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# THE OPEN COURT

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and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

FOUNDED BY EDWARD C. HEGELER

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PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, BY GILBERT STUART

*Frontispiece to The Open Court*

# THE OPEN COURT

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## THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF WASHINGTON

BY J. V. NASH

**N**O other character in American history ranks with Washington in the reverence accorded by generation after generation of his fellow citizens. The title "Father of His Country," spontaneously accorded him, has been accepted universally without question. Hardly had he been laid in his grave before the myth-makers began weaving legends about him; some of which, such as the cherry-tree story, though scrupulous historians have repeatedly exposed them as fictions, continue to flourish as luxuriantly as before.

Had such a character as Washington enacted a somewhat similar rôle in the history of a nation of antiquity, he would have attained, even before his death, to apotheosis as a god. Had he lived during the Middle Ages he probably would have been canonized after death. Certainly, so far as exalted personal virtue and devotion to the public weal are concerned, Washington was in no wise inferior to Louis IX of France, otherwise known as St. Louis; or to Joan of Arc, burned to death as a heretic but now a full-fledged saint of the Catholic Church.

That this supposition is not far-fetched is proved by the fact that only a few years ago a movement was reported as initiated among certain patriotic Episcopalians to have Washington duly canonized as the first official saint of their Church. The movement came to nothing, though the editor of an Episcopal weekly in editorial comment gravely remarked that the proposal was not so absurd as it might appear.

There is no doubt that Washington was a member, in good standing, of the Episcopal Church. But a great deal of mystery and speculation has surrounded the question of his private religious views. For Washington was baptized into the Episcopal Church when he was an infant of two months, at a time when that Com-

munion was the Established Church of Virginia, supported by public taxation, and in effect a department of the Government. His position, therefore, was quite different from that of an adult who joins a church as a result of a sincere conviction that he shares the creed of that church. Clearly, Washington's church membership helps us little in ascertaining his religious opinions; especially since, as we shall see later, he refused pointedly, as a grown man, to partake of the sacrament or even to kneel in prayer at church.

We are, consequently, thrown back upon his own statements and the testimony of others concerning his beliefs. Obviously, the testimony of others in a case like this must be approached cautiously. Unfortunately, statements by Washington himself which throw light upon his religious beliefs are painfully scarce. But as actions proverbially speak louder than words, we can perhaps with their help arrive at a fairly accurate understanding of Washington's attitude toward the Unseen.

The trouble is not that Washington wrote little. No other man of his day in American public life has left such voluminous records. In early life he began keeping a diary, which he conscientiously continued to the end, and which is now available in published form. Even greater in bulk is his correspondence; for Washington was a most industrious letter writer. "To correspond with those I love," he once remarked, "is one of my highest gratifications." His published correspondence and miscellaneous writings fill fourteen volumes; while a great store of unpublished letters and other papers is in the custody of the Library of Congress.

This vast accumulation of material from Washington's pen has been searched with the most painstaking care; yet in it all the name *Jesus Christ*, or even *Christ*, has not been found. The nearest approach to it is a single allusion, in 1783, to "the Divine author of our blessed religion"—a stereotyped phrase of little real significance. Nor is there the slightest reference to any personal religious experience. To be sure, God is sometimes mentioned, but usually as a vague "Providence" or as an even vaguer "Heaven."

In approaching our inquiry into Washington's spiritual development, it will be well to examine the religious environment into which he was born. As we have already noticed, the Episcopal Church was established by law in Virginia and all taxpayers were required to contribute to the support of its clergy; they were paid

largely in tobacco, which to a great extent took the place of currency in the economic system of that day in Virginia.

As is normally the case with established churches, the Episcopal Church in Virginia, at the time of Washington's birth, had fallen into sloth and corruption. The clergy led lives little different from those of the landed gentry; many of them even engaged in fox-hunting, gambling, and drinking. At best, the church was formal and official. Religious fervor—*enthusiasm*, as it was called—constituted there as in England a social error. It was relegated to illiterate tub-thumping fanatics of the dissenting sects. The gentry of Virginia belonged to the Established Church, which was a branch of the powerful, state-supported Church of England.

In order to avoid any appearance of prejudice, let us call as a witness to the state of religion in Virginia during the eighteenth century a prominent prelate of the Episcopal Church. Bishop Meade, whose father was Washington's military aide, published some astounding revelations on this subject. He wrote:

There was at this time not only defective preaching but most evil living among the clergy....many of them had been addicted to the race-field, the card table, the ball-room, the theatre—nay more, to the drunken revel. One of them had been for years the president of a jockey club. Another preached against the four sins of atheism, gambling, horse-racing, and swearing, while he practiced all of the vices himself. When he died, in the midst of his ravings he was heard hallooing the hounds to the chase....Infidelity became rife in Virginia, perhaps beyond any other portion of the land. The clergy, for the most part, were a laughing-stock or objects of disgust....in order to conceal the shame of the clergy from the younger ones and to prevent their loss of attachment to religion and the Church, the elder ones sometimes had to hurry them away to bed or take them away from the presence of these ministers when indulging too freely in the intoxicating cup.

Even Parson Weems, the myth-spinning early biographer of Washington, was a fiddler much in demand at dances.

It is only fair to add that, according to some contemporary accounts, the established Puritan Church of Massachusetts also had fallen into evil ways. A clergyman at Andover speaks of an ordination service at which he "was pained to see two aged ministers literally drunk and a third indecently excited by strong drink."

It is perhaps one of the most striking evidences of Washington's innate strength of character that he should have emerged unscathed from a religious environment of this type. At any rate, the lives led by the professional clergy in his day may have been a factor in instilling in his mind a personal distrust of orthodox religion. On the other hand, his temperament prevented any development of a mystical, subjective religiosity. For Washington was an almost perfect type of the extravert personality. In his open features we see nothing of the haunting melancholy that looks out from the unfathomable depths of Lincoln's eyes. He was one of those "once born" men described by William James, who feel no sense of spiritual maladjustment, who suffer no emotional *Sturm und Drang*, and who consequently never pass through the experience of rebirth or "conversion."

In terms of Hindu philosophy, Washington was a great *Karma Yogi*—one of those souls who attain to Mastership through the path of work and deeds nobly performed, rather than through intellectual or emotional realization.

Washington's education began under auspices even more dubious than his religious environment. For his first schoolmaster was a convicted felon, a man of some education who was among a shipload of convicts sent out from England to Virginia and sold to the colonists. The authority for this almost incredible statement is the Rev. Jonathan Boucher, an English clergyman engaged by Washington in later years as a tutor for his stepson. According to Dr. Boucher, "George, like most people thereabouts at that time, had no other education than reading, writing and accounts, which he was taught by a convict servant whom his father bought for a schoolmaster." Schools were few and far between, and probably this tutor was the best that the elder Washington could afford, for he had a large family by two successive marriages—or "ventures," as he whimsically termed them. From his mother, George could have acquired very little educationally. Paul Leicester Ford, in *The True George Washington*, declares that she was "illiterate and untidy, and, moreover, if tradition is to be believed, smoked a pipe."

Washington's formal education ended by the time he was sixteen. Yet he was destined to be numbered among the alumni of Harvard, which conferred an honorary degree upon him during the

Revolution. He also became Chancellor of William and Mary College, and in his will provided for the establishment of the George Washington University.

But the young Washington was not of a scholarly turn of mind. He mastered arithmetic, because he considered it of practical use, and his proficiency with figures served him well in after life. He was careless of grammar and spelling, though he took pains to develop his penmanship. In that respect his manuscripts are a delight to the eye. His achievement of beautiful handwriting must have been a severe task. For Washington was a big, hulking, awkward youth. Like Lincoln, he possessed immense muscular strength. His hands and feet were excessively large; he had to have gloves made to order, and he could bend an iron horseshoe. His height was about six feet, two inches, and in his prime he weighed 200 pounds. It is reminiscent of Lincoln, too, to note that as a youth he achieved fame as a wrestler and in the lifting of heavy weights. At an early age he became an expert horseman.

His father's death, when George was only eleven, left the widow almost penniless, with five children, the others younger than George. Most of the property went to two older half-brothers by a former marriage. There is a story that George was on the point of entering the British navy as a midshipman, at fifteen, but in response to his mother's entreaties abandoned this ambition. Shortly afterwards he went to Mount Vernon to live with his half-brother, Lawrence. The latter had had the benefit of an English education and had married into the wealthy Fairfax family, who now gave George his first employment as a surveyor.

At Mount Vernon, which he was destined to immortalize, George was taken into Virginia society life. He became familiar with fine dress, fox-hunting, dancing, gambling, drinking, and flirtation. Yet here again his character successfully withstood damage, though he had developed into a youth of strong physical passions.

Woodrow Wilson, in his biography of Washington, says that he "had the blood of a lover beyond his fellows." He ardently wooed several of the high-born Virginia belles, but with discouraging lack of success. After all, who was he? A "poor relation" of his half-brother, with no property of his own, and small prospects; moreover, because of his sketchy education he probably was lacking in social graces.

The prize that Washington finally drew from the marriage lottery was a widow of about his own age—Mrs. Martha Custis, the mother of four children, two of whom had died in infancy. Her first husband had left her wealthy; she brought to Washington 15,000 acres of land, \$100,000 in cash and bonds, and about 150 slaves. The widow needed an able manager for her estate, and Washington filled the bill; then, too, he was by now rising in the world, a man over whom Destiny was beginning to hover. They were married on January 6, 1759, when Washington was almost twenty-seven. The marriage brought quiet but real happiness to both.

Washington dearly loved children; unfortunately he was never to have any of his own, but on the two stepchildren he lavished a loving care. The girl, Martha, to whom he was tenderly devoted, had epileptic fits and died young. The only time that Washington appears to have knelt was when he fell sobbing to his knees over the cold body of his little "Patsy." To the boy, John Parke Custis, Washington gave every advantage; but the youth accomplished little and died in early manhood, leaving children. Two of these, a boy and a girl, the Washingtons adopted and brought up. The boy, George Washington Parke Custis, became the father-in-law of Robert E. Lee. The girl, Eleanor P. (Nellie) Custis, grew into a famous beauty, was for many years a member of Washington's household, and, only a few months before his death, Washington had the happiness of seeing her married to his own nephew, Lawrence Lewis. Both George and Nellie have left valuable memoirs of Washington.

Washington's marriage placed him in a position of affluence and helped pave the way for the career that was to make him the Father of his Country. And he was now the Master of Mount Vernon, following the early death of his half-brother, Lawrence, whom he had accompanied to the West Indies in the latter's vain search for health. After Washington acquired Mount Vernon, he became rooted to the lovely spot. It was with regret that he left it to assume command of the army. The Revolution kept him away for seven years, and the Presidency for another eight years; and when he retired from public life less than three years remained to him.

But this is not a biography of Washington. We cannot linger over the crowded events of his life. There was one other incident

of his youth, however, that is of significance in a study of Washington's philosophy and religion. It is well known that he was a member of the Masonic fraternity. In later life he became the Master of an important lodge, often officiated at Masonic ceremonies, wearing the mystic regalia of the order, and at the end he was buried with Masonic as well as Christian rites.

Washington was accepted in the lodge at Fredericksburg, Virginia, November 4, 1752, when he was still some months short of twenty-one. His career as a Mason thus covered a period of more than forty-seven years. No doubt the ritual and principles of that great society appealed strongly to him.

Only two days after his reception into the Masonic order, Washington was commissioned one of the four adjutants-general of the Virginia Militia, with the rank of major. His receiving this commission while still under twenty-one caused some adverse criticism. But his relative, George Fairfax, remarked that "all Washingtons are born old."

For no other man, perhaps, did Opportunity knock so often at the door. But only a man of unusual ability and character could have been ready, as Washington always was, to accept the great responsibilities that Destiny began to offer him. As he advanced in years, his moral stature steadily grew. Character radiated from his personality and was the secret of his influence. Only Washington could have held the army together in the dark days of the Revolution; only Washington could have secured the adoption of the Constitution when the Confederation was lapsing into anarchy; only Washington could have guided the young nation successfully through the first two administrations of the presidency. He prob-



George Washington in the regalia of a Free and Accepted Mason of the York Rite, and wearing the Masonic apron worked for him by the wife of Lafayette.

ably will always stand unique in his election as President of the United States by unanimous vote.

As Washington advanced into the years of maturity, the orthodox creed of his childhood no doubt faded imperceptibly into the background. There was no violent loss of faith, just as there had been no dramatic "conversion" in early life. His temperament was essentially optimistic; he felt no inclination to introspective brooding; and perhaps as he grew older he adopted, consciously or not, the Confucian attitude that it is well to respect supernatural beings but to have as little to do with them as possible.

According to Jefferson, Washington was a Deist, as was Jefferson himself. Jefferson added that Gouverneur Morris, who was an avowed unbeliever and professed to know Washington's secrets, declared that Washington "believed no more of that system [Christianity] than he himself did."

It is true that Washington continued to attend the services of the Episcopal Church, of which Mrs. Washington was a devout communicant. He even was elected a vestryman, but such an office in the State Church was largely secular in character.

When Washington was President, he attended Christ Church in Philadelphia. Nellie Custis records that "on communion Sundays he left the church with me, after the blessing, and returned home, and we sent the carriage back for my grandmother [Mrs. Washington]."

