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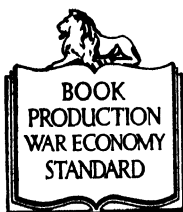
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PREFACE

The Swarthmore Lectureship was established by the Woodbrooke Extension Committee, at a meeting held December 7th, 1907: the minute of the Committee providing for "an annual lecture on some subject relating to the message and work of the Society of Friends". The name "Swarthmore" was chosen in memory of the home of Margaret Fox, which was always open to the earnest seeker after Truth, and from which loving words of sympathy and substantial material help were sent to fellow-workers.

The Lectureship has a two-fold purpose: first, to interpret further to the members of the Society of Friends their Message and Mission; and, secondly, to bring before the public the spirit, the aims and the fundamental principles of the Friends. The Lecturer alone is responsible for any opinions expressed.

The Lectures have usually been delivered on the evening preceding the assembly of the Friends' Yearly Meeting in each year. The present lecture, in abridged form, was delivered at the Friends Meeting House, York, on the evening of July 29th, 1942.

A complete list of previous Lectures, as published in book form, will be found at the beginning of this volume.

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

I

The Lord sent not His Covenant to our forefathers but to us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.—DEUTERONOMY v. 3.

IF in this dark hour of man's history we are to discern some eternal significance embodied in the passage of hard temporal facts, and if we are to see any fresh light on the essence of our Quaker heritage and message, and the nature of what contribution we can best make to the common need, we must "keep very close to our Guide, not to run ahead and not to lag behind". The chastening nature of the experience we are living through should be enough to prevent any responsible Quaker citizen, conscious of the responsibility we all must share for the present plight of the world, from "running ahead of his Guide", feeling as we do that dependence on our own and not on a Greater Strength and consequently going beyond what we know in speech and act, has been in part the cause of our undoing.

At the same time, although it may seem to some that just now, the whole world having appealed to the arbitrament of force, we are called on, as it were, to show cause why the licence to preach our message should not be withdrawn, we have an equally definite duty not to lag behind our Guide, nor to withhold such message as we clearly see to be ours to give. Indeed it is difficult to know whether man's unfaithfulness in following the light he has, or presumption in attempting to run without reference to any guiding light, has been the more potent cause of his present dire state.* This attitude

* Ralph Cudworth: *Sermon I*, vol. IV, 1646, has a vivid description of the plight of the angels who "went before their Guide": "They all entangled themselves with the length of their own wings, they would needs will more or otherwise than God would will in them, going about to make their will wider and to enlarge them into greater amplitude, the more they struggled they found themselves the faster pinioned and crowded up into narrowness and servility; in so much that now they are not able to use any wings at all, but inheriting the serpent's curse, can only creep with their bellies upon the earth."

then, a humble attempt "not to run before or lag behind our Guide" seems to me fundamental, if our message is in any way to speak to contemporary condition.

In the words of the Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1804: "It is a solemn thing to stand before the nation as the advocates of inviolable peace." And indeed it is. If we regard this stand as our witness to one facet of Christian truth, the solemnity of it is at once apparent in the fact that whether men ever accept this position depends upon the reality of our worship and thence upon the quality of our lives and of our service. There is therefore laid upon us the responsibility of constantly attempting to discover afresh and to make our own, the reasoned basis of our faith, the sanctions it rests upon, and its implications for the future.

"Blind with the gossamer of prevalent death," we may not be able to discern with any sense of certainty how we have reached this present pass nor how we are to find our way to sanity and health, but in so far as we believe ourselves to be speaking not of shadows but substantial things we may not keep silent.

Throughout the lives of all of us here the clouds of this impending horror have been hanging heavily.

I find that Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, lecturing in this series in 1911, clearly prophesied what was coming upon us. "Looking upon the past, and striving to forecast the future of our race, I seem to see an endless procession moving along an upward tending path on a mountain side. We have already climbed far from the morasses in which we started. Most beautiful in the distance are the Delectable Mountains on which the sunlight rests. But between us and them lies a craggy, cruel ravine of impenetrable darkness, from which at intervals arise the cries and groans of men, women and children sacrificed to the Moloch of War." At intervals—is that the prospect that lies before us? We have known one uneasy interval, and known it for a time of dishonour and dis-ease—exhibiting all the ugly symptoms of a sick society—booms and slumps, unemployment and scarcity—short of irruption into war itself.

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So, at intervals, it seems, we may expect this wholesale human sacrifice—unless the disease from which society is suffering can be diagnosed and cured, and we ourselves can discover and obey some new law which may once again set our feet upon an “upward tending path”. We are a small and insignificant body, but that must not excuse us nor deter us from making our due contribution to ends so desperately desired by men.

