—or the mind—and different colors of the spectrum are displayed. We seldom find ourselves able to respond to an intellectual or moral demand with exactly the same force on different occasions, so why should we expect this of our children? Of course, adults of strong character can be granted to possess a measure of real consistency, but such parents were long in developing the connecting links between perceptions and habits. The sum of it is, then, we think, that the noblest and most sublime ideas are not beyond the understanding of children, but that the young must grow up to a knowledge of what they wish to do with such ideas, and what they can do with them—in their own time. Ideas rule conduct, as the Buddha suggested when he said that "man is made of thought," but the rule of such a complicated kingdom as that of a youth's body, emotions, and environmental influences is not established overnight.

The outlook that seems best for all humans, young or old, is that each has from birth an inherent capacity for deep perception, high resolve, and soaring aspiration. Yet this is only a capacity. We cannot expect others to respond to all the challenges of life as if they were continually wise and inspired, for they are only wise and inspired part of the time, and parents are not always able to recognize those times. Thus acceptance of others becomes a dual acceptance—acceptance of frailty, but also acceptance of potential strength. When we set rigid standards for the young to follow, we are bound to trouble our relationships with them, for no one suddenly becomes perfect.

Consider the feelings that may be awakened in a child by our constant expectation that he live a perfect life: confused, and knowing that he cannot always be as "good" a boy as he thinks he is expected to be, he feels resentment against the adults who thus weigh him with psychological pressure. And because he is confused, he is not sure that the adults are altogether wrong in judging him adversely—perhaps there is something uniquely wrong in him, perhaps he has some fatal moral defect which makes being "good" all the time impossible; perhaps other children are able to accomplish this, or at least manage not to have such bad motives as he sometimes does.

In this depressing psychological soil can flourish the roots of innumerable neuroses. The child who feels himself a failure, unable to meet the challenge of living up to what is expected of him, becomes a desperate child. Whatever progress he does make may simply goad him with greater dissatisfaction, since by this means his attention is called to how near and yet so far away is adult approval. He may try frantically to prove that other boys and girls are "worse" than he is, just as have the votaries of most religions been afflicted by an overdeveloped sin-consciousness. We may note, here, that the parents who torture their children in this way may not themselves be at all "sin-conscious" in the orthodox sense. They may simply expect rapid and consistent progress, in school, in control of crying, in athletic achievement! But each child has natural individual limits for all these things, and each has its own time-scale for growth. Extravagant praise may alter this natural growing rate by encouraging the lethargy of self-satisfaction, but blame for not growing faster, even if unspoken, and only dimly sensed, can dry up the well of inward aspiration.

Worst of all, a child so haunted may be driven to concealment of feelings he does have and to a pretense of feelings he does not have. And if he continues in this manner for long, he comes to have less and less real individuality—the thing most worth having! He may lose individuality during the very period when he should be gaining it, because the strain of pretense may rob him even of the *knowledge that he is pretending.* Such a case is reviewed in *One Little Boy* by Dorothy Baruch. This child withdrew himself so far from reality that he actually became schizoid in many of his reactions, and years of the most expert care were needed to reawaken his faith in himself as someone who really didn't have to fear that he was "no good."

For these reasons, probably, psychologists keep repeating to the public that children must have "constant love" from their parents. One of the meanings of love, certainly, is acceptance, but it is *ungrudging acceptance* that the child really needs. His mistakes need not be condoned; they need to be accepted as part of the process of growth. The parent will on occasion do well to recount to the child some similar transgression committed in his own youth—an admission which is in no sense a license for further misdemeanors, but serves, instead, to encourage the thought that since the parent finally learned not to get into such troubles, he, the child, ought to be able to manage the same result. Actually, many parents feel that it is not possible for them to love the child just as completely, and in all the same ways, all the time. But they can always *accept* the child and his problems, that acceptance flowing out of a sort of philosophical compassion which smothers the petty feelings of disappointment in "our" child. In one very real sense they may be said to love the child the most when they are actually fighting intense personal unhappiness caused by his behavior—fighting it by being compassionate. At such times some parents have consciously imagined that "their" child is not "theirs" at all, but simply a youngster whose ignorance and lack of emotional balance had temporarily led him to unkindly, unpleasant, or destructive actions.

