

# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the  
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER

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VOLUME XL (No. 7)

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DR. RUDOLF KASSNER

*Frontispiece to The Open Court.*

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## THE LEPER

BY DR. RUDOLF KASSNER

### INTRODUCTION

RUDOLF KASSNER, the renowned Austrian philosopher, and one of the profoundest and most original thinkers of the day, was born on September 11, 1873, at Gross-Pawlowitz in Moravia. He is of entirely German origin, and not only his parental, but more especially his maternal ancestors (all of them free-holders) belong to that race of fair-haired mountain Silesians, which has given to the Germans a Jacob Boehme and an Angelus Silesius.

Kassner studied at the universities of Vienna and Berlin, and, later on, for a short time at Oxford. He then spent many years in the capitals of Europe, and undertook long journeys in India, through the whole of Russia, etc. After the war he settled in Vienna and lives there still, Tilgnerstrasse 3, Wien 1.

His works represent a unity, and should be read in chronological order as they were published, for more than is generally the case in the writings of the thinkers of this world, one work emanates from the other, and is only fully comprehensible in connection with its forerunner.

Kassner is deeply original. He possesses the originality of life itself, and in his writings one can hardly discover any direct influence by modern German minds, with the one exception perhaps of Nietzsche, and this only in the first period of his intellectual career. On the other hand, the works of his youth are distinctly influenced by the English Essayists and Aesthetes and by Emerson, but most especially by Plato and the Upanishads. Rudolf Kassner's translation of Plato's *Symposium* (1904) is considered to be classical and of rare beauty, and has become one of the most popular translations of all, from any ancient tongue.

The titles of his works, as they appeared in succession (mostly in the Insel-Verlag, Leipzig) since 1900 are: *Death and the Mask*, *The Moral of Music*, *Melancholia*, *A Trilogy of the Spirit*, *The Elements of Human Greatness*, *Indian Idealism*, *The Chimera*, *The Leper*, *Number and Visage*, *Essays*, *The Foundations of Physiognomy*, *Transformation*.

Rudolf Kassner's works, from the first to the last page even in those books in which the expression does not yet appear, is physiognomy in the widest and profoundest sense of the word. It is a doctrine of Form, a new irrationalism. His thinking is bound to the language in which he writes, and he has what Flaubert calls: "*la conscience du mot*" in a higher sense than any other living writer. Therefore the enormous difficulty in translating him. As was the case with the great mystics of the Middle Ages, his thinking is absolutely irrational, not to be understood in the sense of the Rationalists of Irrationalism, like Maeterlinck or, to a certain extent, Schopenhauer. It is entirely alive, a particle of life itself. His doctrine of Physiognomy has nothing in common with that of Lavater or other famous Physiognomists, on the contrary: it stands in direct opposition to them. We may not be permitted to say that his philosophy is *a* or *the* philosophy of intuition (which would be romanticism, a

form of mind which Kassner repudiates entirely), but his physiognomy teaches most essentially, that just the intuitive mind must be very logical, if intuition is not to become senseless and empty. Perhaps none will understand his work better than he who recognizes in it the innermost and innate opposition to the works of Professor Freud. This opposition (Physiognomy versus Psycho-Analysis) is all the more important, as in the early writings (English poets) psycho-analytical problems were possibly hit upon in the language of the Aesthete, at a time when Freud was not only unknown to Kassner, but to the world at large. In Kassner's last essay: *Christ and the World Soul*, this opposition to psycho-analysis has been made particularly clear—we may say: has become a sort of program.

But there is another side to Kassner's being, beyond that of the Seer and thinker, which the short work we are offering to the American public exemplifies in a particular sense: Kassner is a Mystic, a God-seeker, and the deepest essence of all his productions is the linking together of the visible and the invisible world, of matter and idea, of mind and soul. His nature, in its deepest source is religion, and like a second Offerus he is well able to carry the Christ Child across the waters on his great rugged shoulders. Only he who keeps this in mind will understand him fully. How endlessly far have we out-distanced Frances of Assisi's famous sermon: He who gives one stone for the restoration of the Chapel will receive one recompense in heaven; he who gives two will receive two recompenses, in Kassner's *Leper*, "who does not long for wages, for measure, for the Emperor's good-will, but whose Soul by the power of its purity longs for God alone."

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

From a purely legal point of view, Alexander I. cannot be held responsible for the murder of his father, Paul I.

On the other hand, what Prince Jachvil, to whose lot had fallen the task of strangling the Emperor Paul with the ribbon of the order he was wearing, supposedly said to the latter's son, namely: "Your hands are clean, because ours have been soiled by this deed," probably gives the truest expression to the facts of the case.

The Emperor Alexander's piety and mystical vein, his unexpected death in far-away Tagaurog, the fact that his coffin was always kept closed and his burial hurried over, gave rise to the popular belief, that he did not die as an Emperor, but as a penitent and a man of God at a much later date in Siberia, under the name of Fedor Kusmisch; further, that the burial in Tagaurog was a mystification and that the coffin supposed to contain his remains, was in reality empty.

Against this may be held the testimony of the people present at his sudden demise, who declared that they had seen his corpse in the coffin.

A totally new light has been brought to bear on the whole subject by the Sovjets having Alexander's coffin opened, which was discovered to contain nothing but stones.

The *Leaves from Alexander I. Notebook*, are totally imaginary; written in the form of the Diary of an Emperor-Penitent.

APOCRYPHAL PAGES FROM THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER I. NOTEBOOK<sup>1</sup>

To know whether we are doing His will, whether His will really is in us, that is all. Between our will and His stands fear. Between our will and His stand the constellations, stand the fear and the terror of the constellations. And we must pass through this fear, then all is well. He who can do so is strong, and reaches the goal.

Today I have felt it more deeply than ever before: God wants something of me, and then all will be well. I know not what it is that He wants me to do. I will that He should tell me. He wills that I should know. This is how we stand opposite each other. A day must come in which everything will be decided. When will it come?

—*Troitza Monastery.*

**D**URING a talk we had in the garden of the Convent, as we sat before the fresh grave of the Starez Heliodor, I said to Father Jefim: "Men cannot understand suffering and are incapable of feeling the joy and the sweetness of suffering, because they have numbers." Upon this Father Jefim answered in almost the same words as the Holy man in Kostroma used when he spoke to me—just a year ago: "It is not a question of men, but of God. Men must count, God alone need not count."

In the course of our conversation, Father Jefim said: that I ought to, and must look upon the fact that I am the first man in my Empire as my sacrifice: order stands for the path, the rank and file for the peregrination.

We all desire to see God and to rest in Him. As long as we live in the body, we shall not make unto ourselves any graven image of Him—then only do we live fearlessly. The Tartars tolerate neither an image of God nor of themselves, for they are willed to live and to beat the enemy, till the hour comes when they shall see God face to face. I would I could live as they do. But as it is, one man sees himself in the other: men sink down and are ruined before their time in each other, and the flesh dies in the flesh.

<sup>1</sup> A legend lived for many decades in Russia, which told that the Emperor Alexander I. had spent the last years of his life in Siberia, under the name of Feodor Kusmitsch, and there had died, unknown, as a penitent, because he had been privy to the murder of his father, Paul I. History has refuted this legend. In reality, Alexander died in his bed, as Emperor, and his remains were laid to rest in the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul.

The Volga measures 3,000 versts from its source to its mouth. How much do I measure from my beginning to my end? For the people I am measured, and have a beginning, and an end, because I am the Emperor. But by what do I measure myself? By God. And that is why I must die in order to live. For men I must live in order to die. If we could only know and feel in our innermost hearts that we die for God, that by death we step out of man's Kingdom and enter the Kingdom of God! Saints must be inexpressibly blessed in the hour of their death, in all their life no hour can have been happier for them than their last.

If our measure be guilt, then all our acts are indeed crimes and our true crime is suffering. A single man, a Pilgrim, is perhaps still able to think this thought. But how can two, or three, or a hundred, how can all men think this thought? Human beings cannot do it, and therefore God must think it for them, and act for them. The destruction of number by God—that is Christianity. Heathenism was the sanction of number by God.

One of my favorite thoughts: Heathenism has not reached its end, as is written in the Catechism and in the lesson-books of history, but goes on living in all nature, in animals, in human beings, everywhere. And the profoundest idea of Heathenism, which only few can conceive, is Christianity, just as death is the profoundest sense of life, is the innermost being, the value of a thing, the debt we owe to God. I expressed these thoughts to Strachow this morning. Upon which he answered: "Why should we then have the Church? Can everything which has been done up to now be undone again? Does not the historical man stand above the natural man? He asked whether it were possible for me to wear the crown with such thoughts in my heart? My thought, he held, was too great and too small for an Emperor, it was a thought for pilgrims and penitents. He is right. And yet, he understands not me nor the human heart. I thought of what the Starez Heliodor had said to me in the Troitza Convent.

My happiness is the course. That I am the first man in the Realm signifies nothing beyond the fact, that I must travel over the whole course to the very end. It is narrow as thought, narrow as the rent of lightning in the clouds.

I asked to be led to Feodor Kusmitsch. Tomorrow morning, before sunrise, he is to be executed, because he cut his comrade's—a common soldier's—throat for the sake of half a rubel. I was disguised, and therefore he had no idea who it was that came to see



him. When I looked into his eyes I know, that this was a man without a course, that the murderer is without a course.

All men are linked together by the course. The course is love, is the Good, is truth, is law. If I could only believe this quite simply! How much this belief would comfort me!

I often think: man is a celestial body, as finished and perfect in himself as a celestial body. All creatures, animals, trees, flowers, are celestial bodies. And that which connects them is their orbit, their course.

If I dared believe this! It is the belief of guiltless men. And yet, at the beginning of the path, at the entrance to the course, stands guilt, and therefore it remains guilt all the way, till I have blotted it out and turned back and become converted. And then I and Feodor Kusmitsch are not separated any more, we are brethren in death, and united in death.

It may also be, that my course is nothing but patience, and his course, the course of the murderer, impatience, for the sake of death.

I remembered today, what I once said to Kutusow, a year before he died: "Everybody, I myself, you—no matter who, is good, brave, full of courage to begin with, and then quite suddenly, he becomes cowardly, from one moment to the other, and remains so, from this moment on, and can do nothing to fight against it. How would you explain this? Does this cowardliness come from God or from the Devil?"

The old General answered: "From the Devil."

I. "No, from God."

Baron Stael has returned from Germany. We talked philosophy, as was our wont two years ago. He is always of a different opinion, but I need this, because it clarifies me all the more surely about my own self, as he who expresses his opinion, is one of the truest men I have ever met with. Stael is very German and does not understand the Russians. We touched upon the subject of Glory. I said to him: "The older I grow, the less can I understand Glory and the longing of men for Glory. Day by day I feel more strongly, that the Christian may and cannot live for Glory. Glory is the last limitation of the Soul, and therefore the most dangerous one. The Christian soul must pass beyond all boundary lines. Napoleon could not conceive a human being getting beyond his own Glory, for Napoleon was of the flesh, his spirit was the spirit of the flesh. I remember that his physical appearance and his voice always had a

paralyzing effect upon me. I disliked his body, his flesh; for me the texture of his flesh, his cheek, his chin, the nape of his neck, his hands, had something repulsive about them. I can say no more. It was flesh of the flesh, externalized, and I imagine, that in the grave it must have decayed sooner than the flesh of other people. He was opaque. As opaque as flesh is at all times—like the big grey Seal, which I saw a little while ago, in a fisherboat on the Fontanke. I never could get rid of the feeling, that behind that which we saw and heard of him stood quite another man, and behind this one yet another, and so on, neverendingly. The hidden secret of such men is nothing but deceit, and their revelation must be Glory.”

Stael answered: “Every man is just such an incomprehensible lump of flesh, such a captive seal, if we take away his deeds and his aims from him, a thing which would be entirely unfair and inhuman. None but the active man, the soldier, the commander, the law-giver seeks Glory. Glory and fame are the spirit of human deeds, they are actually the light of our deeds, and as such as precious as the deed itself. Whoever denies Glory must also deny the deed. They both belong to us as little as they belong to our sons. Glory is nothing but the deed which reaches beyond the doer. What nobler ties can be formed between men, between periods of time, than by Glory. The lonely man is indeed not capable of understanding either Glory or the times in which he lives. Therefore the lonely man should not have a son. The son would turn against him.”

I. “Are not all great men lonely?”

Stael: “That is what the poets, who falsify everything, say. The great man is our Judge, our measure, is the law-giver; the lonely man is guilty whatever he does, and therefore he may not judge. Can one conceive a greater difference?”

I. “We each of us talk in our own tongue, and cannot understand one another. Answer me: What is it that has set the distance between us and God?”

Stael: “It is the law, beyond which we dare not go.”

I: “No, Stael, it is guilt. And therefore guilt is blessed. He who is not guilty can also not feel joy, or rather, his joy is worthless. The Glory of the lonely man, the Glory of the Christian is guilt, the guilt of the guiltless. In Kaluga there lives a peasant, who, in spite of being innocent, was sent to Siberia for twenty years. He was suspected of having committed a murder, and the evidence was against him. At first he defended himself, then gave it up, went to Siberia and did penance willingly, indeed joyfully, for a deed which

another man, whom he did not even know, had done. I ask you, Stael, who is in the center of our moral world, this peasant or Napoleon? You will say: Napoleon. I say: the peasant. Napoleon lives on the circumference. Do you understand this?"

Stael: "No, I do not and I will not understand it."

I: "Why?"

Stael: "If we all felt as this peasant does, there would be nothing but criminals and no crime, or else nothing but crimes and no criminals any more."

I: "Stael, there was a time when I spoke exactly as you speak now, it comes back to me quite clearly at this moment. Let me tell you of one of the most wonderful hours of my life. It was at Paris, in 18. . . I had formed a great friendship with a Marquise Carega, who at that time surpassed all women in Paris by two things, by her walk, and by her pearl necklace. Her walk, all the other women attempted to imitate, without success; her pearls few people had ever seen, as the Marquise never wore them publicly, at the play or at receptions; for such occasions she had had a necklace of imitation pearls fabricated, which were so like the real ones, that even connoisseurs owned themselves deceived. In the evening, when she was alone, she hung the real pearls round her neck, or else they lay on her table before her, or she held them in her hand. There are Beings, Stael, in whom the secret of the human race reveals itself; more cannot be said of them, and it is senseless to call such people good or wise. And the Marquise Carega was a Being of this sort. Other people cannot exist without obstinacy, they make a point of honor of their obstinacy, in order to be admired. Women like the Marquise are without obstinacy, and if only for this reason they partake of a higher life and are alive in a higher sense, they are truly marvels, who touch the heart of him who has the happiness of coming near them most deeply. On the day, when the Marquise betrayed the secret of her pearl necklace to me, I was as much taken aback as you were, Stael, when I told you of the penitent of Kaluga, and I asked the Marquise exactly as you asked me just now: 'If all women, out of too great a love for their real pearls, or out of precaution, or fear, or for some other reason, wore false pearls and hid the real ones, we would never see real pearls any more; in a certain sense real pearls would cease to exist, and the fact would be established, that we could deprive a thing of all its value by over-estimation,' whereupon the Marquise answered: that I did not know the human heart, more especially, that I did not

understand woman—there was much that I still had to learn. She could see by this question. Men ripen so slowly. Not until it had become quite impossible for me to formulate such a question even in my thoughts, and not to see the right answer immediately, would I understand what I had not understood up to now: the human heart. “Learn not to think in such a way any more: make it a rule from today, from this hour on, never to draw such horrible conclusions! Promise me this! Try and see a new, a better, and freer humanity by not asking: if all acted as you do what then? Any more—not asking it even in your thoughts. Oh my friend, believe me, all do not act as I do, nothing is as certain as the fact that all do not act as I do, and even if they did, it would not be the same. It is extraordinary that after so many experiences, after so much suffering, after humanity has grown so old, love appears incomprehensible, indeed absurd to you and to many men—to most of them, and above all to those, who we women instinctively feel and love as men. Where shall we seek for the source of all the many women’s disappointments if not in this? Mark my words: from that day on when you will feel your question to be simply foolish, childish and senseless, love will not appear incomprehensible or absurd to you any more, but, on the contrary, just because of its incomprehensibility and absurdity you will look upon it as the only true and innate state of human beings, and then, I give you my word, I shall destroy my false pearls, and wear the real ones before the eyes of all the world.”