First of all let us be quite sure that we do believe this state of war to be the total reverse of the good life for men. Can we take that for granted? Not I think if it is remembered how much both of direct and indirect action in the lives of men and nations has contributed to a state of war. It is impossible that the end desired has always been peace when the means employed have so often been predatory and ruthless. Wherever power has been desired and gained over another's life, wherever his rightful share has been usurped and he himself has been used as a means to another's end, the seeds of war have been sowed. We may have sought peace with our lips, but in our lives we have not ensued it.

The shocking ease with which we become accustomed to the every day language of war: “mopping up operations”, “picking off your opponent”, “liquidating undesirable elements”, makes us ask ourselves whether we truly realize the bestiality of war. It is difficult to recognize here the accents of the humane and enlightened civilization which we thought we had attained, even if we held it somewhat precariously in pre-war years. We are repentantly aware of the extent to which even the most sensitive amongst us now hears of increasingly appalling horrors with greater unconcern than would have been thought possible three short years ago. Guard against insensitiveness as we may, we know we are all to a greater or less extent subject to its insidious growth, and even while we excuse it as a merciful skin mitigating the assault upon our senses which the daily battery of war news brings, we know we must resist it, for this increasing callousness and the holding cheap of human

life has already endangered civilization and bears with it direst peril for the future.

Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,
 The heirship of an unknown destiny,
 The unsolved mystery round about us, make
 A man more precious than the gold of Ophir,
 Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things
 Should minister, as outward types and signs
 Of the eternal beauty which fulfils
 The one great purpose of creation, Love,
 The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven ! *

“ Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things should minister.”
 A far cry this from the fate of contemporary man, a mere unit in large-scale operations the outline and purpose of which he but dimly perceives ; whose successful prosecution in war will lead to his brother’s death, if unsuccessful, to his own !

The insidious suggestions by means of which the evil thing is made to appear less evil than it is, should keep us on our guard. We are asked to admire the excellence of the common unity achieved in war. What a desperate remedy for social disunity ! Too often it is the means employed by a State (as by an aggressive individual), conscious of inner disorder and disruption, to present a bold cemented front to the world—the inner confusion is but temporarily masked and when the aggressive mood is over is exposed again, and the social body from reaction and fatigue is less able even than before to harmonize its warring interests and create a peaceful order. We are asked to remember that many find purpose in their lives, and scope and opportunity for the first time in war. What a dreadful confession of all that society has denied them in peace ! (Of the convicts released in hundreds from Cayenne for unskilled labour in France, Alexander Paterson writes that it is a bitter reflection “ that it takes the inferno of a European war to rescue them from the inhumanity of peace ”.)

If we are not careful, we may one day find ourselves

* From Prelude to *Among the Hills*, Whittier.

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echoing a recent pronouncement of the B.B.C., "Total war need not mean total misery".*

II

We love all men and women, simply as they are men and women, and as they are God's workmanship, and so as brethren.—GEORGE FOX.

BEFORE we can attempt to build up a picture of man's destiny which shall at all approach Whittier's conception, of his dearness to God and of the full and noble life which should be his, we must again affirm our belief that war involves a violation of his nature and a prostitution of his powers, which is incompatible with the will of God for him.

As with war, so with existing conditions of industrial life ; until we make resolute attempts to disengage ourselves to the limit of our powers (there being nothing more difficult than to be aware of the air we breathe), from preconceptions and prejudices that blind us inevitably to their essential ugliness, we shall not be in a position to admit the magnitude of the wrong they do the spirit of man. With their clearer vision and heightened perceptions, artists have tried to stir our sluggish imagination and to move our hearts ; John Ruskin, William Morris, Eric Gill, in turn have prophesied the nature of the judgment of posterity on our inhuman way of treating man, "making money and unmaking man". Assuredly our descendants will see the phenomenon of unemployment more clearly for the outrage it is, than we have been able to do. "Just as capitalists see everything in terms of saleability, they must naturally see labour also. We are blind to the monstrous, the devilish inhumanity and therefore the blasphemy of this theory and the practice founded upon it. We do not treat animals thus. A horse must have his proper food and shelter whatever happens, but a motor car needs oil and petrol only

* An occasional reading of Erasmus' *Complaint of Peace*, 1559, may serve as a salutary reminder of the utter irrationality and horror of the course on which we are all embarked.

when it is being used. The capitalist treatment of human beings is like the treatment of machines.”*