If the art of acceptance is practiced by parents, their love will flow more easily in those moments when the child is at his best. These high moments we may expect, and hope for—but we ought not to expect them to come at some particular time and in some particular way. We are able to ready ourselves for a full appreciation of them only when they do arrive, and perhaps, too, we can help the child, in our daily attitude, to retain the memory of those best times so that they may contribute to more and more of them in the future.

Our child is capable of anything *he* wills, eventually, but *he* must will it. He can take all the inspiration we can give him, if it really is "inspiration," but he will use it only as and when he makes it his own.

FRONTIERS

War Resistance

WE have been saving for weeks some remarkable quotations, wondering what to do with them. What *can* you do with extracts from an article written for the *American Legion Magazine* (January) by General-of-the-Army Douglas MacArthur, warning against the totalitarian threat in too great an eminence accorded to the Army and its leaders? We need not consider whether or not General MacArthur's statements were made for political reasons. Sufficient for the moment, certainly, is the unusual forthrightness and the essential message of the words themselves, for which we can only be grateful.

The New York *Herald Tribune* (Dec. 16) provides several quotations from this article, in which the General speaks of the need for tighter civilian control of foreign policy, "if the youth of our land is to avoid being corrupted into a legion of subserviency to the so-called military mind." He then gives reasons for opposing the sort of pressures which accompanied the recent army-inspired campaign for UMT:

> All this, while intended and designed to strengthen freedom's defense, carries within itself the very germs of freedom's destruction. For it etches the pattern of a military state which, historically under the control of professional military thinking in constant search for means toward efficiency, has found in freedom possibly its greatest single impediment. . . .
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> To avoid this historic pitfall, it is essential that civilian control over the citizen army be extended and intensified. . . .

The worst things about the "military mind" are obviously the habit of violence, the habit of punishment, and the habit of enslavement. Enough eruptions of these, we should say, make the totalitarian temper, and a man does not need to wear an army uniform to share it. We have all doubtless noted such items as the following, printed under the heading, "Detention Camps for U.S.," which appeared in the Los Angeles *Times* for Dec. 31:

> Atty. Gen. McGrath is quietly taking the first steps toward setting up detention camps for dangerous subversives in this country, should the need arise.
>
> It is a big-scale operation, providing for a possible roundup of thousands of potential spies and saboteurs. Federal prison labor already is at work or soon will be—on three major installations with a combined capacity for housing mote than 3000 persons.

We read such items, and perhaps some of us vaguely disapprove. We read MacArthur and approve his statement, but do we really recognize the most threatening trends of the times, converging as a conspiracy against civil liberties behind the excuse, "threat of war"? Perhaps we also need to hear from those peculiar individuals to whom the "threat of war" argument—the argument of self-protection—seems less important than the protection of the principle of civil rights.

Especially for those who are inescapably aware of the trend towards a "Garrison State," there is considerable logic in being on the mailing list of an organization like the War Resisters League, located at 5 Beekman Street, New York. The War Resisters League channels war disapproval into lobbying, letter writing, and fraternization among those who feel strong opposition to anything which strengthens the grip of the military on any country in the world. Both the War Resisters League *News* and the international quarterly, *The War Resister*, consistently provide information of a nature the public will seldom encounter elsewhere. These are "pacifist" organs, it is true, but much of their work and of that of the War Resisters League itself is easily justified solely on the basis of support to the cause of civil liberties.