No man is able to conceive God in Spirit. Man must be moved by God, then God is there. Happy is the man who is moved by God. He cannot go astray, and reaches his goal. (After an hour of greatest forsakenness.)

In the evening I asked Stael quite suddenly, because this thought had occupied me all day: “What is the hardest thing in life?” Stael answered without a moment’s hesitation: “Comradeship.”

“I don’t understand you.”

“That it should be possible for two to go together, that neither of the two should be more than the other, that the two should be one. That is hard.”

“God brings men together, God is equality and unity.”

Stael answered: “By God one could explain everything. God makes everything easy. He, Stael, had only one desire, to feel what he had felt in his youth, he did not ask for more.

I: "Is not age an everlasting agony, a continual disappointment, under such circumstances?"

He: "Certainly, for him who has no son. I want to go on living in my son, and in this way to refind my lost youth."

There is very much delicacy and kind-heartedness in the way in which Stael clings to that which is. He does not wish man to over-estimate himself in God. Stael lives in an internal world of honor. That is German, not Russian. If a Russian gets ready to live in an internal world he will leave honor outside, he will feel honor to be superfluous, and nothing but a hindrance.

Monsieur de Mirepoix was struck by my good memory, because I took up the conversation with him today exactly there, where I had broken it off five years ago, when he first came to Petersburg from Paris. I can always do this. And yet, when I saw Mirepoix once more, after all this time, it seemed to me as if he had risen from the dead, as if, for these five years, he had not tarried among the living, thus completely had he escaped my memory. This is what always happens to me, with all human beings. My capacity for forgetting and for remembering are equally great and there where the two meet, I live, there it is that I am. Nothing is as strange to me as that which men call Time; it is as strange to me as the face of a woman, who we have ceased to love, is to us all. My time is waking.

N. wants to know men without moving a finger. None can take without giving. He should give men enormous odds to begin with, in order that men should reveal enormously much to him. This is knowledge of men. It is what Christ did. He gave men Eternity to begin with, He gave Himself to all men, therefore He knew them. I cannot conceive anything more paltry than that which men generally call "knowledge of men."

Stael has his limitations, of that I have become fully conscious today. The young and beautiful Princess D., whom all men adore, is going to marry blind Cheremeteff, and Stael declares, such a thing ought not to be allowed, it could only turn out to be a mistake. Sooner or later disappointment was bound to set in. One should warn the Princess not to share the fate of a blind man. "What a fellow you are, Stael! always trembling before something. Do you want to wait, from this day on, till the Princess has found out that she has presumed too much upon her love? Do you know exactly what a human being is capable of accomplishing? Is it ever, or in any way possible to calculate this? Stael, sometimes it seems

to me that you are not only no Christian, but a thorough-going pedant. Stael, you understand nothing but time. But for that which does not take place in time, for that which is there from all eternity, you have no sense. Do you really believe, that Christ only came to earth to convert the Jews and heathens one after the other. He could then well have come sooner, in fact, He should have done so. No, it is not so, Stael. Christ was there from all eternity, in all those who do not live in time, who do not live in fear, because time is fear, be it the time of the Heathen or of the Christian. Christ lived in His mother, for Mary, the wife of Joseph, was without fear, and therefore chosen among all women to bring forth the God who was in her. Mary Magdalene also was without fear. And Princess D. is without fear. Let your thoughts rest upon this.

I asked Mirepoix whether a very taciturn man must not necessarily be very cruel, and all the more cruel, the more taciturn he be. I have been thinking how a man can become a murderer, by too much taciturnity. I am thinking of Feodor Kusmitsch, who appeared to me today in my dream. His face was close, even as flesh is close. If I am right, then God's loving-kindness can only show itself by being everywhere, in all men, quite openly. God's Being is openness. Perhaps the murderers and those who must die, believe that God's Being is secrecy.

To reckon with God. Who is secret enough to dare reckon with God? Who besides God Himself?

Sometimes I feel as if life rushed on with a velocity for which we men have no measure and which we therefore cannot calculate. How would it otherwise be possible for us to part from the moment, if we did not do so as men, who are in the act of madly rushing on?

Prince Urussow lives by gambling. People tell me that he wins. In the end he must win. At that point where he is hard and opaque he must win. And his partner must also win just there where he is hard and opaque. Whoever plays with God is bound to lose. It is God who then is hard and opaque, and his opponent, man, is soft and broken, like the soil in Springtime. In order to win he must lose, he must be destroyed by God. Human beings who play with God love death in their secret hearts, while they fight against it.

I said to Stael today: "We are all born stubborn, refractory, morose, and must slowly train ourselves to an ever purer worship and devotion. The path which leads to this is common to all men, and links the boy to the man, and the young man to the old. I said that I could hardly understand how a boy could grow to be a man

without following this path. Stael tries for the shortest cut, and this shortest cut is shown to him by duty, by obedience. He does not understand love, or in how far love is happy to be in the wrong. That is what Christianity has taught men: to choose the longest way, to actually put ourselves in the wrong before God.

Stael answered: "There are duties towards God as well as towards man, and whoever fulfills these cannot err."

I: "No, no and no. We only say such things in order to say something. We have not a single duty towards God, except the one duty to put ourselves in the wrong."

"Why? That wrong may be there?"

"No, because we love God, for no other reason."

I then asked Stael, whether he could guess which of the Apostles was his own particular one. He could not guess. I said: St. Peter. He, the Apostle, also believed, that only the shortest way leads to God, that there is, in fact, only one way, a sort of public highway, which leads to God. Everybody should set their foot upon it, and then all would be well and perfectly clear. But see here, Stael, as Peter would not put himself in the wrong before God, God had to put him in the wrong, and now you will understand why Christ let Himself be denied thrice by Peter, before the cock crowed twice.

I had a long talk with Stael, and here set down its content, in order to keep in mind something of its essence. I said to Stael: "It is a great and hard divine thing to appropriate a human being, to possess a human being, to penetrate a human being. Cannot you feel how impossible it is to pierce the flesh? The older I grow, the more I feel this. In my youth I struggled against the sacrifice, for my Soul was the Soul of a robber. Today I know that there is only one way in which to possess living things: by sacrifice. Dead things alone can be possessed without sacrifice. And a human being can only become my own, if I sacrifice myself to it. In no other way. Stael, cannot you understand that that which is alive fights for ever against that which is dead, and therefore he who truly wishes to possess men, must abhor every other possession. None can possess both, the living and the dead. It is the true essence of our human nature, that we are able to sever the living from the dead. Many do not understand how to do so. Those are the unclean spirits, the interlopers. Stael, I love not the single thing which has a beginning and an end and which leads to nothing; I cannot possess it, I can only destroy it. Sometimes I have the feeling that I have destroyed everything which was mine, in order that it should become not mine

any more—for no other reason. The measure is more than the object, and the sacrifice is more than the measure. The sacrifice is the inner sense, is the possession, is the chain of Beings. You say: he who denies God is godless. No, God can still live in denial, as the salamander lives in the fire. Godless is he, who does not feel the sacrifice between man and man, who does not perceive the gulf and the grace between man and man, godless is he who is dead, godless is the serpent, for he claims that he has a right to possess man without grace, without love, without happiness, without sacrifice. He kills, and by killing he gains possession. Many die the death of the serpent, they die prematurely, before their death. The only thing which we are called upon to do, is not to die this death, not to die the death before death, the death of the serpent.

Stael: "And yet there is only one death for us, and the further off from this the happier we are."

I: "Do you not feel that the great secret which lies in human beings also lies between human beings? Can you not feel the gulf, the grace, the happiness between man and man?"

Stael: "Perhaps grace and happiness were there once—long ago, in our youth. What, then, if in the course of time we are forced to put indifference in place of grace between man and man, just exactly indifference, nothing besides indifference? We can make it as great as we like, it will always remain indifference."

I: "I cannot do so. I could not place indifference between man and man: I prefer to put deceit just there, where you put indifference, Stael. Yes, most decidedly, I will put deceit in its place. Where I see nothing between man and man, Stael, out of this nothing temptation arises before me. It cannot be otherwise."

Stael: "In this case life can never be peaceful."

I: "No, and it should not be peaceful, not for a single moment. Then only God will be merciful to me, then only will I not die the death before death."

A dream I had last night: I was in my coronation robes, my crown was on my head, and with my sword, for no apparent reason. I was belaboring someone who had stepped in my way, and of whom I knew that he was a leper. He wore a Tarter's cap made of fox fur. I saw this quite plainly, and see it still. I went on hitting him, but my sword never touched him, and every time I tried to strike the sword was between me and the leper, and I could not reach him because of the sword. The more I struck at him, the more the leper laughed. He laughed again and again, quite loathsomely, his laugh-



ter ran down his face, which was the face of a dead man, like rain down a window-pane. But suddenly, when I stopped hitting at him, I was he, I was the leper and yet again myself, I was still wearing the crown, but under my robe of purple and ermine my body was covered with ulcers and sores, and my face was fixed and my laughter loathsome, and ran down me like rain down a window-pane. I felt quite distinctly that I was the leper and myself at the same time and that I was alone and nobody would come near me and my voice was hot as fire and dying away, and the words in my mouth were heavy as stone, and fell to earth, and I called upon God, and knew, that God was God no more.

My dream of yesterday haunts me. I will not tell it to any man. I still see the leper with the Tartar's cap before me. I know, that he is the only man on earth who does not long for righteousness, for my good-will, for wages, but who longs for God alone. All measures and all greed and all wages fester away from his body, and thus his soul is pure, as pure as the soul of no other man, and by the power of its purity it longs for God.

## THE GODS OF PERU

BY LEWIS SPENCE

CERTAIN lands possess an individuality well-nigh magical, standing out boldly from the regions which surround them as an isolated cliff rises from the monotonous levels of a prairie. Such a country is Peru. Like Egypt or Spain it appears to overshadow its neighbors, not merely by reason of its physical altitude, but because of its mysterious and shadowy aloofness and its traditions of a high antiquity and a vanished civilization.

That it certainly possesses a sorcery of its own, an environment capable of shaping a wonderful race, is witnessed by the gigantic ruins of the strange and picturesque civilizations which formerly occupied its arid and wind-swept tablelands. These successive cultures were created by races who were among the most advanced of the Indian peoples of America, and the singular human society they developed surprised and bewildered the Spanish conquerors of Peru by its complexity and rich variety.

Centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards, and probably while Spain was still a Roman province, civilized communities waxed and waned, warred and struggled, on the plateaus of Old Peru. Some of these were situated in widely distant parts of the country, but all appear to have possessed a common distinctive culture. All we know of these remote peoples is what can be gleaned from the remains of their architecture their pottery and their tombs. In the North are to be found the vestiges of a race known to archaeologists as the Incas, who built the gigantic structures of Chimu, near Truxillo whilst in the south the Nazca maintained a very similar mode of life, pastoral and agricultural, building large irrigation terraces for the cultivation of maize, and manufacturing fine painted pottery.

Of the precise origin of these, the earliest Peruvians, we know nothing. But we are better informed regarding the races which

succeeded them, the Quichua-Aymara tribes, who, indeed, may have had a close affinity with them. The Quichua-Aymara people seems to have drifted down by degrees from the Altaplanicie Highlands of Bolivia, or, as some authorities believe, wandered westward in early times from the shores of the great and almost land-locked sea which formerly covered the present site of Argentina, founding later a settlement in the neighborhood of Lake Titicaca. These tribes, the Quichua and Aymara, formerly one people, seem to have divided into two swarms, the Aymara occupying the plateaus of the Andes ranges, so that in course of time they became a race of mountaineers, and the Quichua occupying the warm valleys beyond the Apurimac, to the northwest of the Aymara-speaking folk. The difference in the language spoken by these races was, and still is, little more than a difference of dialect, such as, for example, is found between Dutch and Flemish.

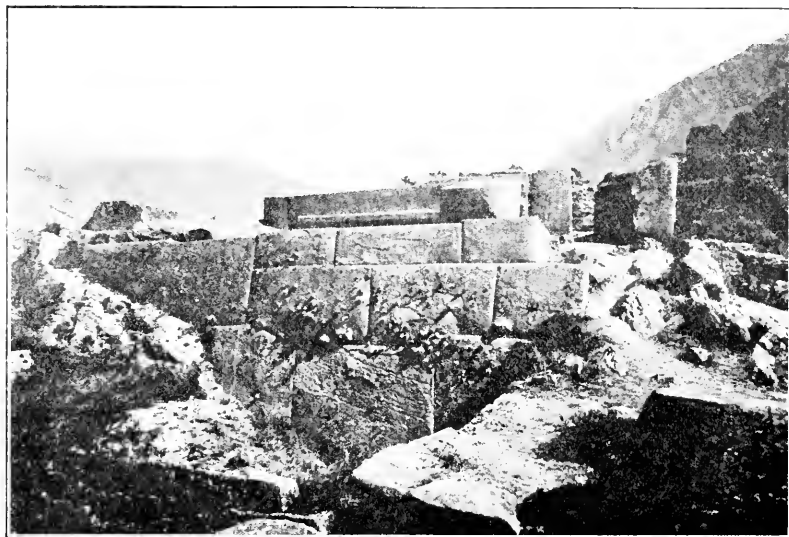
Before the advent of the Incas these peoples had developed a civilization of their own. To the Aymaras is probably due the construction of the extraordinary city of Tiahuanaco, on the southern shore of Lake Titicaca, and built at a level of 13,000 feet above the sea. Of this once great community only some of the most outstanding fragments of masonry remain, great blocks hewn from trachytic rock. The most remarkable is a great doorway, carved out of a single block of stone, seven feet in height and thirteen and one-half feet wide, its upper portion decorated with symbolic figures in high relief. Scattered over the site are gigantic blocks of stone, some thirty-six feet long, the remains of cyclopean walls, standing monoliths and colossal statues.