The spectacle of the President of the United States turning his back on the sacrament outraged the minister, Rev. Dr. James Abercrombie, to such an extent that he rebuked Washington (anonymously) from the pulpit for the bad example he was setting. Washington replied by absenting himself altogether from the services on Sundays when the Holy Communion was added to the usual program. Fortunately, we have Dr. Abercrombie's own account of the affair:

Observing that on Sacrament Sundays, Gen'l Washington, immediately after the Desk and Pulpit services, went out with the greater part of the congregation, always leaving Mrs. Washington with the communicants, she *invariably* being one, I considered it my duty, in a sermon on Public Worship, to state the unhappy tendency of *example*, particularly those in elevated stations, who invariably turned their backs upon the celebration of the Lord's Supper. I acknowledge



CHRIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA

A Southeast view of Christ Church as it looked in 1787. This is the church where Washington attended services when he was President and where he was rebuked by the Rev. Dr. Abercrombie for setting a bad example by leaving before the Sacrament.

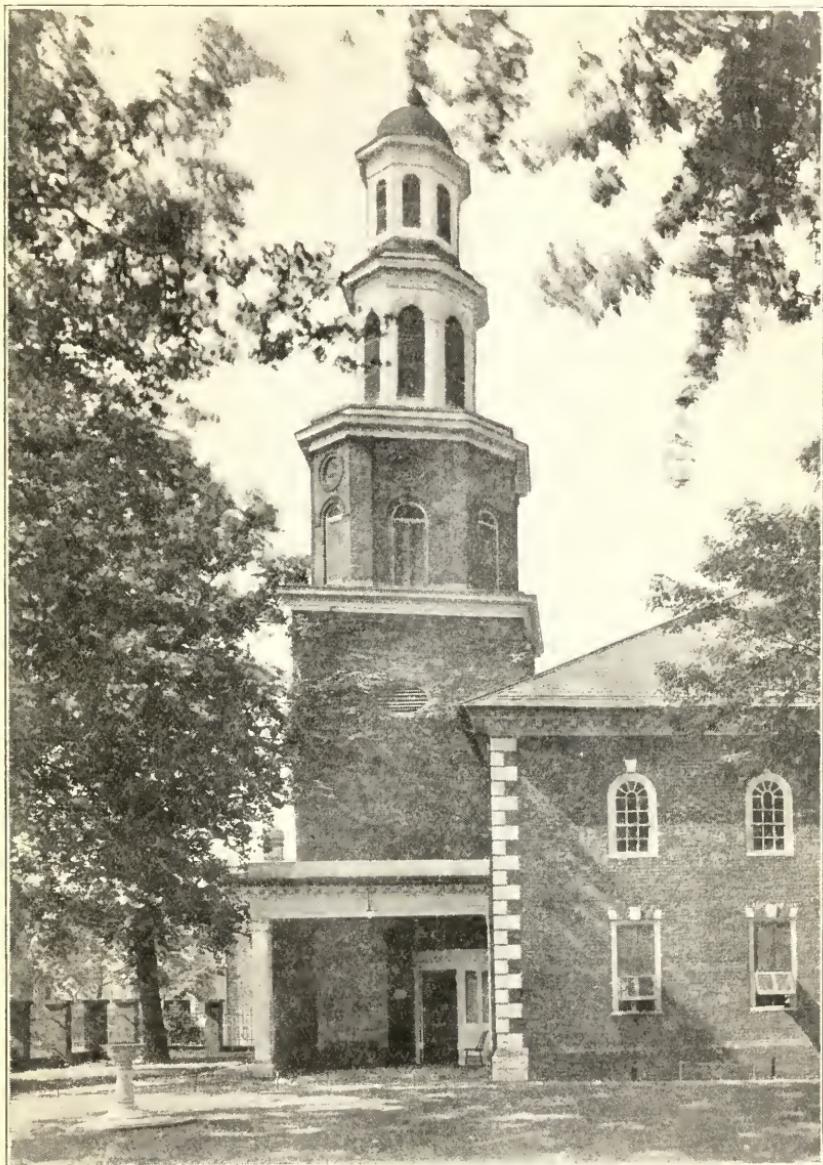
the remark was intended for the President, as such, he received it. A few days later, in conversation with, I believe, a Senator of the U.S. he told me he had dined the day before with the President, who in the course of the conversation at the table, said that on the preceding Sunday, he had received a very just reproof from the pulpit, for always leaving the church before the administration of the Sacrament; that he honored the preacher for his integrity and candour; that he had never considered the influence of his example; that he would never again give cause for the repetition of the reproof; and that, as he had never been a communicant, were he to become one then, it would be imputed to an ostentatious display of religious zeal arising altogether from his elevated station. Accordingly he afterwards never came on the morning of Sacrament Sunday, tho' at other times, a constant attendant in the morning.

The testimony of Nellie Custis and of Dr. Abercrombie, with reference to Washington's not caring to receive the communion, is confirmed by the Rev. Dr. William White, another of Washington's pastors, who in 1787 became a Bishop. In reply to a letter of inquiry, some years after Washington's death, Bishop White wrote:

Truth requires me to say that General Washington never received the communion in the churches of which I am parochial minister. Mrs. Washington was an habitual communicant.... I have been written to by several on the point of your inquiry; and I have been obliged to answer them as I now do you.

Nellie Custis also is on record as saying that when in church Washington always "stood during the devotional part of the service." This statement likewise is confirmed by Bishop White, who wrote in answer to another inquiry, "As your letter seems to intend an inquiry on the point of kneeling during the service, I owe it to truth to declare that I never saw him in the said attitude." He observed, however, that Washington's behavior was always "serious and attentive." Obviously, it would not have been in keeping with Washington's character if his conduct in church had been frivolous or inattentive.

The famous story about Washington's kneeling in the snow during the bitter winter at Valley Forge, imploring Divine aid, seems to be quite without historical foundation. It was first told nearly half a century after the supposed event, by an old man named Isaac



*Courtesy of United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission  
CHRIST CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA VIRGINIA*

Potts, who was believed to have been Washington's landlord that winter. But investigation has shown that during the winter in question Washington lived at the house of Mrs. Deborah Hewes, and his account-book shows that he paid his rent to her. It was not until several years later that Potts acquired the house, and there is no evidence that he was at Valley Forge at all when Washington was there. The facts concerning this Valley Forge story will be found clearly set forth in Appendix II of Rupert Hughes' *George Washington, The Human Being and the Hero*. "No conscientious historian of to-day," according to Hughes, gives credence to the tale. The author of this entertaining volume points out, incidentally, that, unlike Washington, Benedict Arnold was an ardent church member. He "filled his proclamations with piety, and joined the church anew shortly before he betrayed the United States."

The late Dr. Moncure D. Conway, in his *Washington and Mount Vernon*, remarks, "In his many letters to his adopted nephew and young relatives, he [Washington] admonishes them about their morals, but in no case have I been able to discover any suggestion that they should read the Bible, keep the Sabbath, go to church, or any warning against Infidelity." He observes also that "Washington had in his library the writings of Paine, Priestley, Voltaire, Frederick the Great, and other heretical works," and that although in his voluminous diaries Washington regularly mentions his attendance at Church, there is "never any remark on the sermons."

In fact, Washington's diaries show us, over a period of many years, just how often he went to church. In the year 1760, it appears that he attended exactly sixteen times; and in 1768, fourteen. Paul Leicester Ford says that these figures are "fairly typical of the period 1760-1773." His average attendance is thus seen to be a little better than once a month.

While he was President, living in New York and Philadelphia, with his every act carefully watched, he was more constant in his attendance at church. But after his retirement to Mount Vernon for good, it seems that he gave up going to church at all. "Six days do I labor," he wrote during the last year of his life, "or, in other words, take exercise and devote my time to various occupations in husbandry, and about my mansion. On the seventh, now called the first day, for want of a place of Worship (within less than nine miles) such letters as do not require immediate acknowl-

edgment I give answers to." He goes on to say that on the last two Sundays this program has been interfered with by the duty of hospitality to visitors.

Presumably the church nine miles away was at Alexandria, where Washington owned a pew in Christ Church. He had a whole stable full of fine horses at Mount Vernon, and a nine-mile ride or drive on a beautiful Sunday morning should not have been a serious barrier to his attending church if he felt the inclination.

Paul Leicester Ford explains that Sunday was Washington's favorite day for transacting business at home; besides writing letters and even preparing invoices, "he entertained company, closed land purchases, sold wheat, and while a Virginia planter, went fox-hunting, on Sunday." When he traveled, he made it a point to observe the scruples of the public regarding the Sabbath; but there is a story that he was once arrested in Connecticut for violating the Blue Laws against traveling on Sunday.

Jefferson relates an amusing but significant story, which was told him by Benjamin Rush. It appears that when Washington was leaving the presidency, the clergy were annoyed because "he had never, on any occasion, said a word to the public which showed a belief in the Christian religion." In an address that they were sending him on this occasion they decided to smoke him out on the subject of his religion, "so as to force him at length to declare publicly whether he was a Christian or not. But, he observed, the old fox was too cunning for them. He answered every article of their address particularly except that, which he passed over without notice."

And yet, in his speech before Congress, when resigning his commission at the close of the war, Washington took the opportunity of "commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to His holy keeping." Again, in the Farewell Address he said, "Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports.... And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion."

But even Paine, an earnest Deist, could have said as much as that with perfect sincerity. On immortality and the special Christian dogmas in general, Washington seems to have maintained a studied silence.

In spite of Washington's personal coolness toward church-going, he approved of the Church as an institution, useful for the general run of people. He provided religious services for the soldiers in the army, and desired that his employés should go to church. W. E. Woodward, in his *George Washington, The Image and the Man*, thinks that Washington's position in this matter was like that of "the modern captain of industry."

According to Rupert Hughes, Mrs. Washington "furnished the religion for the family, said the prayers, and read the Scriptures. His own great Bible looked as if it had never been opened."

Washington's tolerance, in an age of intolerance, must not be passed unnoticed. Early in the Revolution, when the New England troops were preparing to celebrate Guy Fawkes Day in the usual manner by burning an effigy of the Pope, Washington in his General Orders strongly condemned this "ridiculous and childish custom"; as Commander-in-Chief, he said that he could not help "expressing his surprise, that there should be officers and soldiers in this army so void of common sense, as not to see the impropriety of such a step." There was good policy here, no doubt, as such a gesture by the army would have been deeply offensive to the Catholic French, from whom the Americans would soon be expecting help. But Washington's protest was no less sincere for that.

An even more striking avowal of his tolerance is found in the instructions he gave to his agent abroad whom he had commissioned to procure some servants to enter his employ: "If they are good workmen, they may be from Asia, Africa, or Europe; they may be Mohometans, Jews, or Christians of any sect, or they may be Atheists."

It would be rare even to-day to find a man of prominence in the United States thus announcing his willingness to give a job to an atheist.

We are told that Washington was extremely generous to those in need. His account-books are filled with entries of sums of money disbursed for charitable purposes. His charity was "large, regular, and habitual." He served through the Revolution without pay, though he asked to be reimbursed for his expenses, of which he kept an exact account.

Washington was not a plaster paragon of virtue, as Parson Weems tried to make him, nor was he cold and unemotional at heart,

though his shyness and diffidence in public often gave that impression. Few great men have been so intensely human. There was indeed something Homeric about the man. It would be interesting to know Washington's opinion of the Eighteenth Amendment. David Ackerman, a Revolutionary officer, is quoted even by the hero-worshipping Henry Cabot Lodge, in his biography of Washington, as follows:

He was an enormous eater, but was content with bread and meat, if he had plenty of it. But hunger seemed to put him in a rage. It was his custom to take a drink of rum or whiskey on awakening in the morning.

The use of liquor, of course, was practically universal in Washington's day; but he never carried it to excess.

"In 1779," writes Senator Lodge, "it is recorded that at a party he danced for three hours with Mrs. Greene without sitting down or resting, which speaks well for the health and spirits both of the lady and the gentleman." At that time Washington was forty-seven years old. His love of fast horses was life-long. When President of the United States he once acted as judge of a horse-race in which one of his own animals was entered but failed to win the prize. All the evidence indicates that, as Woodward puts it, Washington was "without a trace of Puritanism."

He had a terrific temper; usually he held it under stern control, but there are records of furious outbursts on exceptional occasions. "He was anything but a profane man," observes Lodge, "but the evidence is beyond question that if deeply angered he would use a hearty English oath." Yet even in his anger he was never unfair. "Anyone who knows the long resentments of human nature," says Woodward, "cannot help being impressed by his generosity toward his personal enemies."

We have already noticed Washington's display of grief over the death of little Martha Custis, whom he playfully called "Patsy." He gave a still more remarkable proof of his inherently emotional nature on another occasion. It was the historic parting with his officers at the close of the Revolution. The famous scene has often been portrayed; usually the Commander-in-Chief is represented as shaking hands, in a dignified fashion, with his tried and true lieutenants. But according to the account written by his adopted son, George Washington Parke Custis, besides shaking hands he also

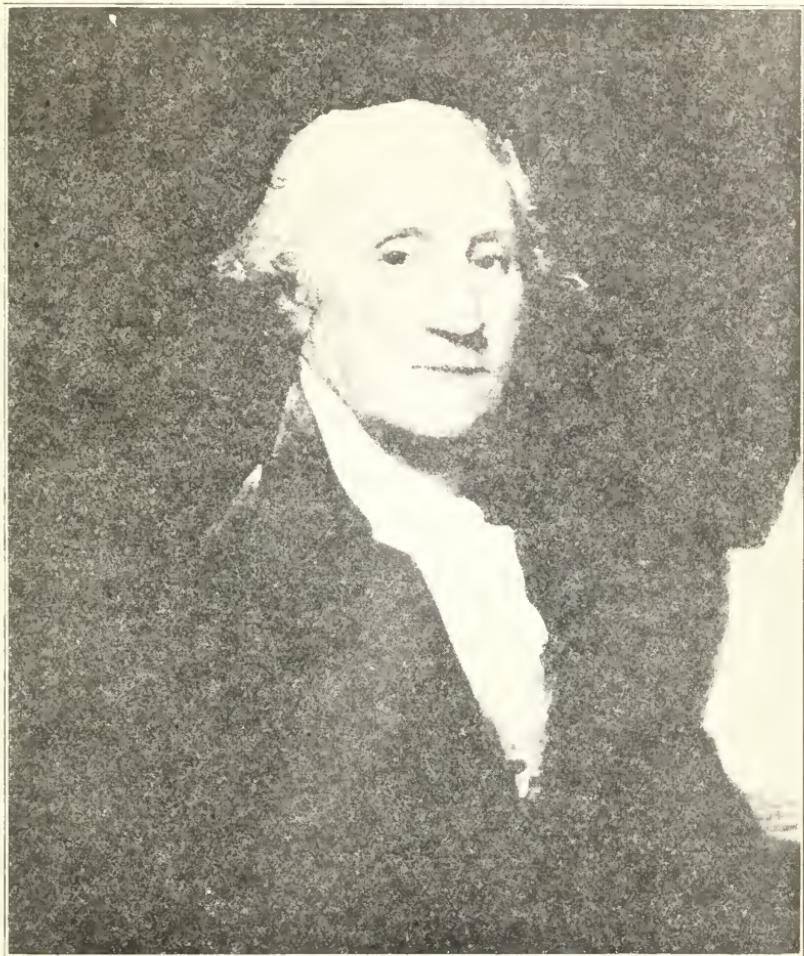
kissed on the cheek each of his brothers-in-arms, who wept as they took leave of their chief. The story of this touching incident, in the words of Custis, will be found in *The Story Life of Washington*, by Wayne Whipple, pp. 162-63. Washington's friendship with the young Alexander Hamilton is one of the most beautiful in history.