The matter of protection for individual convictions, especially when they are "harmless," is of grave concern to every country making a pretense to democracy. And whatever else we learn from the reports of activities carried on by members of the WRI (War Resisters International), we gain from its publication a glimpse of minority groups in travail in many lands, and of vigorous efforts to come to their aid. For instance, the 1952 March-April issue of the WRL *News* describes efforts made to allow the deportation—or emigration—of French conscientious objectors (who have no legal status in France) to Sweden, where, as in Denmark, there is recognition of the rights of conscience-against-killing in wartime. Whether or not the Swedish government will assist this effort is another matter, but at least it is an interesting proposal, especially in relation to the increasingly popular idea of world citizenship. Perhaps Garry Davis could become a Swede. He probably wouldn't mind being a Swede if the Swedish government showed itself advanced enough to grant asylum to French war objectors. *The War Resister,* incidentally, tells us some interesting things about the Danes. Danish law requires some kind of service to the State, but for those who express conscientious objection to participation in war, the law also provides that such "alternative work must never serve any military purpose." So far, we are told, the law has been ministered in that spirit.

Those who take pride in the past record of the United States in relation to civil rights will view with alarm another item reported in the WRL *News.* It seems that some members of the American Legion, angered by recent Supreme Court decisions allowing American citizenship to foreign-born pacifists—opponents of both conscription and participation in war—have "been campaigning vigorously for legislation which would exclude conscientious objectors from citizenship." This would mean that persons who refused to support the Nazi regime by bearing arms for Hitler, those who served time in Italian prisons rather than serve Mussolini in Ethiopia, and those who refused to join Franco's army would be denied American citizenship! The Legionnaire campaign against pacifists recalls Hitler's denunciation of them in *Mein Kampf,* and the later Nazi policy of hunting down pacifists in all occupied countries, since, as Hitler had warned, they could easily constitute the greatest danger to his regime. One might expect the American Legion to appreciate such "dangerous" enemies of Hitler, but apparently the method they chose to resist totalitarianism is unacceptable!

Students of the early days of American history will remember the fervent hope of Washington, Jefferson, and Thomas Paine that America might become an "asylum" for all who desired to free themselves from the incessant threat of war which prevailed in Europe. Someone should tell the Legion a few of these things, and we can be sure the WRI and WRL will try to do it. Then, when one of our most popular generals views totalitarian trends at home with such emphatic alarm, the WRL may, at least temporarily, be regarded in a fairly respectable light!

The winter number of *The War Resister* also contains a portion of a speech by a British delegate to a War Resisters International conference held at Braunschweig, Germany, in 1951. The opinions offered dovetail nicely with the well-articulated views of Supreme Court Justice Douglas concerning the intrusion of U.S. military psychology in Asia. The British WRI delegate said:

> So far as there is any conflict between fundamental conceptions of the State, it is of particular importance to those who want to maintain the democratic way that the rights of the individual should be both emphasised and exercised. It may well be that the denial of full individual freedom is not an essential part of Communism and that once the Eastern fear of the West was removed the relationships between the State and the individual would

become more humanised. The amnesty for political prisoners and a change in the attitude to political offences in Yugoslavia is an indication of this. It is certain that we in the West should be on our guard against the opposite process—the increasing denial of individual freedom in the name of the security of the State. As examples I will quote (*a*) the refusal of visas by the British Government to delegates to conferences in Britain; the recent withdrawal of passports from two British citizens and the general political discrimination which is becoming more and more obvious. And (*b*) the whole question of conscription, as the most flagrant denial of the rights of conscience—but what outsider is capable of judging the conscience of another man? In their dilemma tribunals in Britain often demand some evidence of action to support an applicant's claims.

It is, therefore, supremely important that a man should allow his conscience not only to speak in the still small voice which he alone can hear, but through the actions which other people can see. In renouncing war a man is showing not only that he has the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong, but the power to renounce the wrong. He vindicates his manhood: he shows that he is a responsible person: he asserts his freedom: he helps to build up the really free society. Today when men have to meet afresh the growing dangers of totalitarianism, war-resistance assumes a new significance. By renouncing war, the conscientious objector also sets a limit to the dictator.

Suppose *this* "foreigner" wished to become an American citizen? Don't we suppose we might be able to stand him? Let's tell Gen. MacArthur to tell the American Legion to let the Supreme Court give citizenship to all those who similarly feel the need for opposing, with all their force, the trend toward military thinking. There will certainly come times when such individuals—even if they don't speak English—would be very handy to have around; a calm man is always of some use when the rest of us are excited.