But the reason for selecting such a site as Tiahuanaco is a mystery. The tableland on which the great city stood is desolate and difficult of access, the snow-line is close at hand, and breathing at such a height is no easy matter. Nor can maize be grown at such an altitude. How, then, did Tiahuanaco get its food-supply? The probable reply to this fascinating riddle is that great climatic changes have taken place at this site through the gradual rising of the land, a phenomenon which, it is known, has occurred on the coast-line of Peru.

Upon the Quichua-Aymara peoples the Incas swooped down as invaders. They were a clan of Aymara stock, who had developed a culture of their own in the neighborhood of Lake Titicaca, and may have been the last representatives of the great race who built Tiahuanaco. At some time in the twelfth century they defeated the

Chanca, a neighboring tribe, and with their assistance overran Central Peru, making Cuzco their capital. But several centuries of hard fighting were necessary before they were able to annex the last province of their vast empire and they only succeeded in consolidating their conquests about a century before the arrival of the Spaniards.

But although engaged in almost constant warfare, the Incas succeeded in developing a civilization of surprising richness and complexity. It was especially in vast undertakings of engineering and in architecture that their genius displayed itself. They drove long,



THE INCA FORTRESS OF OLTANTAY-TAMPU.

straight tunnels through the Andes mountains, the pillars of their empire, and bridged seemingly impassable gorges, connecting up the centers of population by admirable highways. As builders they were supreme, indeed no race in the world's history has ever surpassed the solidity and exquisite finish of their masonry, the stones of which were frequently ground to fit each other in a series of angles. Perhaps the most famous Incan building was the Coricancha or "Golden House" at Cuzco, the great temple of the sun-god, the walls of which were covered with thin plates of gold, and whose gardens were filled with gold and silver animals and insects. Even the water-

pipes of this temple were of silver, and in its inner shrine the mummies of the dead Inca Kings sat in state, as though still alive.

The rule of the Incas was paternal, even "grandmotherly," and their control of the people was over-emphasized. The Inca, or Emperor, was regarded as the representative of the sun upon earth, and on the principle that the rays of the sun penetrate into every corner, he delegated his authority to officials, each of whom had charge over ten thousand, a thousand, a hundred, or even over ten families. Every person when born was provided with a portion of land, and this he was forced to till, when old enough. He had also to help to maintain the lands of the Inca and the priests. He was compelled to wear a headband of a certain color which showed from which province he came, and his wife was selected for him by the Incarial authorities. The rule of the Incas has been described as "state socialism." However that may be, it was a soulless machine which made no allowances for individuality, but treated the wretched people precisely as it did the herds of llamas it reared for their wool.

This unique civilization was almost entirely destroyed by a handful of Spanish adventurers. In 1532 Francisco Pizarro, with two hundred men, landed in Peru, and, taking full advantage of a struggle for the crown between the rival princes Atahualpa and Huasca, speedily seized Cuzco and executed Atahualpa, the successful claimant to the throne. The empire of the Incas collapsed like a house of cards, and although several efforts were made by members of the royal family to expel the Spaniards, none of these succeeded, and Peru became an appanage of the Spanish crown.

Although excellent topographical and archaeological results have recently been achieved on Peruvian soil, little or no research has been lavished upon the strange and still obscure religion of the Incas since the death of Sir Clements Markham. Yet that religion is well worthy of the most careful study, and it is little to the credit of Europe that none of her scholars is at present devoting his exclusive efforts to the consideration of the difficult but fascinating problems it affords. Such an investigator would find a quite embarrassing amount of material awaiting examination and collation. The chief authorities on the rites and myths of old Peru are those Spanish scribes who were either contemporary with its conquests by Pizarro, or who wrote at a time not far distant from that event. These have bequeathed much knowledge of the Inca religion, which is now readily available in translations from the Spanish by the late Sir Clements Markham, published by the Hakluyt Society.

In the century preceding the Spanish Conquest of 1532 the religion of the Incas had been regulated in such a manner by the State that anything approaching independent theological thought was impossible. There is abundant evidence, however, that prior to this period the priestly class—that is to say the royal caste—had been at considerable pains to amalgamate into one official belief the several aboriginal faiths popular in the various districts of Peru.

The record of their efforts is related in the "Royal Commentaries of the Incas," written by one of the descendants of the ruling race, Garcilasso de la Vega, and provides matter of intense interest to students of Comparative Religion, as affording a practical insight into the methods which were employed in the making and development of an official religion. In pre-Inca times, says Garcilasso, every district, village and family possessed its own god, and these were usually such objects as mountains, trees, flowers, herbs, caves stones great or small, and animals. The jaguar, puma and bear were worshipped for their strength and ferocity, the monkey and fox for their cunning, and the condor of the Andes because several tribes believed themselves to be descended from it. In a word, the type of nature-worship described by Garcilasso was, in some cases, pure fetishism, in others totemism.

Lakes, springs, rocks, mountains, precipices, and caves were all regarded by the various Peruvian tribes as *pacchariscas*—places whence their ancestors had originally issued to the upper world. The *paccharisca* was usually saluted with the cry, "Thou art my birth-place, thou art my life-spring. Guard me from evil, O Paccharisca!" In the holy spot a spirit was supposed to dwell which served the tribe as a kind of oracle. Naturally the *paccharisca* was looked upon with extreme reverence. It became, indeed, a sort of life-center for the tribe, from which it was very unwilling to be separated.

The worship of stones appears to have been almost as universal in ancient Peru as it was in ancient Palestine. Man in his primitive state believes stones to be the framework of the earth, its bony structure. He considers himself to have emerged from some cave—in fact, from the entrails of the earth. Nearly all American creation-myths regard man as thus emanating from the bowels of the great terrestrial mother. Rocks which were thus chosen as *pacchariscas* are found, among many other places, at Callca, in the valley of the Yucay, and at Titicaca there is a great mass of red sandstone on the top of a high ridge with almost inaccessible slopes and dark, gloomy recesses, where the sun was thought to have hidden himself

at the time of the great deluge which covered all the earth. The rock of Titicaca was, in fact, the great *paccarisca* of the sun itself.

We are thus not surprised to find that in aboriginal times, many standing stones were worshipped in Peru. Arriaga states that rocks of great size which bore some resemblance to the human figure were imagined to have been at one time gigantic men or spirits who, because they disobeyed the creative power, were turned into stone. According to another account they were said to have suffered this punishment for refusing to listen to the words of Thonapa, the son of the creator, who had taken upon himself the guise of a wandering Indian, so that he might have an opportunity of bringing the arts of civilization to the aborigines.

The earlier processes of religion as they appeared in Peru, are also illustrated by the reverence of objects known as *huacas*. The word comes from the root *huacan*, "to howl," native worship taking the form of a weird dirge-like wailing or howling. All sacred objects indeed, were known as *huacas*, and these had numerous forms. They were usually stones or pebbles, carved or painted, the personal fetishes of their owners, and frequently depicted the llama or the ear of maize, symbols of the food supply. In order that irrigation for agricultural purposes might proceed favorably, agricultural *huacas*, known more particularly as *ccompas*, were placed near the irrigation canals to exert a lucky influence upon the water-courses, and stones of a similiar kind were set up in the maize fields to ensure that a sufficient supply of rain might be forthcoming. These maize *huacas* were known as *chichics* or *huanacas*, and the spirits who resided within them, *mamas*, or "mothers." To this was added the generic name of the plant over which they presided. Thus *acsumama* was the potato-mother, *saramama* the maize-mother, and *cacamama*, the mother of the coca-shrub, from which cocaine is procured, and which has been masticated by the Peruvian natives since time immemorial. The maize-mother frequently took the self-same shape as the Scottish kirnababy, a doll fashioned from the stalks of maize, renewed at each harvest, and sacrificed to as the presiding spirit of the maize-crop.

Connected with agriculture in some degree was the Huamantantac ("he who caused the Cormorants to gather themselves together.") This was the agency responsible for the gathering of sea-birds, resulting in the deposits of guano to be found along the Peruvian coast, which are so valuable in the cultivation of the maize-

plant. He was regarded as a most beneficent spirit, and was sacrificed to with exceeding fervor.

The *huaris*, or "great ones," were the ancestors of the aristocrats of a tribe, and were regarded as specially favorable toward agricultural effort, possibly because the land had at one time belonged to them personally. They were sometimes alluded to as the "gods of strength," and were sacrificed to by libations of *chicha*. Ancestors in general were deeply revered, and had an agricultural significance, in that considerable tracts of land were tilled in order



THE GOD PACHACAMAC FROM A PECTOID.

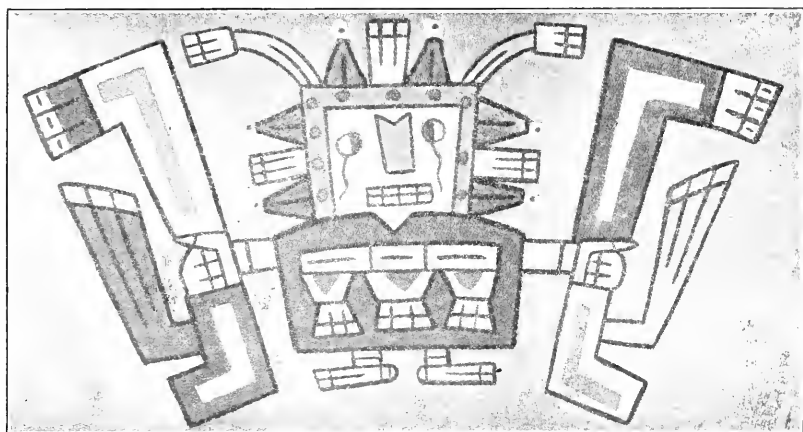
that they might be supplied with suitable food and drink offerings.

Later Peruvian theology recognized only three gods of the first rank, the earth, the thunder, and the creative agency. Pachacamac, the great spirit of earth, derived his name from the word *pacha* which may perhaps, be translated as "matter." In its sense of visible matter it is equivalent to "world" or "universe," but applied to events which happen in succession, it is capable of being translated as "time." Pachacamac, however, was not the earth itself, the



material soil, but the spirit which animates it and all things which emerge therefrom, men, animals and plants. He was, indeed, the all-pervading soul of nature. His consort was Pachamama, who presided especially over mountains, rocks and pampas, and who appears to have been literally the earth or earth-mother, a goddess developed from the idea of the earth as a living being.

But in the latter years of the Inca dynasty Pachacamac appears to have been somewhat overshadowed by a more ideal form, Pachayachachi, an advanced conception of the creative agency, who seems to have had a solar origin. This change was probably due to the influence of the Inca Pachacuti, who is known to have made several other doctrinal innovations in Peruvian theology. He com-



THE GOD PACHACAMAC, FROM AN ANCIENT PERUVIAN VASE.

manded a great new temple to the creator-god to be built at the northern angle of the city of Cuzco, in which he placed a statue of pure gold, of the size of a boy of ten years of age. The small size of this idol was intended to facilitate its removal, as Peruvian worship was nearly always carried out in the open air. In form it represented a man with his right arm elevated, the hand partially closed and the forefinger and thumb raised, as if in the act of uttering the creative word. To this god large possessions and revenues were assigned, for, previously, service rendered to him had been voluntary only.

The rain-and-thunder god of Peru was worshipped in various parts of the country under various names. Among the Collao he

was known as Con, and in that part of the Inca dominions now known as Bolivia he was called Churoquilla. Near the cordilleras of the coast he was probably known as Pariacaca, who expelled the *huaca* of the district by dreadful tempests, hurling rain and hail at him for three days and nights in such quantities as to form the great lake of Pariacaca. Burnt llamas were offered to him. But the Incas, discontented with this local worship, which by no means suited their system of central government, determined to create one thunder-deity, to whom all the tribes in the empire must bow as the only god of his class.



PERUVIAN DEITY FROM A VASE.

Sun-worship was officially established in Peru by Inca Pachacuti, about the middle of the fifteenth century, and it was only at this period that the Incas became known as "Children of the Sun." The worship of the sun had formerly had a merely tribal significance on the shores of Lake Titicaca. Now it took on a national aspect, was placed first in the trinity of gods, and special lands were devoted to the upkeep of its temples, which were served by a specially dedicated caste of priests and nuns. Great annual festivals were cele-

brated in honor of the luminary, and the establishment of these necessitated the revision of the calendar, and, as in Mexico, brought about the introduction of human sacrifice.

By degrees this solar worship almost entirely obliterated the lesser tribal cults, and, indeed, surpassed those of the thunder and earth deities, which, if they never entirely disappeared, became quite subservient to it. Permanent provision was made for sacrifices to the sun before the other deities were so recognized, and as the conquests of the Incas grew wider and that provision extended to the new territories, they came to be known as "the Lands of the Sun," the natives observing the dedication of a part of the country to the luminary, and concluding therefrom that it applied to the whole. The material reality of the sun would enormously assist his cult among a people who were too barbarous to appreciate an unseen god, and this colonial conception reacting upon the motherland would undoubtedly inspire the military class with a resolve to strengthen a worship so popular in the conquered provinces, and of which they were in great measure the protagonists and missionaries.

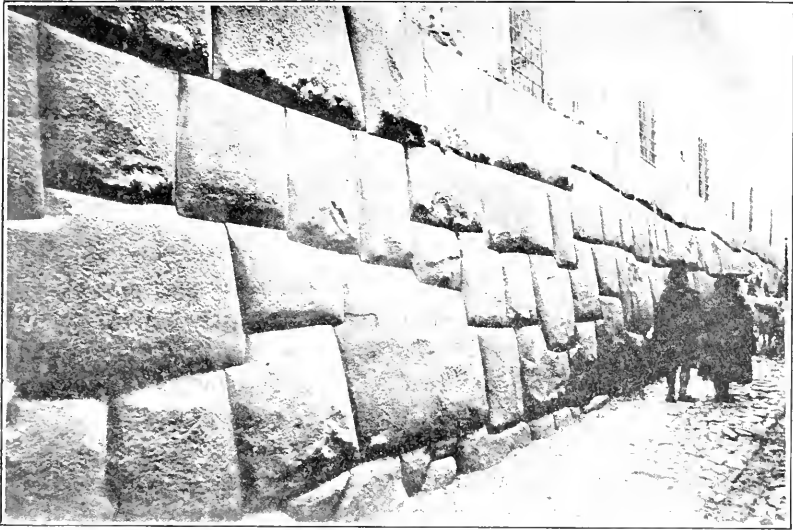
In every Peruvian village the sun had considerable possessions. His estates resembled those of a territorial chieftain, and consisted of a dwelling-house, a *chacra*, or portion of land, flocks of llamas and pacos, and a number of women dedicated to his service. The cultivation of the soil within the solar enclosure devolved upon the inhabitants of the neighboring village, the produce of their toil being stored in the *inti-huasi*, or sun's house. The Women of the Sun prepared the daily food and drink of the luminary, which consisted of maize and *chicha*. They also spun wool and wove it into fine stuff, which was burned in order that it might ascend to the celestial regions, where the deity could make use of it. Each village reserved a portion of its solar produce for the great festival at Cuzco, and it was carried thither on the backs of llamas destined for sacrifice.