It has sometimes been held against Washington that he was a slave-owner. But it must be remembered that slavery was part of the established economic system during his lifetime. We know, too, that Washington personally was opposed to slavery, not so much on humanitarian grounds—for the slaves generally were treated well—as because he regarded it as economically wasteful and inefficient. He looked forward to its abolition, and in his will he arranged for the emancipation of all his own slaves—an act in which he stood alone among the great Virginians of his generation.

When on his death-bed, Washington's attitude toward religion did not change. No clergyman was present, although one might easily have been summoned from Alexandria, had he so desired. Toward the end, Washington remarked to his faithful secretary, Tobias Lear, "I find I am going, my breath cannot continue long; I believed from the first attack it would be fatal." He directed Lear to see to it that his correspondence was cared for and his accounts settled. "He then asked," says Lear, "if I recollect anything which it was essential for him to do, as he had but a very short time to continue with us." Lear had no suggestions to offer. Mrs. Washington was in the room; she, too, apparently remained silent. Washington then remarked of his death that "as it was the debt which we all must pay, he looked to the event with perfect resignation." According to another account, Washington whispered to his physician, Dr. Craik, "I die hard, but I am not afraid to die." Later, with great difficulty, he managed to give Lear a few words of instruction regarding his burial, asked whether Lear understood him, and, on receiving an affirmative reply, murmured, "'Tis well"—his last words.

Washington never worked out any systematic philosophy or theory of government, to which his name can be given. His mind was essentially of the executive type. In the administration of the Government he believed strongly in the value of conference; he solicited freely the views of men like Madison, Hamilton, Edmund Randolph, and even Jefferson. Though personally he leaned to the

Federalist thought of Hamilton, which was anathema to Jefferson, the Sage of Monticello told Lafayette that when he and Hamilton were members of the President's cabinet and disagreed with each



PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, BY GILBERT STUART

other, "General Washington would sometimes favor the opinion of one and sometimes the other, with an apparent strict impartiality. And Mr. Jefferson added," said Lafayette, "that, so sound was Washington's judgment, that he [Jefferson] was commonly convinced afterwards of the accuracy of his decision, whether it

accorded with the opinion he had himself first advanced or not." Owing to an increasing divergence of policy, it probably was a relief to Washington when Jefferson resigned from the cabinet; on the other hand, Hamilton's genius was often erratic and needed to be guided—as it constantly was—by Washington's caution.

The remarkable Farewell Address, greatest of Washington's state papers, is said to have been first drafted by Madison and later revised by Hamilton; Timothy Pickering tells us that it was then "put into the hands of Wolcott, McHenry, and myself....with a request that we would examine it, and note any alterations and corrections which we should think best." They offered a few minor suggestions, chiefly on "the grammar and composition." Washington then gave the paper its final editing, and the document is justly credited to him. It bears his unmistakable stamp.

Though he was himself an agriculturalist, Washington had an extraordinary appreciation of the importance of commerce and industry as factors in national prosperity. It was the Mount Vernon conference on interstate commerce, held in his own home, that led to the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Professor A. B. Hart considers him "the ablest man of business of his time."

It is true that Washington did not share Jefferson's democratic faith; he preferred to see the Government in the hands of men of substance. For he believed that thus stability would be attained and the welfare of rich and poor alike promoted. He seems to have accepted without question the economic doctrine of *laissez faire*.

Philosophically Washington was, in the language of to-day, a pragmatist. His intellectual habits have been likened to those of Bacon. His mind was essentially a practical one. In the words of Lodge, "He saw facts, knew them, mastered and used them, and never gave much play to fancy." He was content to leave to minds of another type the realm of philosophical speculation, political theory, and dialectic exercise. He would examine the results of their cogitation, and such as appealed to his good sense he would use. He was not a genius, either as a general or as a statesman, nor did he profess to be one. Jefferson, who could look at Washington with complete detachment, said of him that "his mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order....It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion."

For example, as late as the autumn of 1775, long after the Battle of Bunker Hill, Washington had not yet declared himself in favor of actual independence from Great Britain. His conversion to the idea of political separation seems to have been due partly to the wanton burning of Falmouth and Norfolk by the British, and partly to the convincing arguments in Paine's *Common Sense*. But as soon as his mind was made up, there was for him no turning back, though his decision meant the parting of the ways with those dear friends of his youth, the Fairfax family, who chose to be Loyalists. It is pleasant to note that during the Revolution Washington repaid their kindness in years gone by; he used his powerful influence to protect them from persecution and the confiscation of their property. But in the fury of the war the beautiful Fairfax mansion, Belvoir, near Mount Vernon, was destroyed, and Washington never had the family as neighbors again.

The late Professor W. R. Thayer, of Harvard, another biographer of our subject, thinks that Washington's chief source of greatness was his character. "If you analyze most closely," he declares, "you will never get deeper than that." But W. E. Woodward writes, "Courage was, I think, his most significant trait, and courage is a most ordinary phenomenon." Both may be right, since high character goes hand in hand with unwavering courage—and with transparent honesty, another of Washington's outstanding virtues.

Jefferson says, continuing his analysis of Washington's character:

He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence: never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed: refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, or friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision.... On the whole, his character was, in its mass, perfect—in nothing bad, in few points indifferent: and it may be truly said that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance.

Washington has left no school of political thought, comparable with Hamiltonianism or Jeffersonianism. But in the Farewell Ad-

dress there are two clearly-stated principles that have become associated with the name of Washington. These are, first, that the nation should strive for closer internal union; and second, that it should avoid political entanglement with Europe. The first was no doubt a factor in enabling the republic to weather the test of civil war; the second certainly was powerfully influential in defeating President Wilson's foreign commitments of the United States at the close of the World War. This latter principle was one of the few in reference to which Jefferson stood on the same ground with Washington; but it had its source in the writings of Paine. Washington is likely to remain the supreme symbol of American nationalism, so long as the republic of which he was the father shall endure.

## WASHINGTON AND STEUBEN

BY CARL WITTK

**I**N 1776, when the United States of America declared their independence from the old world, the American stock was already of mixed blood. A study of the muster-roll of Washington's revolutionary army reveals a surprisingly large number of non-English foreigners in the America of colonial times.

The Germans contributed their full share to the success of the American Revolution and their services to the cause of American Independence have been detailed on many occasions. By 1750, a zone of almost continuous German settlements had been established on the American frontier extending from the head of the Mohawk River in New York to Savannah, Georgia. In Pennsylvania, the mecca and distributing center for the German immigration of the colonial period, this element constituted one third of the total population.

German sectarians, like the Mennonites, Dunkards, and Quakers had religious scruples against active participation in war, and although these religious convictions had been a matter of common knowledge for years, many a little German congregation had difficulty with its patriotic neighbors during the course of the war. Some sectarians, like the Moravians of North Carolina, paid triple taxes in lieu of military service. Others furnished food supplies, or did hospital or relief work, and the pious Germans of Bethlehem,—“Christian Socialists”—were the Good Samaritans for Washington’s ragged, hard-pressed army during the terrible winter at Valley Forge. Their colony was overrun by sick and wounded American soldiers, and one building intended for two hundred and fifty beds, had a thousand packed into it.

German Lutherans and members of the Reformed church,—the “Church People” as contrasted with the sectarians—of course had no scruples against warfare, and these elements took a lively part in the war for independence. On May 22, 1776, the Continental Congress recruited a wholly German regiment in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Its colonel was first Nicholas Haussegger and then Ludwig Weltner. Hundreds of German names appear on the muster-roll of Pennsylvania regiments. Armand’s Legion, a corps of

dragoons authorized in 1776, was recruited by Baron von Otten-dorff, a Saxon who had served in the Seven Years' War under Frederick the Great. Washington's bodyguard contained recruits from Pennsylvania German counties, and was commanded by a former cavalry lieutenant of Prussia. In the Mohawk Valley in New York it was the German farmer militia under Nicholas Herk-heimer who turned back the forces of Colonel St. Leger in the battle of Oriskany and thus contributed decisively to the failure of General Burgoyne's campaign of 1777—a campaign which was a turning point of the Revolution, and led directly to the French Alliance, by which the Revolution became a world war.

The patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America was Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg. His son, Peter, born in America, but educated in theology at Halle, became a brigadier-general in the Revolutionary Army. Christopher Ludwig, a veteran of Prussian wars, was superintendent of bakers and director of baking for the Revolutionary Army. Gerhard Wieden, of Hanover, became a brigadier-general and played a conspicuous role in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. Heinrich Emmanuel Lutterloh of Brunswick, in the closing years of the war, was quartermaster-general of the Continental Army.

When the Revolution ended, over 12,000 so-called "Hessians," Germans who had been hired to fight under the British flag, remained in America, and they and their descendants were rapidly assimilated into the American population. Upon their arrival in the United States, many of the German mercenaries had had nothing but contempt for their American opponents. "These frightful people deserve pity rather than fear," wrote the Hessian Colonel von Heeringen, after the battle of Long Island. "Among the prisoners are many so-called colonels, lieutenant-colonels, majors, and other officers, who, however, are nothing but mechanics, tailors, shoemakers, wig-makers, barbers, etc.... Every man has a common gun, such as citizens of Hesse march out with at Whitsuntide...." It was not long however before the Hessians were impressed with the comfort and relative plenty enjoyed by the ordinary people of America, and American propaganda, designed to detach them from the British cause met with marked success. Carefully prepared propaganda was translated into German, and put inside packages of tobacco intended for the German soldiers. Every man who would

desert to the American colors was promised fifty acres of land, and eight hundred acres of woodland, four oxen, one bull, two cows and four sows were offered as rewards for the captain who would bring forty men with him into the Continental lines. Hessian prisoners of war were taken into the German settlements of the Shenandoah Valley, to Frederick, Maryland, and to the German counties of Pennsylvania, where they were well received by these Americans who spoke their mother tongue. At the close of the war, thousands became respected citizens of the nation whose independence they had opposed on the battle field.

A number of foreign officers came to America to offer their courage, skill and experience in the War for American Independence. Lafayette, ardent young Frenchman who hailed the revolution as the harbinger of a better day, placed himself under Washington's command, as the symbol of the Franco-American Alliance. Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a Pole, served as an Army artillery officer, and the gallant Count Casimir Pulaski, fell at the siege of Savannah. The Chevalier du Portail served as an officer of engineers, and John Kalb, son of a Franconian peasant born in Huttendorf, but known in the United States as Baron de Kalb, came to America in 1777, with Lafayette. He fought with reckless courage in the Southern campaigns, and died of the eleven wounds he received at the Battle of Camden. Perhaps the services of the German Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben were less romantic and less spectacular, but they involved the all-important task of making an army out of an undisciplined rabble.

Baron von Steuben came from a military family. In 1744, he had participated in the siege of Prague, as a volunteer; thirteen years later he was wounded in the second battle of Prague. He participated in the famous battle of Rossbach also. Why he left the service of Prussia and of Baden after such a distinguished record, is still a matter of controversy. In 1777, von Steuben was in Paris, for an interview with Count St. Germain and Beaumarchais and as a result of this conference he was introduced to Benjamin Franklin. It is quite clear that the French government was eager to send this competent soldier of fortune, who was temporarily out of employment, to America. Franklin offered von Steuben two thousand acres of land in America, but could offer no other financial inducements. Von Steuben returned to Germany; the French and Franklin

increased the offer, and in 1777, provided with letters of introduction from Franklin to Washington, Samuel Adams, Robert Morris, and Henry Laurens, the president of Congress, von Steuben embarked for America, to seek honor and fame in the American Revolution, and if possible, to establish his fortune. He had not been a general in Baden, probably nothing higher than a major or colonel, but the Continental Congress soon gave him a major-general's commission. He arrived in the United States in December, 1777, after a very stormy passage, and at the age of forty-seven, cast in his lot with Washington's army.