In the field of education, too, we find it lamentably easy to accept complacently a denial to man of his heritage of knowledge, truth and beauty. “ We take it calmly because we are used to it and human beings see nothing wrong in abuses to which they are accustomed. But our descendants will view it as we view the slave trade or debtors’ prisons or child labour, which our ancestors accepted as natural and harmless institutions ; and the sooner we anticipate the views of our descendants, the sooner we shall end a national disgrace.”†

But perhaps most difficult of all our institutions for us to consider dispassionately is the law we live under. Most difficult because we find it ready made, we submit to it under penalty and naturally we find it easier to regard it as final than transitional, as we ought. In determining whether we have here a good or bad inheritance we have to remember that classes and individuals almost invariably govern in their own interest, and that we inherit a legal code and tradition whose preoccupation has been the protection of existing property rights rather than those of the general public. In the vitally important matter of housing, the laws of property represent a triumph of sectional interests over the welfare of the community as a whole and the poor in particular.

And not only bearing in mind in whose interests they were passed, do our laws need watchful scrutiny, but bearing in mind at what times they were passed and to meet what need. “ In peace and prosperity both states and individuals are actuated by higher motives, because they do not fall under the dominion of imperious necessities ; but war, which takes away the comfortable provision of daily life, is a hard master and tends to assimilate men’s characters to their conditions.”‡ Now it is just at these times of imperious necessities that laws are chiefly made, burdening with

* Eric Gill : *Autobiography*, 1940, p. 257.

† Sir Richard Livingstone : *The Future in Education*, 1941, p. 6.

‡ *Thucydides* iii, 82. Jowett.

unnecessary restraint and loss of liberty the days of peace when men should normally be actuated by higher motives. Circumstances, at such times, are not favourable to the passing of the most equitable laws and those therefore most likely to be respected. And there remains, partly unconscious, and largely unexpressed, a sense of inequity and frustration.

In all consideration of existing institutions we must resolutely continue to hold before our eyes the conception of man dear to his Creator who "sees and loves his image there", loves him both for what he is and what he may become. And if any would query whether this conception of so tender a relationship is logically defensible, shall we not reply that it appeals most powerfully to the logic of our emotions? "To say that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," says Canon Streeter, "is to say that he is a God who sets supreme value on individual persons—a God to whom the individual is personally dear. He is the all-parent who cannot regard his children merely as details in a picture however glorious, or as notes in a tune however wonderful." It is not as if we could claim that his children have been "as details in a picture" for that would at least imply design and purpose. Far too often they are merely the cheapest and most easily replaced commodity in industrial stock.

Far too long have we disregarded that most liberating saying of Christ, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath", and as a result man has continued to be sacrificed to 'divers abstractions, "the balance of power", "the maintenance of the gold standard", "protective tariffs", and the like, and he may yet be sacrificed to the regimen of "a planned economy".

"We need constantly recalling to the truth that so long as we deal with the cosmic and the general, we deal only with the symbols of reality, but as soon as we deal with private and personal phenomena as such, we deal with realities in the completest sense of the term."*

* William James : *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1902, p. 498.

We need then to make no apology for the constant recurrence of this theme of reverence for life itself, for the body as the temple of God, throughout our Quaker history ; it is the natural partner of our belief in the sacredness of human personality and has found expression in the past in the persistent chivalry of famine relief workers, in tender caring for the destitute dead, in the succouring of prisoners and in the freeing of slaves.

Such a conception as this of Dante's may stand as one among many sanctions for our faith : " Forth from the hand of Him, who contemplates it with delight ere it even exists, like to a little maid that cries and laughs in her childish sport, issues the soul, so simple that it knows nothing, save that, set in motion by a blithe Creator, it eagerly turns to that which gives it pleasure."*

This seems no impossible conceit when the love of a woman for her unborn child is a known and lovely fact. And shall we attribute less to the Creator ? Neither is it merely an expression of a belief in original innocency, for a creator would hardly be " blithe " who looked forward with nothing but apprehension and misgiving to the journey on which the little soul is setting forth.

But now, because of man's unfaithfulness and sin, the journey on earth is pitifully short, the end violent, and even in times of " peace " the passage was fraught with insecurity and poverty and cumbered with many and hazardous " occasions of stumbling ".

Whom do you blame, brothers ? Bow your heads down !
 The sin has been yours and ours.
 The heat growing in the heart of God for ages—
 The cowardice of the weak, the arrogance of the strong, the
 greed of fat prosperity, the rancour of the deprived,
 pride of race, and insult to man—
 Has burst God's peace, raging in storm. †

Do we yet sufficiently realize that the sin has been ours too ? that no amount of testimony against the method of

* Purgatorio, Canto XVI.