The Rock of Titicaca, the renowned place of the sun's origin, naturally became an important center of his worship. The date at which the worship of the sun originated at this famous rock is extremely remote, but we may safely assume that it was long before the conquest of the Collao tribe by the Inca Pachacutic. Reverence for the luminary as a war-god by the Colla chiefs was noticed by Inca Tupac, who, in suppressing a local revolt, concluded that the local observance at the rock had some relationship to the disturbance. It is, however, certain that Tupac proceeded after the re-con-

quest of the region to establish at this natural center of sun-worship solar rites on a new basis, with the evident intention of securing on behalf of the Incas of Cuzco such exclusive benefit as might accrue from the complete possession of the sun's paccarisca. According to a native account, a venerable *colla* (or hermit) consecrated to the service of the sun, had proceeded on foot from Titicaca to Cuzco for the purpose of commending this ancient seat of sun-worship to the notice of Tupac. The consequence was that the Inca, after visiting the island and inquiring into the ancient local customs, re-established them in a more regular form. This account can hardly be accepted in face of the facts which have been gathered. Rather did it naturally follow that Titicaca became subservient to Tupac after the revolt of the Collao had been quelled. Henceforth the worship of the sun at the place of his origin was entrusted to Incas resident in the place, and was celebrated with Inca rites. The island was converted into a solar estate and the aboriginal inhabitants removed. The land was cultivated and the slopes of the hills levelled, maize was sown and the soil consecrated, the grain being regarded as the gift of the sun. This work produced considerable change in the island. Where once was waste and idleness there was now fertility and industry. The harvests were skilfully apportioned, so much being reserved for sacrificial purposes, the remainder being sent to Cuzco, partly to be sown in the *chacras*, or estates of the sun, throughout Peru, partly to be preserved in the granary of the Inca and the *huacas* as a symbol that there would be abundant crops in the future and that the grain already stored would be preserved. A building for the Women of the Sun was erected about a mile from the rock, so that the produce might be available for sacrifices. For their maintenance, tribute of potatoes, ocas and quinoa was levied upon the inhabitants of the villages on the shores of the lake, and of maize upon the people of the neighboring valleys.

Titicaca at the time of the Spanish conquest was probably more frequented than Pachacamac itself. These two places were held to be the cardinal shrines of the two great *huacas*, the creator and the sun respectively. A special reason for pilgrimage to Titicaca was to sacrifice to the sun, as the source of physical energy and the giver of long life; and he was especially worshipped by the aged, who believed he had preserved their lives. Then followed the migration of pilgrims to Titicaca, for whose shelter houses were built at Capacahuana, and large stores of maize were provided for their use. The ceremonial connected with the sacred rites of the rock was rigor-

ously observed. The pilgrim ere embarking on the raft which conveyed him to the island must first confess his sins to a *huillac* (a speaker to an object of worship); then further confessions were required at each of the three sculptured doors which had successively to be passed before reaching the sacred rock. The first door (Puma-puncu) was surmounted by the figure of a puma; the others (Quenti-puncu and Pillco-puncu) were ornamented with feathers of the different species of birds commonly sacrificed to the sun. Having passed the last portal, the traveller beheld at a distance of two hundred paces the sacred rock itself, the summit glittering with gold-leaf. He was permitted to proceed no further, for only the



CONVENT OF THE VIRGINS OF THE SUN, CUZCO, PERU.

officials were allowed entry into it. The pilgrim on departing received a few grains of the sacred maize grown on the island. These he kept with care and placed with his own store, believing they would preserve his stock. The confidence the Indian placed in the virtue of the Titicaca maize may be judged from the prevalent belief that the possessor of a single grain would not suffer from starvation during the whole of his life.

The Intip-Raymi, or Great Festival of the Sun, was celebrated by the Incas at Cuzco at the winter solstice. In connection with it the *Tarpuntaita-cuma*, or sacrificing Incas, were changed with a re-

markable duty, the worshippers journeying eastward to meet one of these functionaries on his way. On the principal hill-tops between Cuzco and Huilleanuta, on the road to the rock of Titicaca, burnt offerings of llamas, coca, and maize were made at the feast to greet the arrival of the young sun from his ancient birthplace. Molina has enumerated more than twenty of these places of sacrifice. The striking picture of the celebration of the solar sacrifice on these bleak mountains in the depths of the Peruvian winter has, it seems, no parallel in the religious rites of the ancient Americans. Quitting their thatched houses at early dawn, the worshippers left the valley below, carrying the sacrificial knife and brazier, and conducting the white llama, heavily laden with fuel, maize, and coca leaves, wrapped in fine cloth, to the spot where the sacrifice was to be made. When sunrise appeared the pile was lighted. The victim was slain and thrown upon it. The scene then presented a striking contrast to the bleak surrounding wilderness. As the flames grew in strength and the smoke rose higher and thicker the clear atmosphere was gradually illuminated from the east. When the sun advanced above the horizon the sacrifice was at its height. But for the crackling of the flames and the murmur of a babbling stream on its way down the hill to join the river below, the silence had hitherto been unbroken. As the sun rose the Incas marched slowly round the burning mass, plucking the wool from the scorched carcass, and chanting monotonously: "O Creator, Sun and Thunder, be for ever young! Multiply the people; let them ever be in peace!"

The most picturesque if not the most important solar festival was that of the Citoc Raymi (Gradually Increasing Sun), held in June, when nine days were given up to the ceremonial. A rigorous fast was observed for three days previous to the event, during which no fire must be kindled. On the fourth day the Inca, accompanied by the people *en masse*, proceeded to the great square of Cuzco to hail the rising sun, which they awaited in silence. On its appearance they greeted it with a joyous tumult, and, joining in procession, marched to the Golden Temple of the Sun, where llamas were sacrificed, and a new fire was kindled by means of an arched mirror, followed by sacrificial offerings of grain, flowers, animals, and aromatic gums. This festival may be taken as typical of all the seasonal celebrations. The Inca calendar was purely agricultural in its basis, and marked in its great festivals the renewal or abandonment of the labors of the field. Its astronomical observations were

not more advanced than those of the calendars of many American races otherwise inferior in civilization.

The religion of old Peru must thus be regarded as a highly composite faith, early native cosmological and totemic ideas being combined, under priestly guidance, with a solar religion of distinctly loftier character, which, at the coming of the Spaniards, was itself in a condition of disintegration. For did not one of the later Incas, who seems to have had in him the makings of a higher critic, express the opinion that the Sun was a being which possessed no volition of its own, but was compelled to walk his allotted path each day "like a tethered beast?" The faith of Old Peru is, indeed, rich in significance for students of Comparative Religion, and it is unfortunate that its more intimate study seems at the present time to have no outstanding protagonists.

## LEADERSHIP, DEMOCRACY, AND CULTURE

BY VICTOR S. YARROS

THE post-war reaction against democracy and free political institutions continues with undiminished vigor. Dictatorships thrive; parliamentary government is becoming a byword and reproach in Europe; even in France certain groups and journals have been demanding a national committee of safety and the suspension of the constitution as the only available means of averting financial anarchy and civil strife.

Books and articles continue to be written and published to express disillusionment in respect of democracy. The confident and optimistic predictions of the early champions of democracy, we are told, have been sadly falsified by events; democracy is neither just, reasonable, nor appreciative of the blessings of civil and religious liberty. Majorities are often bigoted, wrong, intolerant, perverse; the servants, so-called, of the majority in legislative or executive departments of government are compelled to lie, pander to popular prejudices, flatter the mob, vote for silly and unenforceable bills, fight policies they believe in and know to be sound and beneficial. In short, as one recent writer gloomily, not to say despairingly, put it, "democracy vulgarizes everything it touches!"

Is there any reason in such indictments of democracy? Let us appeal to experience. Did democracy vulgarize or corrupt Washington, Jefferson, the Adamses, Lincoln, Tilden, Cleveland, Benjamin, Harrison, Wilson? In every congress and in every legislature or city council, there are men who cannot be bribed, bullied or flattered into deliberate betrayal of trust or violation of principle. True, there are not *many* such public servants, but there *never* were many men of that type. Were there no sycophants, time-servers, demagogues, cowards, ignoble schemers under autocracy, or limited monarchy, or oligarchy? To put the question is to answer it



There are not many sincere, high-minded, rigorously honest artists in the modern world, but *what age had more?* There is a greater demand for rubbish or third-rate work today, because of widespread elementary education and the ubiquitous press, but what is there is to prevent the conscientious artist from being true to himself, or to his ideals, and ignore the noisy market place? It was not yesterday, nor in contemplation of democracy, that the love of money was declared to be the root of all evil, or that the Psalmist prayed to be saved from poverty, on the one hand, and superfluous wealth, on the other. Thousands of years ago wise and noble men preached the gospel of the simple life. Devotion to the values of the spirit, to science, art or philosophy, has always been incompatible with riches, or excessive gregariousness, or thirst for popularity and fame.

Democracy has its vices, but what about aristocracy and plutocracy? When Matthew Arnold complained, fifty years ago, of the lower middle classes, did he have words of praise for the upper middle classes, or for aristocracy?

When artists and scholars depended chiefly or largely on powerful or wealthy patrons, on dukes and petty princes and counts, was high merit certain of quick recognition and encouragement? Let Dr. Samuel Johnson answer that question, or let us seek the answer in the biographies of Johann Sebastian Bach. How many of his great compositions did Bach hear or manage to get performed? His patron preferred mediocrities whose very names have long since been forgotten, and even Bach's fellow-composers and children failed to appreciate his genius. Perhaps a little more democracy in government and art might have helped Johann Sebastian!

The strongest man, said Ibsen, is he who stands alone. That will be true to the end of time. Yet he who is true to his inner light and indwelling monitor; he who first and last thinks only of ideals and standards to be lived up to; he who knows that all the honor lies in doing one's part as well as possible, is not necessarily condemned to neglect, obscurity, poverty and isolation. Not *every* prophet is made to drink hemlock; not *every* pioneer and leader is rejected and scorned by the multitude. Genius, beauty, intellect, power, nobility slowly make their way to the hearts of men.

Democracy, the herd, the mob, we are told, dislike originality and heresies of all kinds. Conformity is demanded by the masses in religion, in morals, in literature, and thus in many cases hypocrisy is forced on the minority. There is some truth in this charge, but

also much exaggeration. Conformity is demanded by the pundits and the arbiters, by the professional and recognized critics, as well as by the average body of human beings. Was not Jesus assailed by the scholars of his day? In the domain of art, was not Beethoven told by the musicians of his time that he violated every canon of symphonic composition? Was not Wagner derided by the erudite critics for his chaotic and empty noise, for alleged ignorance of the elements of music?

Books have been written on the farcical mistakes and the strange crimes of the professional critics. They are said to have driven poets, novelists, essayists and others to commit suicide, and their savagery and inhumanity are said to have embittered and wrecked many writers of rare talent who, with a little encouragement, might have left enduring and first-rate work.

It would be easy to make a plausible argument in support of the contention that civilization, culture, liberty, and every human possession of worth are in reality much safer with democracies than they are, or would be, with dictators, whether proletarian, military or aristocratic. After all, as contemporary writers have pointed out, there is no "public": there are *many* publics, with different tastes, aspirations and actual or potential capacities. There is a public for the ten-cent shocker or thriller; there is a public for the sensational and blatant demagogue; there is a public for the mendacious quack; but there is also a public for the writer or artist or man of science who has something important to say and who says it very quietly and in the style appropriate to his matter. There is a public for Proust, for Miss Cather, for Virginia Wolff, for Conrad. The yellow editor and the picture paper boast of tremendous circulations, but these circulations have *not* been gained at the expense of the serious, self-respecting, intelligent and useful newspapers and reviews.

Mr. H. Belloc said in a recent indictment of popular government that democracy has been "found out"—given a trial, a fair chance, and found wanting. But Mr. Belloc forgets that democracy has spread and taken root precisely because autocracy, monarchy, oligarchy and dictatorships had previously been "found out," and pronounced obsolete and rotten.

It is idle to indict the form of government called democracy for the sins and vices of the overwhelming majority of human beings. The late James Bryce said truly and profoundly that "*democracies are what their leaders make them.*" Democracies may be fickle and

unstable, but in that very circumstance the true, courageous, unselfish leader often finds his opportunity. If windbags are able to influence democracies for evil, forceful and magnetic statesmen and orators of the noble and pure type can and do influence them for good. Not that all history can be correctly interpreted on the Carlyle theory of hero-domination and hero-worship. The leader is not an accident; he is a product of his soil, time and environment. He is the voice of inarticulate or half articulate millions; he gives dramatic expressions to aspirations, visions, impulses of hosts of very ordinary men and women. But he is valuable and often indispensable because of that function of his. It makes a vast difference whether a democracy or an electorate is guided and inspired by a reactionary or a liberal leader, by a preacher of hate or an apostle of concord and tolerance. It makes a vast difference whether a leader is sober-minded, patient, generous, or whether he is rash, suspicious, vain and arrogant.

The greatest virtue of democracy lies in that fact that its "other name is opportunity," in the words of Emerson. The only equality possible is equality of opportunity, including, of course, equality before the law, and *that is inseparable from democracy*.

It is said, indeed, that equality before the law no longer exists in America, and Volsteadism with its padlocks and contempt of court provisions is cited as the most flagrant violation of that basic democratic principle. But who wrote that violation into the law—the people, the "herd," the majority? No; very virtuous and righteous minorities!

Those disappointed democratic philosophers who say that they have lost faith in the people never understood what sort or degree of faith in the people democratic principles required of them. The present foes of democracy in government and in society need a course in political science, in history (including the history of art) and in constitutional law.

Such a course would teach them that the alleged failures of democracy are, in most cases, the failures of the opposition to democracy, though that opposition is usually unconscious. When minorities in a legislature obstruct and filibuster in order to prevent the majority from passing measure deemed by it proper and necessary, they violate the democratic principle. When parties split into factions and sub-factions, and when bitter dissensions over small issues paralyze governments, it is not democracy that breaks down because the democratic principle implies acquiescence in majority rule

after fair and ample discussion of a given question, and it also implies common sense in lawmakers and rulers. "Government is compromise," said Burke, and in a democracy this dictum is particularly true. Compromise, again, implies tolerance and respect for the opinions and sentiments of those, one is constrained to disagree with and to oppose in the intellectual arena. We hear much about the deplorable and alarming growth of intolerance in the United States. The younger generation is told by college presidents and other men of light and leading that its particular mission at this juncture is to fight intolerance and to regain the individual and personal liberty that has been lost or that is being menaced by fanatical groups and reactionary tendencies. Such appeals and warnings are pertinent and necessary, but let it be noted that *they are made in the name of democratic ideals and standards*. Reject democracy, and on what ground can you fight intolerance? Reject the principle of equal opportunity and equal rights, and you commit yourself to despotism of one sort or another.