On July 4, 1779, von Steuben described his American reception in a letter to Geheimrat von Frank, in Hechingen. He had landed on December 1, 1777, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, accompanied by a secretary, a servant and a cook,—with the guns of the fortress and the ships in the harbor booming a salute to the former officer of Frederick the Great's army. Three days later von Steuben reached Boston, where he was cordially received by John Hancock. Five weeks passed before the necessary arrangements for the journey to Pennsylvania were completed. Carriages, sleighs and horses were procured for the Baron; five negroes were assigned to him as drivers and grooms; an agent was commissioned to provide quarters and provisions for his party; and von Steuben himself engaged two English servants "as field equipage" for him and his officers. On January 14, von Steuben reached York, Pennsylvania, where the Continental Congress was in session, and offered his services as a volunteer to the revolutionary cause. On the way from York to Valley Forge, where Washington's army lay encamped, von Steuben was entertained at a subscription ball by the Pennsylvania Germans at Lancaster.

Von Steuben was a sober, practical, matter-of-fact soldier, who came to America to contribute his talents for whatever reward he might eventually be able to get. There was none of the romance of the ardent, young Lafayette about him. And yet, the spirit of young America quickly entered his soul, and after seven months in the United States, he wrote home to a German friend,—.... *Welch ein schönes, Welch ein glückliches Land ist dieses! Ohne Könige, ohne Hohepriester, ohne aussaugende General Pächter, und ohne müssige Baronen. Hier ist jedermann glücklich. Armut ist ein unbekanntes Übel....*" And in the same letter he added,—



Courtesy of United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission  
GENERAL VON STEUBEN

*"Wir sind hier in einer Republik, und der Hr. Baron gilt nicht Heller mer, als Mstr. Jakob oder Mstr. Peter und hierzu können sich die (deutschen und) französischen Nasen schwerlich gewöhnen...."*

The real service of von Steuben to the American Revolution and General Washington's deep appreciation for his talents, can be understood only if one remembers the conditions that prevailed in the revolutionary army during the early years of the war for independence.

When Washington journeyed to Boston in 1775 to take command of the army that had been hastily assembled after Lexington and Concord, he encountered conditions which would certainly have hopelessly discouraged an ordinary man. What he found was an armed mob, torn by local jealousies, commanded by civilian officers many of whom were dissatisfied, incompetent, and jealous of each other. There was no efficient direction of the commissary department, and barracks, hospitals or any of the other prime necessities for field operations were entirely lacking. The military chest of the revolting colonists was practically empty; the troops were without uniforms, and the powder supply woefully near to exhaustion. The army was infested with swarms of colonels and war profiteers, and General Montgomery described the New England soldiers as "every man a general and not one of them a soldier." Von Steuben, in 1784, in a letter to Knox, referred to the United States in these early years of the Revolution as "a country where Caesar and Hannibal would have lost their reputation, and where every farmer is a general, but where nobody wishes to be a soldier." Washington alternately prayed and cursed for better times. "Such a dearth of public spirit, and want of virtue," he complained, "such stock-jobbing, and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another—I never saw before, and pray God I may never be a witness to again—Such a dirty, mercenary spirit prevades the whole that I should not be at all surprised at any disaster that may happen."

Washington's problems were by no means over when the British evacuated Boston. In spite of many patriotic accounts to the contrary, the Revolutionary Army was raised and maintained in a period of rather widespread apathy toward the progress of the war. At least a third of the American population were active or passive loyalists, and it has been asserted that probably more Americans fought in British regiments during the Revolution than in the Continental Army of Washington. If the population supporting the war be put at 1,400,000 the United States of 1776 might have

yielded a total fighting strength of 400,000. As a matter of fact, the American army never exceeded 90,000, not even on paper and including all the undisciplined militia. The actual field forces never reached 30,000 and the total effectives fluctuated from 5,000 to 20,000. In February, 1778, out of an army of 17,000, only 5,012 were capable for service. The American army that marched from the Hudson River to Yorktown for the final great battle of the war, numbered 2,000, and Yorktown was won, largely by a foreign, (French) army and navy. Desertions were so numerous that on January 31, 1777, General Washington wrote "we shall be obliged to detach one half the army to bring back the other." Enlistments, especially in the early years of the war, were for short terms only, usually from three to six months, and Washington's operations were seriously handicapped in numerous campaigns because of the fluctuation in the size of his army. It should be added, however, that not the force actually under arms constituted the American military strength, but the potential power of the farmers and planters and frontiersmen of the continent who could be rallied in special crises.

The militia was a particular source of worry, and Congress, full of the democratic spirit of the Declaration of Independence, always financially embarrassed, and fearful of a military dictatorship, refused to create an adequate standing army and only in most pressing emergencies granted the commander-in-chief sufficient authority to enable him to carry out policies without a constant reference to Congress. Democracy was the passion of the day, and was carried to curious extremes. Provincial officers were generally elected to their commissions, and in Washington's own words, were "nearly of the same kidney with the Privates." Even John Adams, in a sudden *flair* for democratic procedure said, "I will vote upon the general principle of a republic for a new election of General Officers annually." General Knox, Washington's chief of artillery, complained that the militia "get sick, or think themselves so, and run home; and wherever they go, they spread a panic," and the commander-in-chief concluded that "to place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting on a broken staff." To his nephew, Washington confided, "Great bodies of militia (are) in pay that never were in camp," and "immense quantities of provisions (are) drawn by men that never rendered....one hour's service."

Discipline, it goes without saying, was difficult to maintain under these conditions, but General Washington, stern and rigid disciplinarian that he was, struggled courageously with the problem, by introducing punishments for which he was severely criticised. One captain was found shaving a private on the parade ground. At Bunker Hill, another ordered his men to march into battle, promising to "overtake them directly," and then did not reappear until the next day. Nathanael Greene insisted that "We want nothing but good officers to constitute as good an army as ever marched into the field. Our men are much better than the officers." Eighteen generals abandoned the service, one for drunkenness, another to avoid arrest for taking double pay, and the rest mainly for petty personal reasons. A lieutenant was dismissed for sleeping and eating with privates, and for buying a pair of shoes from a soldier. Cases of insubordination, gambling and drunkenness were frequent, and many privates were absent without leave to work on their farms. Order after order was necessary to induce the men to shave and to pay some attention to their personal appearance—a matter which the commander-in-chief constantly stressed. An American staff officer described the army of 1776 as "a receptacle for ragsmuffins." Bounties sometimes reaching \$750 to \$1000 were offered for recruits and led to the new evil of bounty-jumping. When men left for home, they usually took their arms and blankets with them. In desperation, Washington introduced lashing and running the gauntlet, as a means of dealing with cases of desertion, stealing, insubordination, cowardice and other offences.

In the early years of the war, the army often suffered most from the absence, or total collapse of the quartermaster's and commissary departments. Because Congress had tried to democratize these departments, responsibility was centered nowhere. There were no engineers to build roads and bridges, and no good maps. Surgeons and nurses were lacking in every campaign, and epidemics of small-pox ravaged the army. In one Southern campaign, hundreds marched naked except for breech cloths, and two days before Christmas, 1777, Washington reported to Congress that nearly 3,000 men were "barefoot and otherwise naked." Powder and lead was not available on time, and the muzzle-loading flintlocks proved very inadequate weapons, especially because men frequently had to mould their own bullets, since there was no uniform

standard rifle. For weeks, the army was without vegetables, salt and vinegar, and the lack of soap contributed to the spread of disease.

In December, 1777, Washington led his army into winter quarters at Valley Forge, among the hills about twenty miles from Philadelphia. The British spent the winter in plenty and in revelry in Philadelphia. The English historian, Trevelyan, has remarked that the camp at Valley Forge "bids fair to be the most celebrated in the world's history." The suffering and privation of the army in the winter of 1777-1778 makes the story of Valley Forge the most gripping chapter in the history of the war. It was Washington alone who held the army together in that critical year: he was the government and the Revolution!

The men lay in huts or wigwams made of boughs, and were often forced to sit up all night by the blazing camp fires, to keep warm, for no blankets were available. Two days before Christmas, there was not an animal in camp which could be slaughtered for food, and the supply of flour had been reduced to 25 barrels. For food, many resorted to "fire cake," a dirty, soggy dough, warmed over smoky fires, and washed down by polluted water. The commissary department had broken down. Washington reported that "hogsheads of shoes, stockings, and clothing were lying at different places on the roads....perishing for want of teams," or teamsters. Men without shoes moved about the camp, reddening the snow by their bleeding feet. Horses died by the hundreds, and men had to be hitched to the wagons. Washington warned Congress that "this army must inevitably....starve, dissolve or disperse." During the winter, as a matter of fact, over 2,300 deserters entered Philadelphia to receive the royal pardon, or to join the British forces. As one officer expressed it,—"the love of freedom....is controlled by hunger, the keenest of necessities." The British general in Philadelphia had gold to exchange for supplies. Washington had only worthless paper. Consequently, no amount of legislation, and not even Washington's threat to hang the profiteers, could stop the practice of American farmers selling to the British, while their own army starved at Valley Forge. Thousands of people in the middle colonies hastened to make their peace with the mother country during this dreary winter.

In this darkest hour of the American Revolution, von Steuben

arrived at Washington's winter quarters at Valley Forge. General Washington came several miles to meet the distinguished foreigner, and accompanied von Steuben to his quarters, where he found an officer with twenty-five men as a guard of honor. Although at first he could talk with von Steuben only through interpreters like Hamilton and Laurens who knew French, General Washington quickly recognized the skill and experience of this veteran of Frederick the Great's army. On the day of his arrival, von Steuben's name was given as the watchword of the camp. The following day, the Continental Army was mustered, and passed in review before the commander-in-chief and his foreign guest. What the shattered and demoralized army needed was a drillmaster and organizer and Washington promptly recommended von Steuben's appointment as Inspector-general of the Continental forces. He began his duties immediately, although it was not until April 27, 1778, that Congress issued the necessary commission. According to von Steuben's own statement, his pay was fixed at approximately \$3300; horses were placed at his disposal and a personal guard consisting of a captain, two lieutenants and forty dragoons were provided to attend the newly appointed major-general.

Many of von Steuben's fellow-officers resented the encroachments of this foreigner upon their authority over their own brigades, and Washington frequently had to restore peace between them and the irascible Prussian. Von Steuben was eager to serve at the front, as an officer of the line, but in spite of his numerous requests, Washington insisted on utilizing his talents for the development of his army of ragmuffins at Valley Forge into a drilled and disciplined military force.

Von Steuben wrote, "I have seen a regiment consisting of thirty men and a company of one corporal." Quartermasters collected commissions on all their expenditures, and names once on the muster-roll remained there, because they furnished the basis for calculating pay and provisions. Bayonets before von Steuben came, were valued as utensils on which to toast beef-steaks over the camp fire, but hardly as weapons of warfare. Guns were rusty, and no account was kept of equipment. Arms and clothing were usually carried home at the completion of the brief terms of enlistment. "Every one would command his own regiment, tho' he could have no more than 40 men under arms," von Steuben wrote to the War

Board from Valley Forge. "Each colonel exercised his own regiment according to his own ideas, or to those of any military author that might have fallen into his hands. . . . the march and the manoeuvring-step, was as varied as the color of our uniforms."

Von Steuben brought order out of the prevailing chaos. He drilled the men with meticulous care, and introduced a rigid system of accounts. It was not easy to introduce a Prussian system of subordination into an army, "where," as von Steuben wrote in 1782, "a few days previously a captain had chosen his colonel, and a sergeant nominated his captain." Under von Steuben's orders, careful inventories were made of all military equipment, and such a rigid system of accounts was introduced that at the end of the first year of his activities, the number of guns lost had been reduced from many thousands to eight, and even some of these were accounted for. With justifiable pride, von Steuben wrote to General Knox in 1784,—"I am satisfied with having saved the country, since the establishment of the inspector-generalship, at least \$600,000 in arms and accoutrements alone."

Washington and Congress approved the system of military discipline von Steuben outlined with German thoroughness in his voluminous reports on the duties of the Inspector-general, and von Steuben's "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States," did service, not only during the Revolution, but for many years after von Steuben's death, it was used as the basis of the American system of military tactics. Von Steuben wrote out every chapter first in German; then he translated it into bad French. His friend, Fleury put it into good French, and then it passed through two other hands before it appeared in its finished English form. The Prussian code of discipline and military organization, wisely modified to fit the American psychology and American frontier conditions, was the basis of *Steuben's Regulations*. Von Steuben also prepared a plan for an American military academy, in whose curriculum he would include natural and experimental philosophy, eloquence and *belles lettres*, civil and international law, history and geography, mathematics, civil architecture, drawing, French, horsemanship, fencing, dancing and music.

At the close of the war, von Steuben was with General Greene in the campaigns in the Carolinas and Virginia, and at Yorktown, where he was the only American officer who had ever participated

in siege operations, he had the honor of receiving Lord Cornwallis' letter requesting an armistice and terms of surrender. Von Steuben had many controversies with the authorities of Virginia and with Congress, with Lafayette and with other officers, and Washington sometimes referred to the "warmth of his temper," but it is significant that the last letter written by the commander-in-chief, before his retirement from the army, was addressed to Baron von Steuben in appreciation of the latter's invaluable services as drill-master and inspector-general of the American army. And the Baron graciously replied.—"If my endeavors have succeeded, I owe it to your Excellency's protection."

After the war, von Steuben became one of the founders of The Society of the Cincinnati, an organization of Revolutionary officers to which Washington, Lafayette, De Grasse and others belonged. Von Steuben also was appointed a regent of New York University and served as president of the German society of New York for the protection of newly-arrived immigrants. That the Baron, like General Washington and other conservative leaders, was greatly disturbed by the financial confusion and apparent collapse of governmental authority after the war, is clearly shown by a letter von Steuben wrote to a friend in 1783,—"A money without gold or silver, military schools where they teach the Presbyterian catechism, arsenals filled with the Word of God, and even the hereditary sin of Congress, an empty purse, are things to make the gloomiest pedagogue laugh. But what will the world say if this great independent empire, which has supported a war for eight years against Great Britain, cannot support itself during one year of peace?"