The one effective remedy for intolerance is education or knowledge. Ignorance and superstition account for all the noxious manifestations of intolerance complained of by thoughtful and broad-minded Americans. And ignorance and superstition are the result of what? Of democracy in education? Certainly not. If the masses were better informed than they are, anti-evolution statutes would be impossible. The "klans" which, in violation of every basic American principle, seek to inflame racial and religious hatreds and prejudices, and to set up discriminations contrary to the spirit of the law, are foes of democracy, not exemplars of it.

Democracy is needed in education and in culture as well as in industry and government. The most democratic and progressive of all contemporary movements is the movement for adult education. "Eternal vigilance," said Jefferson, "is the price of liberty." He might have said, "the price of democracy." But men cannot be vigilant if they do not know what it is that requires watching and protecting. Elementary education is no longer sufficient in a democracy: the higher and liberal education should become the possession of all instead of the privilege of the few. Not all men and women can go to college, but college and higher education are not synonymous. Science and culture can be acquired by reading the right books and the right magazines and newspapers, and by attending the right lectures and conferences. It is the business of men of science to make their facts and theories interesting and fascinating to

the multitude. Radio is a new instrument at their command, and the film is another. The isolation of the man of science and of the philosopher is largely responsible for the assaults upon evolution and upon the freedom of thought and expression.

It has been suggested recently that some sociological foundation ought to undertake a searching inquiry into the causes of the recrudescence of intolerance and bigotry in America. Without questioning the value of such an investigation, the present writer would point out that the principal cause of the sinister phenomenon is obviously the appalling ignorance and credulity of hosts of supposedly intelligent people. The bigots and fanatics do not know how to think straight, how to examine data and reach conclusions, and how to avoid glaring fallacies and blunders.

Those superior intellectuals who despise Main Street and the Babbits, and who sneer at the Rotarians and Philistines, had better do something for culture, civilization and liberalism among the average bodies of men and women. "Educate your masters," said the Marquis of Salisbury, a great tory statesman, after the enfranchisement of the British workers, and England has followed his advice. "Educate your sovereign voters," should be the slogan of democratic and liberal thinkers. Education is the potent preventive of stagnation and retrogression: education is the shield of genuine democracy. Knowledge alone can make the world safe for democracy.

## GILBERT K. CHESTERTON, MASTER PARADOXIST

BY HAROLD BERMAN

AMONG contemporary English men of letters the name of Gilbert Keith Chesterton stands out pre-eminently in the front rank. Whether you like him or not, whether you agree with his analysis of human society, his paradoxical dialects as well as the topsy-turvey remedies that he prescribes for the cure of its many ills, he nevertheless challenges your attention by the sheer brilliance of his diction, the scintillant glitter of his phrasing and the nimbleness of his wit; though upon a more leisurely analysis of his argument and the weighing of the same in the scale of cool, dispassionate reason you invariably find that it is specious, a counterfeit coin that bears a gold glitter over a dull body of common brass.

Chesterton has mastered amazingly well the sleight-o'-hand trick. He is a conjurer who will actually cause you to believe—if only for a while—that live rabbits can issue out of his plug hat though he has put only a linen pocket handkerchief into it. He is a master casuist and sophist who juggles at will with logic, balances an axiom on the tip of his little finger and can stand a pyramid on its needle-pointed apex. The marvel is that the inverted pyramid does indeed seem to stand up, that the rabbit, born of the pocket-handkerchief, seems to be alive, to breathe and eat and frisk; while truth's axiom, of which we have been so sure a while ago, begins to assume the distance and the unreality of a myth, or, perhaps, and vice versa it is the myth that is real and not the fact. For, after all is said and done, it is only apparently so; and when you stop to examine the premises, you generally do find that a master-magician has busied himself for a while with your amusement, busied himself with the production of things of whose speciousness he himself is thoroughly aware in his inner consciousness. And moreover, that even you as the spectator of this show are not actually expected to believe it as authentic and genuine, but rather to admire the rare skill with which they are produced for the beguilement of your occasional idle moments.

Chesterton delights in playing the part of the Devil's Advocate. He finds great delight in taking up his lance for the outcasts among modern ideas and outlawed institutions. He takes singular delight in the mere fact of being the Knight Errant on behalf of outlawed ideas; a Knight who roams the land far and wide in search of an adventure when there is none close at hand in sore need of his chivalrous attention. We delight in following him about when he is bent on one of these quixotic expeditions though we somewhat doubt, now and again and ever so often, if our valiant Knight is "all there" in the colloquial sense, or we ask: is he not really shamming in his seemingly-sincere and mock-heroic effort to demolish a verbal windmill; to put up a jerry-built shanty in the place where now we have a palace rearing its proud head? For, there is in all of us, hidden somewhere within or under the phlegmatic mask that civilization has imposed upon us, an impish instinct that delights in perversity and spitefulness, aside from the insistent and irrepressible call of the native and the indigenous.

It should be understood that Chesterton seeks to nullify with his dialectical skill and paradoxical verbiage the hypothetical mischief wrought to the cause of our beliefs and habits of thought by the modern sciences and philosophies. And there is where his strength paradoxically lies. There is a nostalgia in all of us, a native and unsatisfied longing for the beliefs of our childhood and the seemingly-so-simple conceptions of the universe and the social polity early imparted to us by our standardized economic and theologic teachings. We would like to believe them true even after we have learnt their falsehood; learned to know that the veil of secrecy must, in the interest of truth, be pierced and torn asunder, and that the scales of tradition are doomed sooner or later to fall from our eyes. And we also admire mental agility and nimbleness, and therefore gaze with wonder at a mental position that is fraught with danger for the occupant, even as we gaze open-mouthed at the physical tight-rope walker as he balances himself on an airy nothing forty feet from solid ground.

But we are also aware all the time that even in the act of trapeze walking or the balancing of one's self on a horizontal pole the laws of gravitation are nevertheless being obeyed, even as they are obeyed in an ordinary walk upon terra firma. And even so is it in Chesterton's case. His wildest paradox always has an infinitesimal underpinning of truth to keep it upright, while his sophistry has just enough of the cement of reason to hold together his windy bricks,

else they would tumble into a heap before your very eyes. Suppose you were to ask your little boy why they don't forge an oven out of lumps of ice cream and he would answer you in all solemnity that, if that were done little boys would be tempted to bite pieces out of it and thereby impair its usefulness. Both, the question as well as the answer, would appear superficially sound and fitting well into one another's scheme. Yet a little reflection will soon show you that neither the question nor the answer has any relevance to it. Furthermore, that the question is so posed that the absurdity is evident right on the very face of it, while there is no need at all for the still-more-absurd answer.

And yet, and to perpetrate still another paradox, these mental gymnastics have their legitimate place in human dialectics, if only they are not taken too seriously, but are assigned a place as the walnuts-and-wine of a frivolous after-dinner moment. And therein lies the rub. It soon becomes evident to the careful reader of Chesterton's works that he is not a mere mental gymnast, that he doesn't do those things for the mere fun or pleasure he thinks he or someone else may get out of the process, but that he is actuated by an ideal, a desire to teach us something, to disseminate among us certain thoughts and viewpoints. And now and again, we find that the sob of a wounded heart rises above the frivolous laugh of the harlequin and occasionally even silences the merry jingle of his cap-and-bells. Chesterton has a philosophy of life; a philosophy built on a nostalgic hankering after the vanished beauties of a bygone age, a simplicity and wholeness—largely imagined, it is true—that were present in the pre-mechanical, pre-American and pre-Protestant ages. In brief, he is one of the many dreamy Romanticists that strutted so dreamily upon the stage of the German literature of the early nineteenth century seeking the "Blue Flower" of a vanished happiness.

He bemoans the disappearance from our life of the simple Mediæval faith; the disappearance of the democracy of the Catholic *Anschauung* and the Catholic institutions; the benevolence inherent in the monastic orders, as well as the sturdy independence of the small peasant-proprietor and the artisan working in his own shop and with himself as master. In seeking thus diligently for the great virtues of the vanished past, and while examining them with the poetic spectacles of the Romanticist, he will no doubt discover some few, imaginary or real, beauties and attribute to them qualities they did not at all possess; while, again, because he is the incor-



rigible Romanticist, he will shut his eyes to their many patent evils and corruptions that caused their passing and final overthrow, the while he resolutely buries his head in the sand so as not to see any trace of goodness in the present order of things. Being a Romanticist, with the Romanticist's inherent incapacity for analysis and the separation of the wheat from the chaff, he does neither find the canker that has eaten away the heart of the obsolete institutions nor is he capable of placing the blame for the many evils that no doubt are inherent in the new order where it really is due, but will seek and find a scarecrow instead. Or, like the child, rage at the cat-o'-nine tails and not at the hand that wielded as well as directed it.

And so it happens that, according to this method, the trouble with the modern state is not that it has deprived man of his tools and his self-sufficiency in production and of his proper place in the social life, but rather that it has deprived the Priest of his meddling function in the affairs of that state. People in the slums are stunted and undernourished not because of competition with other races who work for less money and for longer hours, but because there are some few in their midst who advocate vegetarianism as a diet in the city of Birmingham or Manchester; while nations make war upon each other and bring ruin and misery upon themselves and others for the sole reason that Germans eat a sausage made of the liver of a cow, and underground trains in London run behind their schedule because a few millions of Jews riding on them remain unconverted to Christianity!

The sophisticated mind can indeed find some analogy between these incongruities. As, for instance, that the temporal rule of the Priesthood held up an ideal of saintliness before the human race, promised it treasure in heaven instead of here below, and that the Apostles stoutly spoke out in favor of Peace on earth and good will to men. But we also know that in the Middle Ages, when the rule of the clergy was most complete and regulated every walk of life, there was even more—a great deal more—of cynical brutality and oppression; less of happiness and sunshine and more of a pathetic ignorance in the people's lives than there is today, all the evils of Industrialism notwithstanding. As Chesterton himself remarks in one of his essays ("The use of Diversity," page 170) the fact that a Duke is addressed as "His Grace" does not prove that he possesses a graceful figure, nor the fact that the King of France subscribed himself as His Most Christian Majesty—and he might have added

the English King's claim to being the Defender of the Faith—prevented some of them from being actual heathens in practice.

Even so did it happen that there was solemn and constant repetition of the Biblical injunctions and the practicing of the very contrary things in actual daily dealing with the peoples. Even so can you prove, by the same feat of mental gymnastics, that the fact of the Jews remaining unconverted in the midst of an overwhelming mass of Christians who outnumber them thirty to one, proves the presence of Original Sin in the human race, and, hence, the perennial desire for war. But all this merely represents the threshing of wind, the wasted and pathetic effort of a distressed mind to free itself from its thralling loads.

That Chesterton *is* distressed with present-day conditions there can be no doubt. He has been called a conservative and, by some, even a reactionary; but it is evident to the attentive reader of his many books and essays that he is neither. For the conservative is he who is thoroughly satisfied with things as they are; he who sees no flaw in the arrangement of things in his day, and Chesterton is anything but satisfied with the present-day order of things, and indeed discovers them full of flaws from beginning to end. Nor is he a reactionary, for the reactionary is he who would build on the present foundation only he would go back to the institutions of yesterday and the day before while Chesterton would hark back not to yesterday but to yester-year. That is; to the distant day ere the foundations of the present order of society were laid, and would entirely uproot these foundations if he but could.

And therein lies the paradox, the greatest jest at the expense of the jester himself, as well as the utter futility of all his efforts. Chesterton and Shaw are the embodiment of the two extremes of English thought of the day. They both stand at the opposite poles of the modern Anschauung, the system of the one being the exact antithesis of the other and their remedies as far apart. But they are as one in their inveterate and uncompromising hatred of the present, collective, machine system, the trading oligarchy, and the ubiquity, as well as the impersonality of International Capital. But, while Chesterton is like a baby crying for the moon or like Werther sighing ineffectually for what is unattainable and finally ends it all by putting a metaphorical bullet into his brain, Shaw accepts the present-day order—mass production, the inter-locking of capital, big enterprises and all—and only wishes to see their evils removed

from them, so that we may all get the full and equal, as well as the greatest, benefit out of the creations of man's ingenuity.

Chesterton is indeed—in more senses than one—a pathetic figure among us. He would fain be taken for a Jeremiah sitting on the ruins of the Temple intoning his elegy. But who can imagine a Jeremiah dressed in motley, with a fool's cap-and-bells jingling merrily in scintillating paradox?

It is not thus that we visualize a Prophet bewailing the ruin of his Elysium. And furthermore, we know that he is flapping his wings in vain; that the conditions, the loss of which he bemoans, cannot be brought back. And were an enchanter, by the waving of his magic wand, to bring them back, Chesterton would be among the first to seek an escape from them and would give half of his life for a single day under modern conditions, rather than enjoy a cycle of years in the Cathay of the coarse, unenlightened and hampered living of the twelfth century for which he so dreamily hankers.

Chesterton is a sheep that has strayed from the fold and, strangely enough, is become thoroughly infatuated with its anomalous position as a lost wanderer. He would not, if he could, find his way back to the fold, and yet he is aware all the time that he may perish—spiritually, at least—if he keeps straying on and on and further away from the sheltered nook and the care of the shepherd. But he is fortunate in that he strays only in spirit, or imagination, from it, while physically he dwells very much within the fold and gets all the needed fodder as well as the tender care of the shepherd that he so heartily despises.

## A MODERN JOB<sup>1</sup>

### AN ESSAY ON THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

BY J. V. NASH

DEEPLY imbedded in the heart of religion, the problem of evil has from time immemorial perplexed the profoundest thinkers. Looking out upon the world, with its imperfections, its pain, and its misery, many have sighed with Omar Khayyam:

“Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire  
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,  
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then  
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart’s Desire!”

Christian theologians such as Cardinal Newman, viewing the same scene, have perceived on all sides evidences of “a great aboriginal calamity”—the dire results of a Fall, and the visitation of divine wrath upon man.

And yet, God is holy and God is good. How is the spectacle of widespread evil, of undeserved suffering, to be morally reconciled with the existence of a good as well as an all-powerful God? How can infinite good tolerate, much less create, evil? Here we are thrust upon the horns of a dilemma. Either God cannot or will not abolish evil. If the first, He is not omnipotent; if the second, He is not good.

It is obvious, of course, that this problem is one which affects most vitally the theistic religions, the religions which center about the cultus of an anthropomorphic deity. A non-personal deity presumably has no will, and so cannot be charged with responsibility for the existence of evil or reproached for not interfering to prevent it.

But if, at the helm of the universe, there be a superhuman Mind, omnipotent, all wise, and all loving, the Creator and the Governor

<sup>1</sup> By Etienne Giran, with an introduction by Archdeacon Lilley, authorized translation by Fred Rothwell. Chicago and London: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1916.

of the world. that Mind must have willed the world to be ordered as it is. How, then, can it be that the world is so full of sin, wretchedness, and injustice? A whole series of baffling problems merge into one, that of *Theodicy*, or divine justice. *Si Deus bonus est, unde malum?*—If God is good, whence comes evil?

The commonest solution of the problem of evil has been found in some form of dualism; i. e., the setting up of a principle of evil at war with the principle of good. Such was the conception of the warfare between Ormuzd and Abriman in Zoroastrianism. The dualism of ancient Persia has powerfully influenced other religions. Thus in Judaism and in Christianity we have Satan bringing sin into the world and waging warfare against the Almighty.