When von Steuben resigned his commission to Congress on March 24, 1784, he got a resolution of thanks, and a promise of a gold hilted sword, which he did not receive until three years later. What he needed was money, for his personal finances were in a chronic state of disorder. At Yorktown, when every major American officer entertained the captive British officers of Cornwallis' army von Steuben tried to sell his horse to raise the necessary funds. After the war, the Baron bombarded Congress with his requests for the well-merited pay for his valuable services. He was completely dependent on his former comrades for financial aid, and in 1784, he wrote bitterly to Knox,—"My friends in America have an opportunity to commit another (folly), namely,

to erect a monument to my memory. The inscription will be found all ready on the tomb of the celebrated poet who died of hunger in England." In 1788, he actually considered establishing a German colony in that part of Western America which still belonged to Spain, and he asked the Spanish government to grant him 250,000 acres on the Mississippi River.

In his appeals to the United States Government, the Baron had the entire support of Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and other influential leaders. Nevertheless, when Vice-president Adams extolled von Steuben's contributions to the success of the Revolution in an address to the United States Senate, one of the ardent democratic Senators from Pennsylvania, (Maclay) recorded in his diary,—"Childish man to tell us this, when many of our sharpest conflicts and most bloody engagements had terminated fortunately before even we heard of the baron." President Washington, continued to press von Steuben's claims and interpreted his demands virtually as a contract between von Steuben and the preceding government. Washington's *Diary* indicates that the Baron was several times entertained at President Washington's home along with the most distinguished company of guests which on one occasion included Frederick Augustus Mühlenberg, first Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. Washington on several occasions presented von Steuben with tickets for the theatre. Early in his administration he sought his advice about the organization of the national defense forces. Moreover, when Washington entered upon his duties as first president of the United States, Baron von Steuben was apparently one of those who participated in the discussion of the momentous question of the proper etiquette to be observed in the presidential office. John Adams advised "splendor and majesty" to support "dignity and authority." But von Steuben wrote more facetiously, in a letter to his friend, General North,—"Our politicians are busi in setling the Etiquette of the New Court . . . My opinion as an old Courtier has been asked. I begun by abolishing all nut cracking after the desert. . . . As to the Queen's Levee, I shall say nothing. I wish it could be very late in the evening, and without candlelight."

Republics, as a matter of fact, have probably been no more ungrateful than capricious monarchs, although they may have been slower in manifesting their appreciation. Eventually, Congress

passed an act which President Washington signed on June 4, 1790, giving von Steuben an annual pension of \$2500 for life. Virginia gave him 15,000 acres of her western land, Pennsylvania, 2000 acres, New Jersey, a loyalist estate which von Steuben refused to accept, and New York 16,000 acres near Lake Ontario, in a tract of land that once belonged to the Oneida Indians. It must be remembered that land was the cheapest thing the states had at their disposal.

On the New York tract, near the present town of Remsen, the Baron spent his last years, after the fashion of a country squire eager to develop his huge estate. He kept a regular journal of his activities on the farm, and made his entries as regularly as though they were his official reports in the service. Among his friends, he numbered the best families of New York, like the Schuylers, and the Van Rensselaers of Albany. Each autumn, von Steuben returned to New York City to spend the winter months among his old acquaintances. His relatives in Europe applied to him so often for money and assistance, that he finally gave up all correspondence with his family, and ignored them altogether in his will. Von Steuben died on his farm, on November 28, 1794, and was buried two days later—without military salute, funeral oration, or any public honors, but with the respect and affection of the thirty neighbors who had gathered at the farm to pay tribute to their fellow townsman.

In September, 1931, a memorial, consisting of a fifty acre plot which contained the five acre grove where the Revolutionary General is buried, and lying within the 16,000 acres granted to the veteran by the state legislature, was dedicated by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor of New York, and the German Ambassador to the United States, F. W. von Prittwitz and Gaffron. Both seized this opportunity to emphasize again the distinguished services of the drill-master of the Revolutionary Army, the great contribution of the German element to American progress, and the warm friendship that exists today between the people of the United States and the people of Germany.

## REASON IN SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

BY VICTOR S. YARROS

**R**ECONSTRUCTION is taking place in philosophy. The need of the critical as well as the positive work now being done in that high realm is admitted by everybody entitled to an opinion on the subject. Unfortunately, not all the workers are proceeding under a plan, and, as we know, the world just now is profoundly interested in planning—economic, political, social and scientific. Reconstruction is a term which implies a plan and definite responsibility in some quarter for that plan.

Perhaps the truth is that what is taking place in philosophy is not really actual reconstruction, but something more modest, something preliminary and preparatory, something confused yet necessary and valuable.

There is much activity and much discussion of raw materials, methods, principles, old and new concepts. Almost everything is in the melting pot. Once familiar tags and formulæ have lost their meaning. There is more disagreement than agreement.

This is not surprising, but it is regrettable that the workers do not use the same language. That is to say, they do not take care to create a basis for understanding. Certain essential terms in the most fundamental propositions are used in different senses; definitions vary, and a good deal of philosophical controversy is carried on without the slightest regard for the meaning of the words and phrases employed. Little effort is made to separate major from minor premises, premises from conclusions, assumptions from verified and accepted findings.

Bertrand Russell once said that no philosopher has ever understood any other philosopher. That seemed a willful paradox, a facetious exaggeration. But whether philosophy was or was not a Babel of tongues in the past, it certainly is that today. It is not advancing or getting anywhere.

It is a fact, for example, that Pragmatism as a philosophy has already demonstrated its sterility and impotence. It brought forth a few arresting and significant ideas, but these did not constitute a philosophy. There has been no growth since, and now even the

few original contributions credited to Pragmatism are being vigorously challenged.

The foregoing remarks may seem unduly pessimistic or extravagant, but they are suggested by a concrete example, the appearance of, and reaction to, a new volume on philosophy from the pen of Prof. Morris R. Cohen of New York, a thinker of exceptional intellectual powers and extraordinary erudition who has many admirers and followers. The work is entitled *Reason and Nature. An Essay on the Meaning of Scientific Method*. The author is not a builder of synthetic philosophic systems, but he is a keen critic of existing philosophies as well as of modern science. He is anxious to establish a point of departure, a proper conception of method. Many of the current errors and fallacies in science, including sociology and psychology, and in philosophical speculation, Prof. Cohen attributes to crude and faulty methods, or wrong postulates, or both. Anticipating certain objections from those who are more interested in final judgments than in the process of arriving at such judgments, Prof. Cohen thus tries to disarm opponents:

To those [he writes] who labor under the necessity of passing judgment on this book in terms of current values, I suggest the following:

The author seems out of touch with everything modern and useful, and yet makes no whole-hearted plea for the old. He believes in chance and spontaneity in physics, and law and mechanism in life. He has no respect for experience, induction, the dynamic, evolution, progress, behaviorism, and psycho-analysis, and does not line up with either the orthodox or the revolutionary party in politics, or religion, though he writes on these themes.

Prof. Cohen assures his readers that he has profound faith in philosophy itself, whatever follies are committed in its name. Pending the emergence of a satisfactory philosophy that will furnish answers to fundamental issues, what we need, according to him, is cultivated and disciplined reason. It is reason that preserves what is best in civilization, and it is reason disciplined that prevents us from worshipping false gods, trying worthless or noxious nostrums, or espousing wild and mischievous ideas.

To cultivate and discipline reason, however, science is not enough, and neither is philosophy. We have need of all our intel-

lectual assets and weapons—science, logic, common sense, and philosophy.

Prof. Cohen is impatient with and contemptuous of Bergson's intuitionism, *elan vital*, etc., as well as with William James' piece-meal supernaturalism, irrationalism, and will to believe. History, he contends, teaches us the great lesson that, in the long run, reason alone counts. To those who claim inner illuminations, the voice of faith or of the heart, he says: "You cannot both distrust logic and claim logical cogency for your own (fallacious) arguments."

But when do we know that our reason is disciplined and cultivated, or that we have adopted the right and true position upon a question that is still open and unsettled? Does any school or thinker ever admit that his reasoning is illogical and lame? Prof. Cohen offers a test of right reason, finding it in what he calls the principle of polarity, which is the principle of balance and synthetic unity. The orthodox dogmatist is wrong, as is the revolutionary, because neither sees the other side of the question he professes to have solved. Superficial thinking generally is attributable to violation of the principle of balance and unity.

There is no wide difference between this view and the famous Hegelian formula—thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The difficulty is in determining the correct application of the test—of any test. No school, however extreme it seems to us, admits that it has sinned against the principle of polarity or has not endeavored to work out a synthetic solution. The communist, the fascist, the liberal, the conservative, the evolutionary radical, severally claim to have weighed all sides and to have arrived at a reasonable synthesis. There is no way of settling intellectual controversies except by leaving the final judgment to time. That, however, is hindsight, not foresight, and certainly one of the functions of philosophy, as of science, is to foresee, direct, and guide.

Whether or not one accepts all the ideas and views set forth in the comprehensive work, it is safe to say that no really scientific and philosophical thinker will challenge the author's leading or important propositions. But the work, curiously enough, makes not for agreement, but for polemics and contention. Prof. Cohen seems to take special pleasure in puncturing fallacies, revealing contradictions, and directing attention to misty and nebulous statements. He has irritated some of the philosophers he particularly

admires, quarreling with them about terms and definitions, parenthetical remarks, and nonessential points generally.

Particularly provocative is his Epilogue, a wholly superfluous essay in "dispraise of life, experience and reality." In this chapter Prof. Cohen is joy-riding, poking fun at other thinkers and making hash of their formulas and concepts. Of course, no one can seriously inveigh against life, experience, or reality. But Prof. Cohen selects phrases he deems vague or paradoxical, and gleefully pounces upon them.

If philosophers would but take the trouble to start with careful definitions, how much confusion and waste they would avoid!

Take the word "life." Prof. Cohen does not like that term, and criticises William James's remark—wholly innocent—that a certain philosopher pleased him because his books had "the tang of life." Life! scornfully exclaims Cohen: why, there is bad life, empty life and sordid, worthless life. He thought, he adds, that philosophers were concerned to teach and inculcate *the good life*. It was rank heresy, then, to praise any work for its alleged savor and flavor of life.

Now this, as Prof. Dewey has said, is mere and sheer quibbling. James had no intention of disparaging goodness in his commendation of a book he had found vital and stimulating. He was weary of dull, tiresome, lifeless books on philosophy, and glad to welcome a work that, at least, had the merit of possessing readability, power, the tang of life. He, a humanist and militant progressive, would have been the first to condemn a book that glorified or rendered attractive the bad, vicious or selfish life. To preach the good life to James is to cap the climax of supererogation!

Then there is the term experience. Prof. Cohen rails at those philosophers who overrate the value of personal, immediate, direct, sensuous experience, and leave but little room for rigorous logical thinking and the use of reason. He dislikes the word because to him it denotes what he calls "events in personal biographies." Perhaps the average man does use experience in that restricted sense, but the scientific thinker knows that human experience includes much more than immediate and vivid sensations. Instead of railing at experience, why not attempt agreement at the outset upon a proper definition of the term?

Reason, or the process of reasoning, is itself an experience, says

Prof. Cohen. And to reason, he contends rightly, is to assume laws or invariant relations in nature. If no such relations, or uniformities, existed, no finite number of physical sensations or personal experiences could prove the existence of any universal principle of law. All this is true, but only the decaying school of sensationalistic particularism needs such reminders. With the other schools it is almost a maxim that reason is the interpreter of sensations and personal experiences, and that the process of reasoning considers the larger experiences of whole societies, races and civilizations in the light of the theory of natural laws and causal relations.

Prof. Cohen is a rationalist of a particular type, and he stresses the role of deduction in reaching conclusions. He insists that deduction is more than a process of summing up and restating known facts or propositions, but a means of discovering new truths and facts. However, his rationalism is not as free from convenient assumptions as he thinks is the case. As Prof. Dewey has pointed out, our keen and penetrating author fails to distinguish between "empiricism" and "sensationalist particularism," and wins easy victories for his style of rationalism. What he does not face is the question how actual personal experience gets converted and translated into rational thought.

Much of the confusion that exists in philosophy today can be traced, further, to lack of any agreement as to the nature of reality and the relation between it and the human mind or the realm of ideas. What is nature, and what makes us sure that our idea of nature is correct?

Prof. Cohen distinguishes between nature and our idea of nature. He cannot believe, he says, that "science creates the sun when it discovers its chemical composition." We cannot, he contends, study mind unless we are familiar with the nature pictured to us by physics, physiology and biology. Psychology is becoming scientific, but precisely because it is built largely on the more exact sciences and their concepts of nature and reality.

The work as a whole, however, is a brilliant and effective defense of reason and of the methods developed by reason in the course of the ages. Prof. Cohen does not treat intuition, tradition, authority, common sense as usurpers and invaders. He recognizes the contributions made by them, severally, to science and to practical human life. But he argues, and proves, that the final appeal,

after all, is to reason, reflective and discursive. It is reason that analyzes and compares supposed intuitions, critically appraises authority, extends and corrects common sense. The notion that reason or intelligence is *nothing but a tool for everyday purposes*, entertained in different forms by Spencer, Bergson et al, he considers shallow and naive. If reason cannot give us glimpses of the higher and finer things, what can? And do we not use reason in dealing with the most abstract conceptions and generalizations?

Those who talk of flashes and sudden revelations, says Prof. Cohen, forget that to the ignorant no such illumination is vouchsafed. Knowledge is their pre-requisite.

I quote a few characteristic sentences from the book which indicate Prof. Cohen's position and mode of thinking:

"The true method of science is to cure speculative excesses, not by a return to pure experience devoid of all assumptions, but by multiplying through pure logic the number of these assumptions, mathematically deducing their various consequences, and then confronting each one with its rivals and such experimental facts as can be generally established."

"Intelligence is the rational organization or distillation of the experience of living.... Unless intelligence illuminates the meaning of our vital activity, we can make no significant assertion about it nor draw any conclusion from it.... No philosophy which stresses formless feeling can throw light on the problem of artistic creation or its intelligent appreciation."

"A philosophy which excludes the subject-matter of the special sciences, natural and social, cannot satisfy that interest in the cosmos which has at all times been the heart of philosophic endeavor.... Philosophy, seeking the most comprehensive vision, cannot ignore the insight gained by the sciences, but must go forward to envisage their possible synthesis."

"If this doctrine that our universe contains something fundamental to which we may point, but which we cannot fully describe, be called mysticism, then mysticism is essential to all intellectual sanity. But if we use the word mysticism to denote this faith in a universe that has ineffable and alogical elements, we cannot too sharply distinguish it from obscurantism. For the former denies our power to know the whole of reality, while the latter holds reality to be definitely revealed to us by non-rational pro-

cesses.... The essential difference between rationalism and obscurantism depends upon whether our guesses or obscure visions do or do not submit to the processes of critical examination and logical clarification."

"If the abstract is unreal, reality is of little moment. For what is humanly interesting if not the abstract?"

Let us note here that Prof. Cohen, disagreeing with recent definitions of philosophy, reverts to the Spencerian idea that the business and function of philosophy is to build up a synthetic world-view, or *Weltanschauung*, on the foundations laid and materials provided by the several sciences. The difficulties in the way of such a philosophy are numerous and serious, Prof. Cohen admits, but, he says, difficulties are not vetoes, and if they were treated as such, philosophy would lose its mission and *raison d'être*. He sums up this matter as follows:

The sciences grow by constantly correcting their content, and it is the inescapable task of the philosopher to use the invariant principles of the scientific method, to go back to ever more rigorous analysis of the elements or rudiments of our knowledge, to examine the ideals which guide scientific effort, and to anticipate where possible what science may conquer in the future.

There is little essential originality in Prof. Cohen's solid and pregnant volume, but he lays no claim to originality. The importance of his book, at this juncture, lies in its remarkable statement and defense of the role of reason and its clear exposition of the proper methods and procedures of science and scientific philosophy. The erudition displayed by Prof. Cohen is amazing, but it is erudition assimilated, mastered, subordinated to fundamental concepts.

Perhaps the book covers too much ground and is here and there a little inadequate and superficial. Some of the chapters—notably those on biology and psychology—require expansion and elaboration. We must hope that another volume from the same gifted pen will not be delayed too long. The author surely feels that in some instances his brevity caused misunderstanding and misinterpretation of his views even among friendly reviewers.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF POLARITY—THEORY AND PRACTICE

It will be interesting and profitable to consider here somewhat critically the principle of polarity as elucidated and defended by Prof. Morris Cohen. Is the principle new to science and philoso-

phy? If so, what does it do for us in matters of practical reform? In the pragmatists' phrase, what difference does it make; or, in the words of James, what is its cash value?

According to Prof. Cohen, the principle is not a new discovery. On the contrary, it is old, "as old as philosophy," for its recognition may be found in the works of most ancient and mediaeval philosophers. Moreover, common sense, we are informed, has always acted in conformity with it after its own crude fashion, though it was not aware of the fact—any more than Moliere's hero was aware of the fact that for forty years he "had spoken prose." Full and intelligent appreciation of the principle is expected, however, to yield large benefits to contemporary thinkers who find it intellectually impossible to associate themselves with doctrinaires and extremists.

To quote Prof. Cohen:

The indetermination and consequent inconclusiveness of metaphysical and of a good deal of sociological discussion results from uncritically adhering to simple alternatives, instead of resorting to the laborious process of integrating opposite assertions by finding the proper distinctions and qualification.

Thus two statements which, taken abstractly, are contradictory may both be true of concrete existence, provided they can be assigned to separate domains or aspects. A plurality of aspects is an essential trait of things in existence.

And the principle itself is thus defined by the professor:

Opposites such as immediacy and mediation, unity and plurality, the fixed and the flux, substance and function, ideal and real, actual and possible, etc., like the north (positive) and the south (negative) poles of a magnet, all involve each other when applied to any significant entity.

And the author adds:

Far from overriding the distinctions of understanding, the principle of polarity shows their necessity and proper use.

To the foregoing no exception can be taken. But, in the last analysis, what does the argument amount to? To this simply, that questions generally, if not invariably, have two or more sides, and

that all sides ought to be given due consideration if a just conclusion is to be reached. Well, in the administration of justice this principle, or maxim, is exemplified daily and hourly. In a criminal case, the prosecution and the defense are given practically equal opportunity to persuade the judge and the jury. The judge is an impartial umpire and the jury's guide. The jury is bound and instructed to consider all the evidence without bias and to render its judgment in accordance with the clear weight of the evidence, giving the defendant the benefit of every reasonable doubt. In a civil case, the doctrine of reasonable doubt gives place to that of preponderant evidence merely.

Of course, judges and juries are human and prone to err. Justice not infrequently miscarries. Emotion, prejudice, class or group interest may blind judge and jury alike. But it is to be noted that consciousness of passion and bias is rare. The principle of polarity is not willingly violated. The verdict may be woefully unfair, but those who handed it down do not concede that it is unfair. They are satisfied that they considered all the evidence and reasoned about it logically and candidly.

What is true of legal disputes is true of all other controversies. Take politics, economics, ethics, religion, history. Let us put a number of questions covering a wide and diversified field. Did Jesus of the Gospels ever live, or is he a mythical figure? Was the murder of Cæsar morally justifiable? Did the German emperor and his military advisers will the world-war? Is democracy a possible and feasible form of government? Would the single tax on land values abolish poverty? Is capital punishment just and necessary? Are acquired characters inheritable and inherited? Is Capitalism digging its own grave, as Marx asserted was the case, or has it sufficient virtue and vitality to correct its own mistakes and remedy its own ills? Is effective control, in the public interest, of great and powerful utilities possible, or must utility regulation and control lead to state ownership and operation?

Prof. Cohen will tell us that no political, social, or other question can be settled rightly unless in the process of adjustment the principle of polarity is recognized and respected. But no school, group, or party ever admits that its program or proffered solution is one-sided, short-sighted, ill-considered, superficial. Whether a given solution is sound or unsound cannot be determined by any

general appeal to polarity. It must be determined by reasoning applied to the facts and relevant considerations.

Can we contend that, philosophically speaking, the truth always lies between two opposite views? Would such a principle be valid? Certainly not. The final answer to a question is often either Yes or No. We cannot say that Protection is and is not essential to national development, or that the Single Tax will and will not abolish poverty, or that democracy is and is not feasible and desirable, or that acquired characters are and are not inheritable. We cannot say that this person is and is not guilty of an offence charged, or that the verdict of a jury was and was not just and warranted by the evidence adduced.

The truth may lie in the middle, and it may lie at the extreme end. There is no *à priori* reason for holding in advance where it will be found. Polarity does not excuse jumping at conclusions.

There is, in fact, no royal road to truth. Science and philosophy arrive at truths, or generalizations, by the pedestrian and thorny path of trial, error, verification, re-verification, modification and restatement. What they say to the individual thinker is: "Make sure of your data. Define your problem with precision and care. Weigh your evidence, and form your theory, when ready for that stage, provisionally, inviting criticism and examination. Never be dogmatic, for new facts may come to light that will dictate revision of your theory. Remember that science and philosophy are progressive and dynamic. There is no revelation for either of them. If you start with an assumption, bear that fact in mind, and do not claim that you have proved every point in the argument and every premise, expressed or implied."

These admonitions have the support of human experiences. Polarity does not sum them up sufficiently.

Let me now revert to two of Prof. Cohen's own illustrations and see how he uses polarity. To quote:

If I say a house is thirty years old, and some one else says it is thirty-one years old, the statements are contradictory in the sense that both cannot possibly be true at the same time and in the same respect. Both statements, however, can certainly be true if we draw a distinction, e.g., thirty-one years since the beginning and thirty years since the completion of its building.

Sometimes an intellectual dilemma is avoided by rejecting both alternatives. This is illustrated by the old difficulty as to whether language was a human invention or a special revelation. The difficulty was avoided by introducing the concept of natural growth.

Neither illustration strikes me as a happy or apt one. Neither involves the application of the polarity principle. In the case of the house, both statements lacked precision, and an exact and complete statement, if one had been demanded, would have removed the ambiguity and left no room for controversy. In the case of language, neither of the old theories had any scientific validity, while the concept of natural growth was suggested by study and experience, and had no aid from or, indeed, need of the polarity principle.

Prof. Cohen appears to claim more for the principle than it is capable of yielding to science or to life. He must have been misled by a few instances in which polarity does remove difficulties by a sort of synthesis. On the whole, one fails to perceive in his theory any improvement on the Hegelian formula—Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis. But even this formula should not be stretched unduly or overworked. To repeat, there is no royal road to truth, as Prof. Cohen himself reminds us over and over again.

## LIARS AND LYING PSYCHOLOGICALLY CONSIDERED

BY FRED SMITH

HAPPILY for us, our topic makes no call for our being statistical with regard to it, else, remembering the famous mot with regard to the intimate relation between lying and statistics, we should be found to be demonstrating, in our first sentence, that which we have set out to evaluate psychologically. Neither does our title demand that we be Sunday-schoolish with regard to our topic. It merely asks that we be scientific. That surely is task enough. To be neither armed against nor enamored of lying as one comes to the study of this theme is to achieve that state of mind which makes possible an impartial study of it. It is well to look at lying and liars with that cool impartiality that one uses in going through a museum. Equipped then with an educated conscience in the interest of clarity rather than for condemnation: motivated by a large curiosity: unimpeded by a moralizing churchianity, one can proceed to evaluate lying and liars. The temptation is to proceed to enlighten him. But this is not our present task.

Remembering our first caution against becoming statistical with regard to our topic, we shall attempt no quantitative tabulation of those who have, in many cases, been too hastily designated by the deprecatory term of liar, lest we turn from the psychology of our topic to its practice. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to become near-statistical, in an incidental sort of way, for the further progress of our discussion. For it is hardly possible to deal with the nature of lying without taking some note of the fact of it.

Again, happily, it is not necessary that we go beyond generalities in this respect. Like the poor, the liar is ever with us. Like wheat, lying exists wherever man is found. Were we here dealing with the ethnology of lying, an interesting field for investigation would demand our attention. Not enough study has been given as yet to the geographic distribution of lies and liars throughout the world. It is enough for us to know that lying is not indigenous to any race or soil, though it might be modified by both. Lying, we shall find, is a modifiable thing. It calls for more than an isothermic explanation. It is an activity not peculiar to the tropics. It is so pervasive that none remains untouched with regard to it. Here

beggar, bishop, and business man are touched with a common fact, though, be it noted, they do not by any means, arrive at a common level. When it comes to lying there are diversities manifold.

This is not to say, however, as many in their haste have said, that "all men are liars." They who so speak are unwittingly making the statement true so far as they themselves are concerned. It is good to remember that though lying is found almost everywhere, the liar is not so widely distributed. Because a man was a liar yesterday, that does not make him one today. The practice of Christianity would be increased and the sense of confusion lessened, if all men knew when to speak of the liar in the past tense. There are few confirmed liars; there are many circumstantial ones. With the majority of men, lying is a thing of happenstance rather than a thing of habit, except, of course, in that interesting realm of understood fictions in which we all move, more or less, giving to something other than the truth the gloss of it. Science doth make liars of us all. Still do we speak in pre-Copernican ways of the rising and setting of the sun. All the obvious truths of our fathers have been shown by science to be not so. But the world in general refuses to change its mental fixations in regard to these things. Men still talk of things as they look, knowing that they are not as they look. With regard to these matters we have agreed to let truth wait on our convenience. It is a curious fact, accepted even by good people, that they will accept a partial truth in place of the whole truth so long as it is a concession rather than a catastrophe.

The mention of this distinction brings us to the moral crux of the whole matter. To many this is the only thing that does matter. These are they who are prone to think of all kinds of lying in terms of the same condemnation. Ruskin in his day drew attention to the fact that "we are too much in the habit of looking at falsehood in its darkest associations, and through the color of its worst purposes." Since then, however, psychology has come to power. It will not treat our lyings so. Lying is not all of a piece. Before the psychologist came to reveal the gradated ways in which men admixture truth, practical experience had given men a clue to this discernment. Lies were described as "black" or "white." The distinction will hardly serve for a scientific classification, but it does serve as a hint that all lies are not of the same nature. Children have a happy way of arriving at the same conclusion.

I recall, as a lad, that we had a way of saying among ourselves that "twenty fibs make a lie." I see that the dictionary at my desk defines a fib as "a softened expression for a lie." Unfortunately many theologians of the past thought it better not to admit of any softening when it came to speaking about lying. It was something to be utterly condemned. It was an abomination to the Lord. One sentence was sufficient to enwrap all lies. Now that I have studied them as well as their teachings I have another illustration of where a man's fear touches the expression of his philosophy with hypocrisy. Lies, crushed to earth, will sometimes rise again because of the truth they contain. The task of the psychologist is not to inveigh against lying, but to investigate it.

Following this procedure, he arrives at many interesting facts. Becoming accustomed to the darkness, assuming that this is the appropriate synonym for all forms of lying, one comes to see that there are many kinds of lies other than those which have been classified as black or white. Richard G. Cabot some time ago sought to classify all lies in a threefold division; the lie artistic, the lie belligerent and the lie philanthropic. It is an interesting but hardly an inclusive classification. How varied lies can be one need only consult "Roget" under the heading of "Falsehood." Having done this it will be seen that lying, in one form or another, at some time or other, is practiced by the large majority of men.