But dualism is not a satisfying solution of the problem. To be sure, the evil deity is destined to go down in final defeat, but in the meantime he flourishes and challenges the rule of God. If God is almighty, it must be by His indulgence that Satan is permitted to exist and fill the world with evil. So we are confronted again with the old dilemma.

Various means have been sought of avoiding this dilemma. While evil is indeed very real, may it not be that it is, after all, relative rather than absolute, and that in some mysterious way it may be necessary for the attainment of high spiritual values? Despite all the evil and suffering, may it not be that "all things work together for good?" Such is the philosophy to which Tennyson has given beautiful expression in *In Memoriam*:

"Oh, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood.

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete."

Browning, with his optimistic exuberance, could exclaim (probably just after a hearty breakfast): "God's in His heaven: all's right with the world." This, however, is little more than a gesture; since even after breakfast in a beautiful Italian palace, a moment's serious reflection must convince one that whether God is in His heaven or

not, all is certainly not right with the world. A world's woes cannot thus be waved away.

The greatest work of literature dealing with the problem of evil is undoubtedly the Book of Job, which is at the same time the supreme literary masterpiece of the ancient Hebrews, whatever its original sources may have been. It has been truly called "the epic of the inner life."

The story of Job may be presumed to be so familiar that we need not dwell upon it. Let it suffice that here we have worked out the lofty ethical concept of virtue for its own sake, not as a mere form of spiritual merchandising whereby man agrees to be good, for a price, the price being the reward of material prosperity. Job's faith is cruelly tested; yet in the midst of unmerited suffering he does not falter: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

In *A Modern Job: An Essay on the Problem of Evil*, the ancient drama is re-enacted in a modern setting. The late Dr. George Burman Foster, it is said, spoke of this book in terms of warmest admiration, as the best presentation he knew of the basic problems of religion.

Here we have the same *dramatis personae*, set down in contemporary life. The modern descendant of Job tastes of abundant prosperity and then falls into extreme adversity. His three friends, of the same names as their prototypes, come to console him.

Urged by Eliphaz to return to the God of his fathers and bow to His inscrutable will, Job replies that his fathers and he himself served different gods, one after another, and he goes on to say: "Now I see the vanity of my childish worship. God! Which God wouldst thou have me serve?" And he enumerates the different concepts of God in the Old and New Testaments. He will no longer serve a God who "is a monstrous enigma, whose crimes cannot be veiled behind His unfathomable mystery."

Eliphaz asserts that God has willed that suffering should be, because of man's rebellion; and he sees in Adam, even admitting the latter's legendary character, a "mighty symbol"—in Christ a "second Adam," who has vanquished pain and death and reconciled man and God.

But this does not appeal to Job. "Who is this God of thine," he asks, "that His wrath is so terrible and implacable?" For himself, he adds: "I will have none of this salvation obtained from an avenging God by the blood of an innocent victim. I prefer his wrath!" As for testing his faith, why should an All-Knowing God

need to learn by experiment how far His creatures can be tempted? Eliphaz emphasizes the disciplinary value of suffering, but Job sees no good in it: "Pain is depressing and evil; if God willed its existence, He willed an evil thing. . . . One does not destroy men's happiness, ruin their homes, break their hearts, take away all hope—slay them for the purpose of teaching men to live."

Part II opens with the second friend, Bildad, taking up the discussion. He admits that he himself was for a long time perplexed by the problem of evil. He even lost his faith and for a time ceased to pray. It was through contact with Christ that he "regained serenity of soul, acquiring the certainty that God does not will evil, and that human suffering is not his doing." Then comes the startling confession that he has been forced to abandon the doctrine of God's omnipotence. "I have made my God greater," he says, "I have made Him a moral God. Most ardently would He free mankind from suffering; he is ever working with this end in view, but he has not won the victory. He has not yet attained to omnipotence in this world." In short, Bildad has sacrificed God's omnipotence to save His goodness.

Eliphaz is horrified by this throwing overboard of Omnipotence. "How desperate," he explains, "is the decision at which thou hast arrived. It is almost the suicide of God!" Bildad retorts by asking why, if the orthodox Christian God is all-powerful, He does not annihilate Satan—by permitting him to flourish, does He not wink at evil?

Job smiles ironically. Perhaps Bildad, he thinks, is in a worse plight than he himself. Who knows that his finite God will not be ultimately worsted? But this does not daunt Bildad. "I am burning," he says, "with the ambition to compass the triumph of my God. Henceforth, I regard the task set before conscious humanity as a divine work. God is by my side, struggling with me, weeping with those who weep, and suffering with those who suffer, marching alongside those who have valiantly determined to win perfect freedom. He is the conscious effort towards good, the active will working within us, intelligence, goodness, and love pregnant with life, but he has not yet overcome the forces of death. His repulses and failures vex him sorely."

In that paragraph we have a suggestive foreshadowing of Mr. H. G. Wells' finite deity, as described in "God the Invisible King."

As for the Cross, Bildad believes that if it manifests God's powerlessness, "it also shows his unfathomable love." Verily, "Christ

came to save God." But Bildad believes firmly in the ultimate victory of his God, who, he says, is praying to man for his help in overcoming evil.

Job ironically regrets that he is so lacking in imagination that he cannot hear God praying. And he adds, grimly, that God's voice in prayer will have to rise pretty high to be heard above the cries of human suffering.

Part III introduces the third counsellor, Zophar, who points out that both Job and the other two speakers have proceeded on the assumption of the miraculous intervention of God in human affairs. "Are you certain," he asks, "He ever intervenes at all in human affairs? For my part, I am convinced there is no such thing as a miracle." His Christian faith, he protests, is not based upon miracle.

But if God never intervenes, suggests Job, have we not the old dilemma again: either He cannot or will not?

Zophar, however, sees God's will as eternal and unchangeable: it "cannot be bent to suit our pleasure," and it is not merely "the benevolent worker of our desires, the supplier of our whims." Our trouble is that we conceive of God in an anthropomorphic sense: we invest Him with our own limited and relative will which, instead of being perfect and therefore unchangeable, is always under the obligation of deciding for some particular alternative. We project our own imperfections into God.

Zophar's God is not the God of creed or book. He believes in God, not because commanded by authority or persuaded by revelation, but because he feels His presence. "He lives without appearing to live. He is so indefatigably active that He seems not to be acting at all. He wills with so immutable a will that He seems not to will. . . . Nor is my God localized at some particular spot in the world: He is present throughout the universe, permeating the tiniest of infusoria and reaching to the most distant of invisible stars. He is everywhere, in everything."

Job returns again to the old charge in another form: "Whether He intervenes or not, He created the world; if He is not responsible now, He was in the past." Zophar, however, will have nothing to do with origins. Substance, he thinks, may be eternal. Nor did God create the world in the traditional sense of the word, for that would have implied a change of will and therefore imperfection.

Here Bildad registers a protest. Such a God, to him, is a stony-eyed Sphinx, "congealed in His own perfection."



Zophar seizes the opportunity to point out that the Father of Jesus was just such an unchangeable God, "who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth His rain on the just and on the unjust." In this "lofty impartiality he sees "the characteristic of divine love," for, "ever the same, God lives in the soul of all, alike of those who know Him and of those who know Him not. He allows Himself to be found even by those who do not seek Him."

Zophar sees in evolution the explanation of the mystery of suffering. As life developed, sensations, some pleasant and others unpleasant, were recognized. The achievement of conscious sensation was a day of triumph: "That day humanity came to birth." Sensation is the source of all progress, while feeling, in the moral life, corresponds to sensation in the physical domain. "It rejects that which offends or wounds it, and seeks after those things that are in conformity with its own nature."

"Dualism once more," sighs Job.

May it not rather, answers Zophar, be merely the dual aspect of some inscrutable unity? There is a restless spirit within man forever resisting the blind forces of nature and spurring him upward and onward. Man is continually "hitching his wagon to a star." In this pursuit of the ideal, Zophar sees man's response to the summons of God. "The ardent longing for justice, brotherhood, and peace, the desire with which the masses are filled to realize the future city—whether aware of it or not—is the slow realization of the Kingdom of God."

Through it all, the will of God remains unchanged; it manifests itself to us under the aspect of irrevocable laws, and our wills are gradually learning to conform to these laws. This is not fatalism, he insists. On the contrary, these laws are the guarantee of moral freedom, of order and harmony. By means of them, man, through the disciplined forces of spirit, will gain the victory over the blind forces of matter.

In the meantime, suffering certainly exists, but do not blame God. "Accuse none," he says, "but those who are responsible for it: men! Yes, men who, encased in the armor of egoism, in the peace and quiet of their own seclusion, watch the famished crowds pass along."

It is man, not God, who has not yet attained to omnipotence. "Omnipotence can come only through the attainment of holiness and truth, of absolute perfection." So he thanks God that man, in his present imperfect state, is not omnipotent—the whole world would be swept by fire and sword. "Is it not by a provident arrange-

ment of God that base-minded—, jealous beings like ourselves are condemned to impotence? Man deludes himself by thinking he can increase his power by violence, by bigger guns, and the like. "True power is creative, and only love can create." Only through love shall we conquer evil. "Man will truly live only when his existence becomes life in God, manifested in humanity. Then, the destructive powers that men discover will become powers creative of beauty and harmony, truth and divinity. Man is still powerless, but he is on the way that leads to omnipotence. In him there is a god seeking himself, a god who is gradually realizing His own divinity. It is this human god who is to transform the world."

As sin and misery are caused by men, so they must be abolished by men, through the development of brotherly love and social conscience, realizing that we are one body, all of whose members suffer when one suffers. "It is not for God to abolish the springs of suffering and poverty, or vice and corruption: it is for us to do all this!" And likewise, through his mastery of science, man will overcome the adverse forces of nature.

As we work to these great ends, we shall be fulfilling God's plan. He is ever at our side: "He is with all who valiantly engage in some noble work. We are God's workers." Prejudice and Pharisaism must go; men must seek justice in all things, but they must "set even above justice a spirit of brotherly compassion."

Zophar goes on to explain how Job's own personal misfortunes were caused by the ignorance and stupidity of men, not by God.

All this, he tells us, is not setting up a new religion. It is merely substituting a different point of view. "In former times it was believed that the will of God must be modified in order to ameliorate the lot of mankind: nowadays it is beginning to be understood that it is the will of man that must be modified." As for those who are now suffering, Zophar would comfort them with the assurance that God does not will their distress; he would point to them the example of Christ, and strengthen them with the knowledge of their true divine nature; that if they must suffer, it will be "not as creatures manufactured by any kind of a potter, but as human beings aware of their greatness, as gods advancing towards the one God."

This is not catering to man's pride; rather, he thinks, it is building up the sense of human dignity. "Priests, reverend pastors and mandarins like to see men on their knees, in suppliant posture, stammering their feeble prayers. My God likes to see them valiant, strenuously progressing, free alike from boasting and from mean-

ness of every kind, with head erect and soul in harmony with body. It is His will that we should be men, not a flock of bleating sheep. All the worse for those professing Christians by whom this truth has not yet been understood; they shall be scattered, like wisps of straw, to the four winds of heaven."

Elihu, in the person of Job's old servant, brings the drama to a close. A simple minded man, he cannot determine which of the speakers has voiced the truth. "Still," he adds, "I feel that all three love God with all their heart, seek after Him with all their soul, and desire to serve Him with all their strength. And this, to my mind, is the whole of religion." Their differences, he believes, ought to make them humble. "Besides," concludes Elihu, "it is not in the adoption of any particular doctrine that Christianity consists. Fidelity to Christ does not depend on the firmness of a man's belief. If such were the case, what would become of simple-minded, ignorant men like myself, whom your discussions fill with confusion and perplexity?" To the simple mind of Elihu, all philosophy and religion is summed up in the divine admonition: "Beloved, a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another!"

It is not known whether the modern Job, like his ancestor, was rewarded with the vision of God, whether his misfortunes were miraculously replaced by new and greater blessings, or whether he died content, "old and full of days." We rather suspect, however, that his philosophy of life was much enlarged and improved.

As a discussion of the subject of evil in its modern aspects and as a contribution to ethics, this little volume is invaluable. No better statement of the changing points of view toward age-old religious problems could be wished.

## DESCARTES' CONCEPTION OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

BY GEORGE A. P. CODWISE

I N reflecting upon the philosophy of Descartes, we must recollect that in the Latin language there are two words for *Mind*. *Animus* or Spirit or Infinite Mind; the infinite thinking principle of life; the rational soul. (*Andrew Latin English Lexicon*.) Our *Animus* is fixed the instant we enter this world. It is always known, though it is admitted that it is broadened by use. In the same manner our knowledge of God was and is a priori, although through development, we will know God better. We know these two things through the fact of our existence; they have nothing to do with our experience. The word *Mens* refers to our finite mind or the intellectual principle within us, and the more experience we have had, the keener in all probability, has been the development of our *mens* and the more rational will be our mode of thought.

Descartes, who was born in 1596, was a very talented man and after learning everything that was possible, he gave up his studies and resolved "no longer to seek any other science than the knowledge of myself *or* of the great book of the world." (*Discourse on Method by Descartes*, Everyman's Library, page VII.) From the translation, we hardly know whether the word *or* is to have its conjunctive or disjunctive signification; if the former meaning is intended, then the second clause is to be included in the first, and the world, the body, material and extension are a part of myself or my ego, or my thought or my mind. If the disjunctive meaning is taken, then when we get beyond, our soul will be wholly disconnected with our body and our sense perceptions; the myself (which includes my soul) is one thing, and the world is another. We should say that the latter was meant by Descartes for among other things he (XVIII) notices the illusions of the senses, the changing nature of their objects and the difficulty caused by the existence of dreams. "Each

judgment we make about individual things may be doubted; we may also doubt whether things have the separateness which they seem to have, but we cannot doubt that there is something there. "While I wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who thus thought, should be somewhat" (26). Again Descartes says: "I, that is to say, the mind by which I am what *I am*, is wholly distinct from the body and is even more easily known than the latter, and is such that, although the latter were not, it would still continue to be all that it is, and so it may be said that Descartes comes to the conclusion that knowledge of myself does not include the knowledge of the world; the knowledge of myself is evidently one thing and the make-believe knowledge or the thinking of the world with my sense perceptions is another.

The great contribution of Descartes to the world is that he was the founder of modern Philosophy. The character of Scholasticism (Schwegler's *History of Philosophy*, page 144) is conciliation between dogma and thought, between faith and reason. When this dogma passes from the church, where it took birth, into the school and when theology becomes a science treated in universities, the interest of thought comes into play and asserts its right of reducing into intelligibility the dogma which has hitherto stood above consciousness as an external, unquestionable power. It assumed as an infallible presupposition that the creed of the Church was absolutely true. They wanted to rationalize the dogma and thorough refinements of logic and syllogisms they brought the dogma into disrepute. Luther and the Reformation were making thinkers more liberal. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Bacon were studying the natural sciences and finally came Descartes with his sceptical philosophy (sceptical at least as far as the objects of the world are concerned) saying in effect: there is nothing true under the sun but the a priori foundations: *God is*, and *I am* are the lasting categories. "For it is highly evident that all that is true is something [truth being identical with existence.]" (*Meditations*, 121.)