The thing which interests the psychologist with regard to this matter is to know what it is that makes men the liars they happen to be. The reasons are many, depending sometimes on the fact of circumstance, at other times, on the fact of one's character. Man is a denizen of two worlds. He lives in the things of the spirit, and also on the plane of sense. For the lubrication of his mundane life he has found it necessary to live according to convention, as well as conviction. Or, rather, we should say that it has become his conviction that at times he must live according to convention. Politeness makes a friend of falsehood and calls it accomodation. Difficult questions are answered ambiguously. Truth must be short measured lest it give offence. The advice of an ancient counselor is made to read, "A man must be first peaceable, then pure." One of the strange anomalies of the virtuous life is that the virtues are always undercutting each other. There is a sense in which men, at times, have to become liars for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, as that discerner of human conduct, Roger Bacon, noted, men often become liars for the pleasure of it. He says: "A lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the mind of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?" Because so many folk have a greater love for the dramatic than for the divine: desiring a thrill more than the truth, lying finds place and power.

It is interesting to note that, in this connection with the dramatic that which is other than the truth often carries with it no sense of moral stigma. It is accounted proper to cultivate the sense of exaggeration before one cultivates the sense of ethical clarity. In nursery rhyme and fireside lore, our parents taught us the way. They nourished the habit by the aid of myth, legend, and fairy tale. And now that we have become men, we find in ourselves a love of fiction. We give a license to the poet which we deny to the man of prose. Which is to say that we have come to the emancipating belief that theoretically strict truth may be a chief good in life, but in practical life it is amenable to circumstance. If we are ethically inclined we comfort ourselves by seeking to have a conscience approved before men. Which means that we have distinguished between a pure conscience and a puritanical one.

Well would it be for society if all lies were fancy born. But that is not so. Many, unfortunately, surge up through the subsoil of passion. Then men and institutions are in peril. A conflagration is abroad. It is as if a poison was injected into the arterial life of society. Of all forms of lying, none needs more attention than this in our day. During the last decade, we have been treated to a debauch of lying in this respect as to almost engulf civilization itself. Under the now hated word, propaganda, corporations and governments have taken to the habit of giving people what they want them to hear. For the ethicist this is one of the major problems of our time. For the psychologist it is one of the most interesting. By a subtle interplay on the major fears and faiths of men, their reasoning processes are crushed or perverted. Under the guise of enlightenment the emotionalizing process goes on and men respond, like dumb beasts, to the call of the dictator.

The last group of 'lyings' to which we give attention is that group which, strangely enough, have their birth in the loyalties of men. Here are born "the patriotic lie of the historian, the provident lie of the politician, the zealous lie of the partisan, the merciful lie of the friend, and the careless lie of each man to himself." The moralist has had much to say about the wickedness of these things. "Sinful it is," he says, "when men slay the truth for the sake of love." The psychologist, in his own un-moral way, is interested in that men are so often the forsakers of truth for the sake of love. It is a curious fact that the loyalties of love so often lead men into the lyings we have just mentioned. Yet the explanation is simple. So long as men allow their emotions to outrun their ethics, so long will lying be resorted to in the long run. What the future of lying will be is hard to say. To the religionist and the ethicist, the psychologist has much to offer, as we have seen. He has also something to suggest, namely, that the primary step necessary to a more truthful order of things is that among the religionists themselves there shall be less lying about lying.

## AN ODE TO LIBERTY

BY ROBERT BURNS

### PART I.—A VISION

As I stood by yon roofless tower,  
Where the wa'flower scents the dewy air,  
Where the howlet mourns in her ivy bower,  
And tells the midnight moon her care.

The winds were laid, the air was still,  
The stars they shot alang the sky ;  
The fox was howling on the hill,  
And the distant echoing glens reply.

The stream, adown its hazelly path,  
Was rushing by the ruin'd wa's,  
To join yon river on the Strath,  
Whase distant roaring swells and fa's.

The cauld blae North was streaming forth  
Her lights, wi' hissing, eerie din ;  
Athwart the lift they start and shift,  
Like Fortune's favors, tint as win.

By heedless chance I turn'd my eyes,  
And, by the moonbeam, shook to see  
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,  
Attir'd as Minstrels wont to be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,  
His daring look had daunted me ;  
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain,  
The sacred posy—"Libertie!"

And frae his harp sic strains did flow,  
Might rous'd the slumb'ring Dead to hear ;  
But oh, it was a tale of woe,  
As ever met a Briton's ear !

## PART II.—THE ODE TO LIBERTY

*The Song the Minstrel Sang*

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,  
 No lyre Æolian I awake;  
 'Tis liberty's bold note I swell,  
 Thy harp, Columbia, let me take!

See gathering thousands, while I sing,  
 A broken chain exulting bring,

And dash it in a tyrant's face,  
 And dare him to his very beard,  
 And tell him he no more is feared—

No more the despot of Columbia's race!  
 A tyrant's proudest insults brav'd,  
 They shout—a People freed! They hail an Empire saved.

Where is man's godlike form?

Where is that brow erect and bold—  
 That eye that can unmov'd behold  
 The wildest rage, the loudest storm  
 That e'er created fury dared to raise?

Avaunt! thou caitiff, servile, base,  
 That tremblest at a despot's nod,  
 Yet, crouching under the iron rod,

Canst land the hand that struck th' insulting blow!  
 Art thou of man's Imperial line?  
 Dost boast that countenance divine?

Each skulking feature answers, No!

But come, ye sons of Liberty,  
 Columbia's offspring, brave as free,  
 In danger's hour still flaming in the van,  
 Ye know, and dare maintain, the Royalty of Man!

Alfred! on thy starry throne,  
 Surrounded by the tuneful choir,  
 The bards that erst have struck the patriot lyre,  
 And rous'd the freeborn Briton's soul of fire,  
 No more thy England own!

Dare injured nations form the great design,  
 To make detested tyrants bleed?  
 Thy England execrates the glorious deed!  
 Beneath her hostile banners waving,  
 Every pang of honor braving,  
 England in thunder calls, "The tyrant's cause is mine!"  
 That hour accurst how did the fiends rejoice  
 And hell, thro' all her confines, raise the exulting voice,  
 That hour which saw the generous English name  
 Linkt with such damned deeds of everlasting shame!

Thee, Caledonia! thy wild heaths among,  
 Fam'd for the martial deed, the heaven-taught song.  
 To thee I turn with swimming eyes;  
 Where is that soul of Freedom fled?  
 Immingled with the mighty dead,  
 Beneath that hallow'd turf where Wallace lies!  
 Hear it not, WALLACE! in thy bed of death.  
 Ye babbling winds! in silence sweep,  
 Disturb not ye the hero's sleep,  
 Nor give the coward secret breath!  
 Is this the ancient Caledonian form,  
 Firm as the rock, resistless as the storm?  
 Show me that eye which shot immortal hate,  
 Blasting the despot's proudest bearing;  
 Show me that arm which, nerv'd with thundering fate,  
 Crushed usurpation's boldest daring—  
 Dark quenched as yonder sinking star,  
 No more that glance lightens afar;  
 That arm no more whirls on the waste of War.

## GLOSSARY OF SCOTS WORDS:

*Blae*, bleak; *lift*, sky; *sic*, such; *tint*, lost.

## BALLAD ON THE AMERICAN WAR

BY ROBERT BURNS

When Guildford good our pilot stood,

An' did our hellim thraw, man:

Ae night, at tea, began a plea,

Within America, man:

Then up they gat the maskin-pat,

And in the sea did jaw, man;

An' did nae less, in full congress,

Than quite refuse our law, man.

Then thro' the lakes Montgomery takes,

I wat he was na slaw, man:

Down Lowrie's Burn<sup>1</sup> he took a turn,

And Carleton did ca', man:

But yet, whatreck, he, at Quebec,

Montgomery-like<sup>2</sup> did fa', man.

Wi' sword in hand, before his band,

Amang his en'mies a', man.

Poor Tammy Gage within a cage

Was kept at Boston-ha', man;

Till Willie Howe took o'er the knowe

For Philadelphia, man;

Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin

Guid christian bluid to draw, man;

But at New-York, wi' knife an' fork,

Sir-Loin<sup>3</sup> he hacked sma', man.

Burgoyne gaed up, like spur an' whip,

Till Fraser brave did fa', man;

Then lost his way, ae misty day,

In Saratoga shaw, man.

Cornwallis fought as lang's he dought,

<sup>1</sup>Lowrie's Burn is a pseudonym for the St. Lawrence river.

<sup>2</sup>The Montgomeries of Coilsfield were friends and patrons of Burns.

<sup>3</sup>Refers to a raid ordered by General Howe at Peckskill in which a great many head of cattle of the Colonists were killed.

An' did the buckskins claw, man;  
 But Clinton's glaive grae rust to save,  
 He hung it to the wa', man.

Then Montague, an' Guildford too,  
 Began to fear a fa', man;  
 And Sackville dour, wha stood the stoure,  
 The German chief<sup>4</sup> to thraw, man:  
 For Paddy Burke,<sup>5</sup> like ony Turk,  
 Nae mercy had at a', man:  
 An Charlie Fox threw by the box,  
 An' lows'd his tinkler jaw, man.

Then Rockingham took up the game:  
 Till death did on him ca', man;  
 When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,  
 Conform to gospel law, man:  
 Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,  
 They did his measures thraw, man;  
 For North an' Fox united stocks,  
 An bore him to the wa', man.<sup>6</sup>

Then clubs and hearts were Charlie's cartes,  
 He swept the stakes awa', man,  
 Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,  
 Led him a sair faux pas, man:  
 The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,  
 On Chatham's boy did ca', man;  
 An' Scotland drew her pipe an' blew,  
 "Up, Willie, waur them a', man!"<sup>7</sup>

Behind the throne then Granville's gone,  
 A secret word or twa, man;  
 While slee Dundas, arous'd the class

<sup>4</sup>General Steuben.

<sup>5</sup>Edmund Burke.

<sup>6</sup>The administration of Lord North was followed by that of the Marquis of Rockingham; after his death, he was succeeded by Lord Shelburne; later Mr. Fox and Lord North made a coalition which forced Shelburne's resignation.

<sup>7</sup>A Scotch song, popular at the time.

Be-north the Roman wa', man:  
 An' Chatham's wraith, in heav'nly graith,  
 (Inspirèd bardies saw, man),  
 Wi' kindling eyes, cry'd, "Willie, rise!  
 Would I hae fear'd them a', man?"

But, word an' blow, North, Fox and Co.  
 Gowff'd Willie like a ba', man;  
 Till Suthron raise, an coost their claise  
 Behind him in a raw, man:  
 An' Caledon threw by the drone,  
 An' did her whittle draw, man:  
 An' swoor fu' rude, thro' dirt an' bluid,  
 To mak it guid in law, man.

#### GLOSSARY OF SCOTS WORDS:

*Ae*, one; *bardies*, poets; *bluid*, blood; *ca'*, call; *dought*, was able; *dour*, stubborn; *drone*, bagpipe; *fa'*, fall; *graith*, harness; *guid*, good; *hellim*, helm; *jav*, pour; *knowe*, high ground; *lows'd*, unloosed; *maskin-pat*, tea-pot; *shaw*, forest; *slaw*, slow; *stee*, sly; *stoure*, dust; *swoor*, swore; *thrav*, thwart or twist; *waur*, worst; *whateck*, of what avail; *whittle*, sword; *wraith*, spirit.

ROBERT BURNS AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
BY GUSTAVE CARUS

THE health of William Pitt had been proposed and drunk with a will when Robert Burns startled the company with the words: "A bumper to the health of a much greater man—General Washington."

The Treaty of Paris, formally ending the American Revolution, was hardly ten years old, and all loyal and proper British subjects still regarded the seceding colonists as rebels and traitors. Yet the poet, at a private dinner at which he was a guest, expressed thus his approval of one who had been only a short time before at war with the country.

It was a time of extreme reaction in Great Britain. The French Revolution just across the Channel frightened all people with conservative leanings; even those who normally had liberal tendencies went over to the conservative camp, understanding, as they did, nothing of the political or social meaning of the great events of the time and able only to see and fear the Reign of Terror. Any liberal move, even a mild one, even the words "freedom" and "liberty," were looked on as dangerous.

Robert Burns was a passionate lover of liberty, and in those days of reaction and repression made no secret of his sympathies, which he expressed in conversations, letters, and poems. His too freely expressed approval of the cause of the French Revolution seems to have been the cause of most of his troubles.

His biographers have given the impression that his unpopularity with the people of Dumfries, where he lived during the last four years of his life, was due to his intemperate habits and his association with low company. But we know that intemperance was so general, even among the gentry, that it could hardly have made him objectionable. By "low company" was meant, most likely, people, not with bad habits, but with *objectionable opinions*, people who were sympathetic with enemies, who were pro-French, pro-American and pro-revolutionary. Men like Maxwell and Syme, whose *opinions* today would be called radical, were his frequent companions, and out of the enthusiasm shared with these men he wrote the *Tree of Liberty*, a half humorous ballad of the French

Revolution. The good citizens of Dumfries were decidedly shocked by the conversation and opinions of this group.

The poet's poverty made him dependent on his position in the Excise Service. Faithful and zealous service was not enough; to make his position secure, it was necessary not to offend his superiors, including the party in power in Parliament, by political opinions or conduct. Burns' independent spirit made this difficult.

The following episode is typical of his troubles. A smuggling brig was seized in the Solway by the excisemen. Burns took part in this dramatic affair. Before making the attack while waiting for a re-enforcement of dragoons, it is told that the poet became impatient and composed *The Deil's awa wi' the Exciseman*. When re-enforcements arrived, he led the party and was the first to board the ship, distinguishing himself for his courage. He would have been promoted for his part in this seizure but for what followed.