He swept away the logic and the syllogisms of the Schoolmen so that he "might afterward be in a position to admit others more correct or even perhaps the same when they had undergone the scrutiny of reason. "I firmly believed that in this way I should much better succeed in the conduct of my life than if I built only upon the old foundations and leant upon principles which, in my youth, I had taken upon trust. I found that as for logic, its syllogisms and the majority of its other precepts are of avail rather in the communica-

tion of what we already know, than in the investigation of the unknown. It is "an art full of confusion and obscurity calculated to embarrass instead of a science fitted to cultivate the mind." (Meth., 12.)

The first thing Descartes did, was, as far as possible, to cut loose from the Schoolmen and be done with presuppositions; but they had only two of these: that of Thomas Aquinas which proclaimed the understanding as principle and the other that of Duns Scotus which thus proclaimed the Will. All the refinements of Logic, came from these two principles. Descartes' aphorism *Cogito, ergo sum*, has developed, seemingly, from the postulate, *I think, therefore I am* into such an inextricable maze of propositions, and these into corollaries, that it is hard to keep the run of them.

For the Scholastics, the Understanding was the theoretical and the Will the practical principle and, through either of these, faith and reason were reconciled. For Descartes, the philosophic thinking by which I know *what I am* is both theoretical and practical; the former tends to make us morbid, the latter happy; the one makes us introspective, the other *outrespective*; in the theoretical, we understand; in the practical, we perceive. If the object or world takes the first place one is inclined toward Materialism; if the *I am*, or subject or mind is primary, Idealism comes forth. If the two balance each other, we have Absolute Identity, but in this the testimony of consciousness to the ultimate duality of the subject and object in perception is rejected.

The great mass of Philosophers are, as Hamilton calls them, Hypothetical Dualists, or Cosmithetical Idealists (the *or* being conjunctive) i. e., they take the external universe, not as a real world outside of us but as a representation to our senses and are divided into those who see this representation as a representative entity present to the mind, and those who view the immediate object as only a representative modification of the mind itself. Then we might consider our dreams and somnambulism for we must be something more than unconscious when we are in that state. All of these tend toward Dualism because they perceive a two-fold conception, only this conception or Idealism holds an hypothesis instead of a reality. Lately there have been produced the Intuitionists and the Pragmatists who may be described as Idealists and Materialists of a different order.

If mind and body are absolutely separate we have Natural Dualism; mind is one thing and the external world another. In general,

people are of this stamp, because it is acknowledged, it is the natural way to live.

These two categories, *God is* and *I am*, were ingrained in me at the moment I entered this world. Does our existence ever deceive us? No, we have an irresistible, unconquerable, a priori consciousness, idea or conception that we exist and that "there is a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will." (Shakespeare.) He is the Deity whom Descartes calls "the fountain of truth." He allows himself to doubt everything else except God and His attributes, and his own soul or spirit, for he maintains that "our senses do not give us truth at all," for they are meant to serve us only for present, practical purposes; they are limited and we must accept the limitations; likewise our minds are limited as far as the world is concerned.

We know we exist but we must admit, as far as at present we see, that it is only by our sense impressions that we are conscious of that fact or perceive it; we also know that when we are unconscious we will still exist, although we do not perceive it. All our sense impressions teach us concerning the *I am* is a sense thought or believing in what my pure thought had already caused me to know and when I became conscious of it I thought of it through my intellect,—the part of my mind which is the every-day working instrument; hence *I am* (although I do not consciously know it) not through sense or thinking but through my mind and personality. We also have the a priori conception that this state of things with regard to our own minds will last forever, so we, though our bodies are dead, will still be conscious. How much more eminent is God who is the basis of everything? Therefore his Spirit cannot be a *nothing*, but must be a pre-eminent existence. We can depend upon our essence or pure thought, for that cannot deceive us. It follows that if we never had sense impressions, God still would have given our spirits the power to have known our own Personality. We are said to know God through analogy, but very little notice is taken of that, or very little faith placed in it, because there is such a wonderful world is no reason why a personal God made it, but it being known that God exists, we see why it should be so wonderful!

The concept *I am* appears to me in a clearer light than the concept *God is* on account of the ephemeral sense impression which I have, through my human intellect, received, concerning it. It makes me pinch myself and feel that I am alive; it causes me to hear the thunder and find shelter. Each man's body is a part of the world

of nature, but nature would be, if we had no sense impressions; thinking them however makes them *appear* real, more real to outward seeming than the fact of myself or my mind, although we know they are not so. We may be mistaken about things of this world; nothing is certain; we should take everything human with a doubt; it is relative to something else. How memory fails us. There is nothing stable or even truthful that is ephemeral, everything is in a flux. This appears to be a paradox; when above it is said that nature would be if we had no sense impressions; while here it is said to be ephemeral; the logic of it is in the word *time*. Time is *not* when this mortal puts on immortality. We can bank upon our own Spirits and the Spirit of God though I do not recognize Him under any particular form or admit any sense impressions of Him. The idea of God and of the soul have never been in the senses.

On page 87 Descartes says: I cannot say that I possess any of the attributes that belong to the characteristics of body. I find none of them that can properly be said to belong to myself. As to the attributes of the soul: if I have no body it is true likewise that I am capable of neither walking nor of being nourished. Perception is another attribute of the soul but perception too is impossible without the body; besides I have frequently, during sleep, believed that I perceived objects which I afterward observed I did not in reality perceive. Thinking is another attribute of the soul and here I discover what properly belongs to myself. This alone is inseparable from me. *I am, I exist*; that is certain but how often? As often as I think. I am therefore precisely speaking only a thinking thing, that is a mind, understanding or reason. I am, however, a real thing and really existent, but what thing? The answer was a thinking thing. And I also know that nothing of all that I can embrace in imagination belongs to the knowledge which I have of myself. But what is a thinking thing? It is a thing that doubts, understands (conceives), affirms, denies, wills, refuses, that imagines, also and perceives (notice that the *I am* or Personality or Existence is not here included.) Is there nothing of all this as true as that I am? or that I am a mind? or that I myself am or exist?

Since it is now manifest to me that *bodies themselves* are not properly perceived by the senses nor by the imagination but by the intellect alone. I readily discover that there is nothing more easily or clearly apprehended than my own mind; and if the *I am* or the existence or the Personality or the mind (or is conjunctive) is the real thing that it is the basis of everything that belongs to me and



hence the groundwork of the intellect. It is the thinking that belongs to me. *I* do not belong to the thinking.

I never think outside of my thoughts and beliefs. I act upon my thoughts and beliefs and sense impressions, and it is the acting which causes the civilization of this world, but we do indeed have a more exalted role and a truer goal to which to look forward, to strive for, to realize. Since we exist there must be some machinery which is the effect of existence or of the cause. This machinery is the mind or the *I* am.

The machine (the mind in the unextended or thought world, the material in the extended or corporeal domain) holds within itself the finished product which it has been constructed to produce. That which is built up by this mechanism (i. e., civilization) whether an exquisite book harvested by the mind or an admirable piece of sculpture chiselled from a block of marble is the effect of the machine but there must have been a motive, a cause for this civilization and the original motive must have been in the mind of God. The mind has a personality, a soul, hence has the essence of reality—immortality. The ideas of the human mind have the faculty of thinking, sense perceptions, doubting, believing. The ideas of the immortal mind have the faculty of perfect intelligence and of knowing.

I not only humanly think and therefore am, but I eternally am and therefore know, and it is God that I know. He is perfect intelligence for in Him we live and have our being." (Acts 17.18)

Hamilton in his *Metaphysics* (page 548) takes it for granted that existence is the highest category or condition of thought. No thought is possible except under this category. "I cannot think that I think without thinking that I exist." It is a priori and all other thoughts, sense impressions and the civilizations of the world are produced from this law of thought.

Everything comes from the existence of God. Our minds are derived from Him and since our minds belong to the Spirit they are immortal hence these two conceptions are sure they are knowledge. They are premises which are founded upon knowledge.

But as for other conceptions although they may be clear and distinct and seem to be perfectly manifest to my senses (belief) they are not so my immortal existence (knowledge). God may change this world. He may alter the laws of the universe. He will cause my body to become dust.

The conclusion we come to from the premise: the world exists (although logical may be and probably is wrong showing that we

had a wrong premise (belief) with which to start. The conclusion we come to from the premise (God is) is sure to be correct because started with a premise which is knowledge.

It has been said that to Descartes' axiom, *I doubt* might be added, so that it would read: I think, I doubt, therefore I am. There might also be affixed the word believe. He does not doubt the innate ideas or conceptions, therefore the *I doubt* certainly should not be placed with the *I am*, but since he does doubt the sense impressions it should be referred to the *I think*—I think, I believe, I doubt, therefore I am. We act according to our sense impressions but before we act, we think, and that part of our Personality or our mind which is called the *Will* features the act. Since Descartes doubts everything concerning the external world, there is an antithesis or at least a contrast between the *I think* and the *I am*, even if the one does take place because of the other. We thus can see why the thinking means doubting (therefore believing) except as to the fundamental conceptions or innate ideas; to-wit: *God is* and *I am*; hence I know my Personality, but doubt my thinking concerning things I see which I may believe in with my sense impressions; but do not know. In fine all my pure thoughts are valid and I know them. My impure thoughts are invalid although I may believe them. My *human* mind claims only the power of thinking—cognito. My *immortal* mind requires the power of knowing—cognosco.

Descartes, to state it in a little different form, is a doubter as to his sense impressions but he knows his God and his own Personality. The two latter conceptions are his bed-rock of Truth. They and the external world are the contraries of each other, but a middle term (man) is there, partaking of the qualities of both: that is the mind of man or his intellect, connects his spirit (through God) with his body and the external world. The impressions are, as to his senses, extended and material; the conceptions are, as to his intellect, unextended and spiritual. They cannot meet and it is not intended that they should. It has generally been said that Descartes believed in an external world, and, by this expression, it has often been assumed that he was a Natural Dualist; if so, nothing is farther from the truth. On page 134 of Descartes' *Meditations* (Every Man's Library) he says: "It must be concluded that corporeal objects exist." He would be a Natural Realist unless he qualifies this sentence, but he does take all the strength out of this statement by the following words: "Nevertheless they are not perhaps exactly such as we *perceive* by the *senses*, for their comprehension by the senses

is, in many instances, very obscure and confused, but it is at least necessary to admit that all which I clearly and distinctly conceive as in them, that is generally speaking, all that is comprehended in the object of speculative geometry really exists, external to me." What is such an object of speculative geometry? On page 225 he tells us "the only clear and distinct notions standing are those figures, magnitudes and motions and of rules according to which these things can be diversified by each other which rules are the principles of geometry and mechanics. I judge that all the knowledge man can have of nature must of necessity be drawn from this source because all the other notions we have of sensible things, as confused and obscure, can be of no avail in affording us the knowledge of anything out of ourselves, but must serve rather to impede it." Hence such an object of speculative geometry seems to be the figures, magnitudes and motions of the principles of geometry and mechanics. On page XXI, "I at least know with certainty that such external realities may exist in as far as they constitute the object of pure mathematics, since, regarding them in this aspect, I can conceive them clearly and distinctly. (Notice that the translation does not read *do exist* but *may exist*.) Hence we must agree with Hamilton that Descartes was a Hypothetical Dualist and hold that to his consciousness the immediate object (that tree) is only a representative modification of the mind itself. (Hamilton's *Metaphysics*, page 202.) In other words the figure or form of that tree which I see (or the external object) is only a representative modification of the mind itself, hence can that tree be called an object (true object) of the external world, since the reality that I see is not a real tree, but a modification of the mind? That is, it is the mind that is the reality and not the tree which I see only with my sense impression, which senses will leave me when I depart from this earth. These figures are only the abstract ideas or views of bodies and not the bodies themselves.

Mind plays a two-fold part: the immortal essence compelling me to know God and myself or the *I am*, and the mortal sense teaching me to believe (not know) in the external world and the laws of the universe. How about the laws of thought? Whatever is, is nothing can both be and not be. Everything either is or is not. They are wrongly called the laws of thought. They are more than that; they are the conditions of existence. They belong to the vital principle. How about the mathematical concepts, the axioms and the laws of motion? God made this universe with certain laws; he can

change these laws when it so pleases Him, but until He does, two plus two equals four. But these laws to our sense impressions (we do not know them with our Personality) are but beliefs and belief goes as high as our consciousness. Knowledge transports us to Super-consciousness and begets the a priori existence. What is this Super-consciousness? My immortal mind, or the *I am*, or Reality or existence or Truth or Cause or any of the vital categories. The laws of the universe can hardly be called vital categories, unless it is remembered that God can change them when he so desires; even now gravitation is but a supposition or hypothesis.

Mind is the thinking principle of man, therefore mind must be the existence or substance in which the thinking is contained, hence we must analyze mind. In *Descartes on Method*, page 73, it is said: "Our minds must be considered finite, while Deity is incomprehensible and infinite." While this is true it is a bald statement and should have been modified by the word *human* making it read: "Our human minds must be considered finite." In all other parts of the book it is regarded, aye, insisted upon that the mind is the chief part of the being of man; that it is what keeps him in touch with God; that it is the potential link for his immortal existence, Personality, the *I am*, which here is limited to a mortal life, but them—Immortality. "I apprehend nothing so far as I am conscious as belonging to my essence except that I am a thinking being (72) a thing, an *I am*, a mind, possessing in itself the faculty of thinking. "Since nothing besides thinking belongs to the essence of the mind, it follows that nothing else does in truth belong to it." My disposition may have been given to me by my parents but they did not make me as far as I am a thinking being" (109). They did not give the "*I am* or my mind which is what I now consider to be myself" to me. "I (that is my mind by which I am what I am) is entirely and truly distinct from my body and may exist without it" (133). And Descartes sums up the whole on page 77 by saying: "It follows that the body may without difficulty perish, but that the mind is, in its own nature, immortal," which gives a very different interpretation (in the translation) to his first statement that "our minds must be considered finite." Our minds are at present human, imperfect, limited, but they have vast possibilities of growth and are the inchoate forms of what our immortal minds shall be. "Mind does not follow from the destruction of the body." (See page one.)

Thought is all the modifications of the mind or thinking subject, but the thought of the object does not make us have a knowledge

of the object. The mind knows itself, and the object is thought of or perceived by the intellect which comprises our sense perceptions of it (the object); this thought or sense perception is *not* knowledge if only for the reason that it is doubtful; the human mind (being limited) can never bring the object above sense perception (which is never infallible). The consequence is that all our senses can give us is an hypothesis concerning the perception of the object on which to build our thought. If the human mind were unlimited, we could get at the truth of the matter. This mind will hereafter become unhampered, unlimited. We know the mind even now, but we also know that it is limited. *Knowledge* is not given by *perception* or *imagination*, but *only* by the *mind*. God and personality do not need the sense perceptions, the outer world does. The human mind requests the power of thinking—cognito. My immortal mind demands the power of knowing—cognosco.

Locke tells us that when we are born our minds are like a blank piece of paper upon which our experience is written, for we had no innate ideas to start with and no knowledge. But where did this blank piece of paper come from? It must have started somewhere and somehow. From wood, originally, you may say; burn this wood and what is left? Only a charred piece of carbon; break up this carbon and it becomes ashes; blow these ashes away and it is dissipated into carbonic acid gas; it is finally taken up by infinity and goes back to its cause. This Cause was something and we call that something—not a representative entity of that wood; not even a representative modification of it but it has gone into its original conception—God. We still believe in the Conservation of energy for the original energy was God.

“By the term thought,” says Descartes, “I comprehend all that is in us, so that we are immediately conscious of it. Thus all the operations of the will, intellect, imagination and senses are thoughts. “But the above are rather to be classed as cognitions or impure thoughts. Pure thought is the innate knowledge we each individually possess of God and of our own minds, and has nothing to do with our impure thoughts as commonly understood or with our sense impressions.

Mind, in its practical sense, can be defined as the neutral principle and out of it flow the thought which is the passive power or that which thinks, while will is the active principal or that which accomplishes what the sense impressions order. It is the sense impressions which make us doubt, and believe, rather than know. The

instincts of an animal are often nearer truth than the senses of man. We often trust the sense direction of a horse rather than our own erratic trend. We anticipate that a dog will often find his home through his natural impulses.

Our mind is probably always active even during sleep, hence it is a solecism (at least in a metaphysical sense) to say *I do not think*. We always think; we may think it is not so, but we always think a something. "I don't believe so" may be correct for believing or doubting belongs to the cognitive powers and sometimes these are at rest. One does not doubt that he thinks but he does doubt that he believes what he is thinking about. The expression *I think, I doubt*, is therefore the proper expression for this cognition or impure thought because it is referred to the sense impressions which always doubts or believes and never knows.

If we know a thing, all doubt has been removed; we have advanced beyond belief; we have come out into the full panoply of knowledge. We are never doubtful about anything that we know. Reality is not in the element, but in the being or power that gave us the element. Reality is not in the intellect but in the being or power that gave us the intellect. Reality is in God for He is Cause of the element and the intellect. Reality is in our Personality for we are Spirit and hence immortal.

Cartesianism is the philosophy best suited to those who belong to the school of Socrates, Plato, Kant, Cudworth, Paley, and Leibnitz, who know God as the source of all virtue and the Mind as the Power of God which leads us to Him and who considers that in the words of Sir Thomas Moore:

"This world is all a fleeting show,  
For man's illusion given; . . .  
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe  
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,  
There's nothing true but Heaven."

# TABOO IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

BY JACOB SINGER

## INTRODUCTION

FROM Polynesia has come a word which applies to phenomena found in many parts of the world. Certain objects or acts or words connected with spirits are said to possess a dangerous power or influence. To safeguard man from these malevolent powers, a number of prohibitions are found in groups dominated by these demonistic notions which serve an alleged prophylactic or protective purpose in society. To trace fully the alleged reasons for certain interdictions or "taboos," one must study the quaint logic of the savage mind, insofar at least as social anthropology reveals that "mind" by giving us the types of thought, belief and action of social groups found in isolated parts of the globe. The "taboos" of Polynesia show the least influence of sophistication, and their unrationalized account supply the needed clues for discovering the origin and growth of many juridical, ethical and religious ideas found in civilized life.

The Polynesian word "taboo" (or "tabu" and "tapu") comes from a verb meaning "to prohibit"; and in its adjectival form means "prohibited, sacred, dangerous, unclean." Another etymology traces the word to the verb "ta" meaning "to mark" and "pu"—an adverb of intensity.

The fundamental ideas underlying all "taboo" are the notions of sacredness and impurity as conceived in primitive society where animistic notions prevail. From these conceptions follow (1) the sacredness (or uncleanness) of persons or things; (2) the prohibitions emanating from the same; and (3) the sacredness (or uncleanness) which results from a violation of the prohibition. The converse of "taboo" in Polynesia is "noa" which means "general or common." Out of these fundamental animistic beliefs have come a system of "taboos" which aims to protect the important personages such as the chiefs, and priests; to afford protection of the weak, women, children and common people generally—from the "mana"

(the magical influence) of chiefs and priests. For like reason, it is necessary to devise means of safety for those who come in contact with corpses and unclean foods and objects which are supposed to be charged with the "mana" or "spiritual electricity." This inherent malevolent force in persons and things must be curbed in order that chief acts of life, such as birth, initiation, marriage and sexual functions may go undeterred. The taboos are further designed to protect human beings from the wrath or power of the gods or spirits. The notion of wrath or other emotional state of the deity belongs to a higher range of culture. The primitive belief is a mechanistic one. A violated taboo brings dire consequences to friend and foe, to saint and sinner, alike.

Investigators have stressed various aspects in their attempt to find the root idea of the taboo system in cults and social institutions of antiquity. Frazer finds taboos as the ground of the religious consciousness with its primitive beliefs in spiritism and animism.<sup>1</sup> For Durkheim taboos rest in the conception of magic revealed by the mechanistic consequences of their violation. It is only secondarily ethical and religious.<sup>2</sup> Marett sees in taboo the "automatic power of self-maintenance and self-vindication." The primitive man thinks of "taboo" as something "unlucky to meddle with."<sup>3</sup> Jevons characterizes taboo as "dangerous and infectious."<sup>4</sup> VanGennep connects taboo with "mana" or the "spiritual electricity" which resides in holy and in unclean things. It is a "half-devil and half-god." To safeguard the unprotected the taboo has been established and out of this system has come the inherent feeling that certain things must not be done.<sup>5</sup>

The study of avoidances and interdictions reveals the complex of ideas and emotions which dominate uncivilized life and these are rooted in the primitive conception of man's relation to the unseen forces which control the universe. Animism is an attempt to explain natural phenomena on a spiritistic basis.<sup>6</sup> The roots of such avoidances through a sense of fear lie deeper in the remote period of a pre-logical age. Just what the nature of these beliefs was in the pre-animistic age is a matter of conjecture. We know, however, that animism alone will not furnish a complete explanation for these primitive taboos. The biblical taboos have come down to us under

<sup>1</sup> Frazer: *En. Brit.*, "taboo," 9th ed

<sup>2</sup> Durkheim: *Les Formes élémentaire religieuses.*

<sup>3</sup> Jevons: *Intr. Hist. Rel.*, p. 61ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Hastings: *En. Rel. Eth.*, 1:535.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, "animism."



various guises of rationalization, but enough remain in the survivals to reveal their primitive nature. The historical records show more archaic beliefs than the codes or prophetic writings. The system of taboo shows traces of the magician's technique, since ritualistic safety devices afford to the priest at least a measure of control over these "dangerous" holy objects. On the other hand a system of prohibitions shows the waning of magic and the growth of humility and a sense of feebleness which gives rise to the sentiments of moral scruples and religious piety. The crudest notion of taboo is the naive belief that contact with objects both sacred and unclean leads to physical consequences both evil (disease) and fatal (death). On a higher level of culture the crude belief has been modified by the conception of wrath or anger of the deity who may or may not punish the sinner. The risk of physical punishment is incurred by violating a taboo. On a more rational level the avoidances are religious or ritualistic conventions interpreted as part of a religious discipline or as symbolic of moral and spiritual values.

Wundt thinks of the taboo as the oldest unwritten code.<sup>7</sup> Such a juridical conception leaves out the mental and emotional life of primitive society which form the motivation for the taboo as a system of social control. The psychology of taboo is more fully considered in Crawley's emotional theory. It is "fear and loathing" which underlies the avoidances practiced by uncivilized man. The objection of Jevons is valid, since the gods are not loathed and many taboos emanate from the relation of persons and objects with them. The distinction between the natural and the supernatural is the product of later sophistication. For the savage both realms merge, so that "taboo" will touch many phases of individual conduct, social custom and religious practice.

The system of taboos includes all places, objects and names related to sacred persons and things. In the double aspect of taboo as "holy" and "unclean" we have the elaborate ordering of practices concerning the "corpse"; a new born child; blood and the shedder of blood; the divine being, the criminal, the sick, the outcasts and foreigners, animals and men, women especially, the married as well as the sacred virgin; food, clothes, vessels, property, houses, beds, canoes, threshing-floor, winnowing fan, a name; word or a day—all these may be "taboo" or a source of danger to the community. These ideas are found in various part of the globe showing that such animistic notions represent a common level of culture. The similarity

<sup>7</sup> Quoted by Freud: "*Totem and Taboo*," p. 31.

is due less to direct borrowing or suggestion, than to the uniformity of the mental processes and emotional experiences of man. In Greece, Eurypluss was stricken with madness when he opened the *larnax* or 'tabernacle, and in Israel Uzza is slain by the Lord for his attempt to support the ark. Similar examples are found in Peru where "none may come within where the idol was, save the principal chiefs who entered with much reverence and veneration, having removed their sandals,"<sup>8</sup> doubtless because the sandals by contact with the sacred soil would become taboo and unfit thereafter for daily use.<sup>9</sup> In Madagascar work is taboo to relatives for certain periods in accord with the rank of each. In Polynesia, not only on the death of "Tuitonga," or a time of general mourning or of sickness in the royal family, but before war or before a great feast, a taboo day or days is proclaimed; no one may go outside of his house, no domestic animal may utter a sound, dogs are muzzled, cocks are put under a calabash. Work is taboo on holy days because anything done then belongs to the god and becomes unfit for common use. To protect others, mourners adopt a particular dress.

As a regulative principle in primitive society, taboo is all important. "The only offence known is taboo-breaking and the only punishment is excommunication." Jevons draws a distinction between taboo and tabooed, holding that supernatural beings are inherently "taboo" or dangerous, while natural beings and objects become "taboo" through the contagion derived by contact or association with the spirits. Occasionally property is made "taboo" by the king or priest, e. g., in Polynesia the catch in fishing is taboo until it is divided. The same is true of the spoil hidden by Achan. (Josh. xvii. 25.) Blood likewise is taboo, especially if it is connected with death. Blood was not to be shed on the ground in ancient Egypt or in ancient India. Amongst the Yonios of Colorado the manslayer is taboo for a month, during which time he must fast and the Kaffir is "unclean" after a battle.<sup>10</sup> In West Africa, after childbirth, the mother is considered unclean for seven days and on the Loango coast the mother is taboo for six months. Abstaining from food for mourners is also a derivative of the taboo idea. Amongst the negroes of the Gold Coast the relatives may not wash themselves or comb their hair during the funeral ceremonies. Among the Fijians, "many make themselves bald for the dead."

Taboos in Polynesia resemble the social and legal codes of civili-

<sup>8</sup> Jevons: *Intr. Hist. Rel.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>10</sup> Jevons: *Hist. Rel. Intr.*, p. 74.

zation. The assumption that these were devised by crafty priests and politicians is no longer held by scholars; for "they are most at home in communities which have no state-organization, and no priesthood. The belief is not artificial and imposed, but spontaneous and universal."<sup>11</sup>

Taboo as a religious observance is equally untenable. Everything sacred is taboo but not vice versa. "It is impossible to make out that all things "unclean" were originally sacred or that the carcasses of vermin ever belonged "to any god." According to Crawley, "the principle of Social Taboo is an idea . . . that the attributes assigned to the individual who is feared, loathed or despised are materially transmissible by contact of any sort."<sup>12</sup> But, argues Jevons, the gods are neither loathed nor despised. The origin of taboo, according to Jevons, is "an inherent quality in the minds of men that certain things must not be done." There are many dangerous things that are not taboo, e. g., to eat poisonous plants. It is rather the things that experience could never teach to be dangerous that are taboo, e. g., touching a new-born child. The pure taboo sentiment is neither exclusively moral, religious nor social; it is purely formal and without content. Still Jevons admits that "the taboo was never grossly material. It marked the awe of man in the presence of what he conceived—often mistakenly—to be the supernatural. This feeling is spiritual in the sense that sense-experience is not the sole source of final test of truth; and that the things which are seen bring man daily into relation with things unseen. This irrational fear lies at the bottom of our morality.

In the confused reasoning of the primitive man, many evils followed from the idea of taboo and the belief in its transmissibility. In Polynesia, the sick were often abandoned. Likewise the same superstitious fear of "taboo" hindered man's conquest of nature and the utility of natural gifts. "With its arbitrary and senseless restrictions it over-grows healthy social tendencies and kills them, as moss kills off grass or ivy strangles the tree." It further isolated and degraded woman and destroyed natural affection. The same baneful effects are to be noted in religion. "The irrational restrictions, touch not, taste not, handle not, which constitute formalism, are essentially taboos—indispensable to the education of man at one period of his development, but a bar to his progress later." A certain selective process appears, which eliminates the baneful and

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>12</sup> *Folk-Lore*, June, 1895: VI., 2, 130.

retains the helpful restrictions. This theory has been called "the Unconscious Utilitarianism of Common Sense." Such a theory is difficult to verify and it deals more particularly with rational strata which cover the older and the more irrational modes of behavior. Human progress appears in the "rationalization of taboo."<sup>13</sup> Religion gives a particular sanction to taboos, thereby affording the opportunity for rationalization. Jevons here does not specify what state of religious development he has in mind. In a low level of culture, the distinction between magic and religion does not exist.

"It seems, then, that individual religious reformers have carried out the selective process by which the innumerable taboos of savage life have been reduced to the reasonable restrictions which are essential to the well-being of mankind. And the prophets and religious teachers who have selected this and rejected that restriction have usually considered themselves in so doing to be speaking, not their own words or thoughts, but in those of their God. This belief has been shared by the community they addressed, otherwise the common man would not have gained the courage to break an ancient taboo. Certainly no mere appeal to reason would counterbalance that inveterate terror, just as it was no mere consideration of utility or of purely human interests which supplied the religious reformer with his zeal, or that prompted the denunciations of the prophets. Their message was a supernatural message; and in the same way the process by which mischievous taboos were weeded out may be termed a process not of Natural but of Supernatural Selection.<sup>14</sup> This generalization is particularly significant in the attitude of the prophets towards the priestly legislation.<sup>15</sup>

R. R. Marett finds the taboo the "cornerstone of the class-system, ensuring the subjection of women to men, of the lower orders to the chief, and of all to the king, whose very name was 'tabu' on penalty of death." R. Taylor holds that taboo is "religious observance established for political purposes," while W. H. R. Rivers is of the opinion that taboo is "the prestige of an immigrant folk ('kwa people') in its dealing with an indigenous population of markedly inferior culture." In Timor, the custom of taboo ("pomali") is very common, and it applies to all forms of property, serving as the guardian of proprietary rights. "A palm branch stuck across an open door, showing that the house is tabooed is a more effectual guard against robbery than any amount of locks and bars."

<sup>13</sup> Jevons: *Intr. Hist. Rel.*, p. 92.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>15</sup> *Jer.* vii. 22.

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K.C.B., K.C.M.G., F.R.S., N.L., D.Sc., LL.D., M.D., F.R.C.S.

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