The brig was condemned and sold at auction the next day, with all her stores and arms, among which were four carronades which the poet bought for three pounds. These small cannon he sent to the French Assembly with a letter expressing his sympathy, an unwise performance, since both the guns and the letter were intercepted at Dover. Diplomatic relations with the French Republic were strained; war actually came some time later. Either this event or his too freely and vigorously expressed opinions led to an official investigation of the poet-exciseman's political conduct and ruined his chances for promotion.

But other forces were pressing toward his undoing.

A group of super-patriots organized a society which they called the Loyal Native Club, "for preserving Peace, Liberty, and Property, and for supporting the Laws and Constitution of the Country." Commissary Goldie of Dumfries was president and Francis Sprott, the town clerk, was secretary. During the summer of 1793 this society paraded through the streets of the town with two effigies of Tom Paine which they burned while the crowd applauded. The ladies of the town prepared beautiful bandeaux of blue satin ribbon, embroidered with the words "God Save the King!" and distributed them to the Loyal Natives to wear on their hats for the parade, and across their breasts at the ball held that evening.

These patriots made Burns and his liberal friends the chief

object of their animosity. One member wrote these lines which someone handed to the poet over the table at a convivial meeting:

Ye sons of sedition, give ear to my song,  
Let Syme, Burns and Maxwell pervade every throng,  
With Cracken, the attorney, and Mundell, the quack,  
Send Willy, the monger, to hell with a smack.

On seeing these words, Burns at once wrote this reply:

Ye true "Loyal Natives," attend to my song,  
In uproar and riot rejoice the night long;  
From Envy and Hatred your core is exempt,  
But where is your shield from the darts of Contempt?

On another occasion he wrote the following:

#### ON COMMISSARY GOLDIE'S BRAINS

Lord, to account who dares thee call,  
Or e're dispute thy pleasure?  
Else why within so thick a wall,  
Enclose so poor a treasure?

Lockhart relates an anecdote of this period, which Carlyle refers to as significant. He tells how David M'Culloch found Burns walking alone on the deserted side of the street, "while the opposite side was gay with successive groups of gentlemen and ladies, all drawn together for the festivities of the night, not one of whom appeared willing to recognize him. Mr. M'Culloch dismounted and joined Burns, who, on his proposing to him to cross the street, said 'Nay, nay my young friend, that's all over now.'"

That Burns tried hard to be more discreet, as was expected of a servant of the Government, although he was not fully successful, can be seen from his letter to Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop, of January 2 and 5, 1793, in which he says:

.....I might indeed get a job of officiating, where a settled supervisor [of Excise] was ill, or aged; but this hauls me from my family, as I could not remove them on such an uncertainty. Besides, some envious, malicious, devil has raised a little demur on my political principles....I have set, henceforth, a seal on my lips, as to these unlucky politices; but to you, I must breathe my sentiments....The board had made me the subject of their animadversions; and now I have the pleasure of informing you, that all is set to rights in that quarter. Now as to these informers, may the devil be let loose to—but hold! ....Alas! how little do the wantonly or idly officious think what mischief they do by their malicious insinuations, indirect impertinence, or thoughtless blabbings. What a difference....the amiable circle I so lately mixed with at the hospitable hall of Dunlop, their generous hearts,—their uncontaminated, dignified minds—their informed and polished understand-

ings—what a contrast, when compared....with the soul of the miscreant who can deliberately plot the destruction of an honest man that never offended him, and with a grin of satisfaction see the unfortunate being, his faithful wife, and prattling innocents turned over to beggary and ruin!

But, that all was not set right can be seen from his letter to John Francis Erskine, Earl of Mar, (who, although he was a stranger to Burns, all unsolicited, offered his aid;) where we read:

You have been misinformed as to my final dismission from the Excise; I am still in the service.—Indeed, but for the exertions of....Mr. Graham....I had without so much as a hearing, or the smallest previous intimation been turned adrift, with my helpless family, to all the horrors of want. Had I had any other recourse probably I might have saved them the trouble of a dismissal...one of our supervisors-general, a Mr. Corbett, was instructed to enquire on the spot, into my conduct, and to document me,—“that *my business was to act, not to think; and that whatever might be men or measures, it was for me to be silent and obedient.*”

Mr. Corbet was likewise my steady friend; so between Mr. Graham and him, I have been partly forgiven: only, I understand that all hopes of my getting officially forward are blasted.

Even his patriotism for Scotland was not entirely free from suspicion. His *Scots Wha Hae* would be irritating in some quarters, and the Jacobite cause, which inspired many of his best poems, among which are the *Lament of Mary, Queen of Scots*; *It was a' for our Rightful King*; *The Lovely Lass o' Inverness*; *Charlie, He's my Darling*; *Bannocks o' Bear Meal*, and *Oh I am come to the Low Country*, was in disfavor in official circles. The memory of the Jacobite uprising was still fresh enough to suggest disloyalty.

His loyalty, in his poems, to the house of Stuart is often criticized as inconsistent with his love of liberty. His position is explained in his letter of November 8, 1788, to the editor of the *Star*, a liberal London paper, in which he gives the reason for his lack of enthusiasm for the centennial celebration of the Glorious Revolution. He says:

The “Bloody and tyrannical House of Stuart,” may be said with propriety and justice, when compared with the present royal family, and the sentiments of our days; but is there no allowance to be made for the manners of the times? Were the royal contemporaries of the Stuarts more attentive to their subjects’ rights? Might not the epithets of “bloody and tyrannical” be, with equal justice, applied to the House of Tudor, of York, or of any other of their predecessors?....

The Stuarts only contended for prerogatives which they knew their predecessors enjoyed, and which they saw their

contemporaries enjoying; but these prerogatives were inimical to the happiness of a nation and the rights. ....

The Stuarts have been condemned and laughed at for the folly and impracticability of their attempts in 1715 and 1745. That they failed, I bless God; but I cannot join in the ridicule against them. ....

To conclude, Sir, let every man who has a tear for the many miseries incident to humanity, feel for a family, illustrious as any in Europe, and unfortunate beyond historic precedent; and let every Briton (and particularly every Scotsman), who ever looked with reverential pity on the dotage of a parent, cast a veil over the fatal mistakes of the kings of his forefathers.

This same Glorious Revolution, which gave the country the Bill of Rights, left in Scotland the painful memory of the massacre of Glencoe.

The religious controversy, which was then going on between the "Auld Lights" and the "New Lights", found Burns supporting the liberal party. He wrote a number of satires on the narrow Calvinism of his day, among the best known of which are *The Holy Fair*, *The Ordination*, *Holy Willie's Prayer*, *The Kirk of Scotland's Alarm*, and *To the Unco' Guide*, which latter has given a by-word to our everyday vocabulary.

His love for freedom was all-embracing and even included that of the outcast. He would have had the same contempt for the cringing beggar that he had for the titled sycophant, but he had a spontaneous fellow-feeling for the lusty vagrant, which he expressed in the final song of the *Jolly Beggars*:

A fig for those by law protected!  
Liberty's a glorious feast!  
Courts for cowards were erected,  
Churches built to please the priest.

The story is told, that during the war between Great Britain and the French Republic, Burns was almost forced into a duel by an officer who took offence at the witty toast: "May our success in the present war be equal to the justice of our cause."

Burns was, however, a loyal British subject. Although he was ready to criticize the Government or the party in power, he had faith in the principles of the British Constitution. In a letter to John Erskine of Mar, he said:

In defence to their accusations, I said, that whatever might be my sentiments of republics, ancient or modern, as to Britain, I abjured the idea!—that a CONSTITUTION which, in its original principles, experience had proved to be every way fitted for our happiness in society, it would be insanity to sacrifice to an untried visionary theory.

But he did not blindly accept the British Constitution as perfect or final. When he presented to the Subscription Library in Dumfries, a number of books, including, a copy of *De Lolme on the British Constitution*, he wrote in it this inscription: "Mr. Burns presents this book to the library, and begs that they will take it as a creed of British Liberty—until they find a better.—R. B." Fearing that this might give offence, he called next day and pasted the fly leaf against the back of the frontispiece, hiding his inscription. The volume can still be seen in the library and by holding the pages to the light, the inscription can be read.

While the French Republic was defending herself against aggression he applauded, but when she turned aggressor, he disapproved, as he wrote his friend, Robert Graham:

As to France, I was her enthusiastic votary in the beginning of the business. When she came to show her old avidity for conquest, in annexing Savoy, etc., to her dominions, and invading the rights of Holland, I altered my sentiments.

When during the war with France, an invasion threatened, he joined the corps of volunteers which was formed in Dumfries, and rehabilitated himself in the eyes of the townspeople to a great extent. For the occasion he wrote *Does Haughty Gaul Invasion Threat*, which became the song of the Dumfries Companies.

His patriotism never became chauvinistic. This poem is a rallying-cry for the defence of the native land and contains not one word encouraging or approving the invasion of a foreign, even an enemy country. Characteristic of it are the lines:

The kettle o' the kirk and state,  
Perhaps a clout may fail in't.  
But deil a foreign tinker loun  
Shall never ca' a nail in't  
Our fathers' blude the kettle bought,  
And wha would dare to spoil it?  
By Heav'ns! the sacrilegious dog  
Shall fuel be to boil it!

It was quite natural that the American Revolution should appeal to Burns. He often expressed his disapproval of the British policy in the Colonies, his sympathies for the Americans and his admiration for George Washington. His *Ballad on the American War* is believed to have been written in 1784, but was not included in the Kilmarnock Edition of 1786 (the first edition) but was included in the Edinburgh Edition (1787). On seeing this ballad, smithy." The ballad forcefully gives the views of the liberals in

one reader, Dr. Blair, remarked "Burns' Politics smell of the Scotland on the war in the Colonies. It seems to have attracted little attention in America.

In his letter to the editor of the London *Star*, Burns sets forth his opinions, saying:

....who would believe, Sir, that in this, our Augustin age of liberality and refinement, while we seem so justly sensible and jealous of our rights and liberties, and animated with such indignation against the very memory of those who would have subverted them—that a certain people under our national protection should complain, not against our monarch and a few favorite advisors, but against our WHOLE LEGISLATIVE BODY, for similar oppression, and almost in the very same terms, as our forefathers did of the House of Stuart! I will not and cannot enter into the merits of the cause; but I dare say the American Congress of 1776, will be allowed to have been as able and enlightened as the English Convention was in 1688; and that their posterity will celebrate the centenary of their deliverance from us, as duly and sincerely as we do ours from the oppressive measures of the wrong-headed House of Stuart.

To Mrs. Dunlop he wrote, much in the same vein, (November 13, 1788.):

Is it not remarkable, odiously remarkable, that tho' manners are more civilized, and the rights of mankind better understood, by an Augustin Century's improvement, yet in this very reign of heavenly Hanoverianism, and almost in this very year,\* an empire beyond the Atlantic has had its REVOLUTION too, and for the very same maladministration and legislative misdemeanors in the illustrious and sapientipotent Family of H——as was complained of in the "tyrannical and bloody House of Stuart."

Burns' finest tribute to the American Revolution is his *Ode to Liberty*. The poem is in two parts, the first is called *The Vision* and the second is the Ode proper. A first version of the first part was published in Johnson's Musical Museum, in 1796, set to music, under the title *The Minstrel at Linclunden*, it included the following chorus:

A lassie all alone, was making her moan,  
Lamenting our lads beyond the sea,  
In the bluidy wars they fa', and our honor's gane an' a',  
And broken-harted we maun dee.

and this stanza concluded the poem:

He sang wi' joy his former day,  
He, weeping, wail'd his latter times;  
But what he said—it was nae play,  
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.

A second version of this part appeared in the edition of Burns'

\*1788, the centenary of the expulsion of the Stuarts

works edited by Dr. Currie (London, 1800) with the title *A Vision*. Here the chorus was omitted. It was believed by most editors and critics that Burns had written the song of the minstrel but had suppressed it and substituted the stanza given above. It seems that both parts of the poem were written about the same time, at the period of his life while he was suffering under the odium of his supposed lack of patriotism. During this time he spent many hours alone, at the Lincluden Ruins, a romantic and beautiful place, where the Clunden and the Nith join. Of the first part he made the two versions mentioned, one he sent to Johnson's Museum where it appeared during his life, the other was published by Dr. Currie after Burns' death.

The second part, *The Ode to Liberty*, the "Song the Minstrel Sang," he withheld from publication. He recited it to some of his friends and sent a copy to Mr. Perry of the London *Morning Chronicle*, with the suggestion that it might be published anonymously. This seems not to have been done. This manuscript was sold to Robert Clark in 1872 after Mr. Perry's death. At the sale it was described as "The original MS. of the Ode on the American War, in 62 lines, in three leaves written on one side only, in good condition, bound in red Morocco cover by Pratt, and lettered 'The American War' by Burns." A fragment of it, beginning "Thee Caledonia," he included in a letter to Mrs. Dunlop (June 25, 1794) where he says its subject is Liberty, and that he intends it as "an irregular ode to General Washington's birthday."

This second part, or the "Ode" proper, was first published in William S. Douglas' edition (Kilmarnock, 1876) but independent of the *Vision* which appeared separately in the same edition. In 1886 Mr. George Gebbie, in preparing his Complete Edition of Burns established that the *Ode* was the missing Song of the Lincluden Minstrel.

These poems seem not to be as well known in America as they deserve, and it is hoped that the future will grant them the recognition they merit.

We know Burns as the poet of labor and the plow, of love and sadness, we know him as the singer of conviviality, and as the Bard of Scotland. We should know him as the lover of liberty and freedom, the friend of the American Colonies, and the admirer of George Washington.

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