† From *The Oarsmen*, Rabindranath Tagore, 1916.

war absolves us from accepting our due meed of responsibility for its causation? Have we as individuals lived in that spirit which takes away the occasion of all wars? Have we yet learnt Blake's lovely truth that

He who binds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy,
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sunrise.*

The raw materials of peace—men wholly free from acquisitiveness and possessiveness—are rare indeed.

Have we not lived too as members of a society whose structure we clearly saw bore within it the seeds of war and whose practices directly led to it, and yet have not been faithful in proclaiming the truth we knew?

We too then must bow our heads knowing how little we have done to allay "the heat growing in the heart of God".

Among Friends one should be entitled to assume that while aggression and cruelty, torture and savagery inspire our horror and repulsion by whomsoever they are perpetrated, attempts to assess relative guilt are considered unprofitable. Christians sometimes wonder how the testimonies and practice of their faith can make any noticeable impact on the power of modern society. This at least we can be sure of, that because, knowing themselves and their opponents to be sinners in the eyes of God, they can never, indeed they must never maintain an attitude of fanatical hatred towards members of other groups, classes or nations, they have a great constructive contribution to make. If the Christian Church as a worshipping body of fallible men really held in one fellowship of repentance even the bitterest opponents, we know that it would powerfully affect the course of social struggles and development.

And so while fully conscious of the extent of the sin rampant in this conflict, we are never absolved from the attempt generously to understand, and understanding, to reconcile.

The more we love any that are not as we are, the less we love as men and the more as God.—JOHN SALTMARSH, d. 1647.

* From *Blake's Works, Nonesuch Edition, p.99.*

III

And the sin when it was matured was big with death.—JAMES i. 15.*

THE first step in repentance is recognition of the sin. In common with a growing body of opinion we cannot explain this war in terms of a mere national or imperial clash. Grown to giant proportions we can recognize in the present aggressor nations many of the evil tendencies in our personal and national life, though in some cases their form is more malignant and its manifestations more acute and horrible.

We recognize the acquisitiveness which assumes that nations and individuals can be made happy by being richer or more powerful than their neighbours. (A schoolmaster recently pointed out to a boy the fine achievement of the Dutch in reclaiming great tracts of coast land. The boy's reaction, "Wouldn't it have been simpler to have seized it from their neighbours? Oh no, I remember, they haven't got a strong enough army," was a shock to the master. But however moral the schoolroom teaching, that was the temper of the boy's world.)

We recognize the bold front and strutting gait which is only a façade for hollowness and fear, and the voice of the bully who is revenging himself for having at some time suffered a galling sense of inferiority. (It is difficult, particularly when the bully is successful, to remember that it is basically fear which drives him on. Bruno knew this when, facing his accusers at the stake, he said: "Greater perhaps is your fear in sentencing me, than mine who am accused".)

We recognize the ease with which a tired and frightened people can be persuaded to obey orders and the relief with which they hand over all responsibilities. (And recognize, too, the impossibility of building a real democracy with such material.) We recognize the cruelty and futility of fastening upon a scapegoat to bear the burden of a nation's frustration and fear.

* Given as exact rendering of James i. 15, by G. H. Rendall. *The Epistle of St. James and Judaic Christianity.*

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We recognize the sin of racial pride.

We recognize the lack of trust in the transcendent power of truth and beauty and in the life of the spirit ; a lack of trust in life itself, which takes refuge in an outer cemented order and leads inevitably to despair and doom. (In respect of Nazi* education we may feel that here at least is a wrong done to the human spirit to which we provide no parallel. It has recently been pointed out† that the literary nourishment of our growing population may not be nearly so objective and innocent as we are apt to take for granted. True, the extent of the damage done is not comparable, but it is salutary not to assume our complete immunity from subtle propaganda, even in time of peace.)

We recognize the total disregard of human value and of human dignity, leading to enslavement and servility. (It seems a strange perversion of the word " humanist " to apply it, as is so often done, to a philosophy which leads to such inhuman ends.) We recognize the lust for power, the oppressive power which money and influence confer over the lives and property of others.

In their essence these are not alien and unfamiliar sins. We, too, need liberating from the chains of our possessiveness, our pride and our desire to dominate. We, too, have to learn reverence for life and trust in the efficacy of beauty and truth.

If, even in the heart of the crisis, we can connect the signs, interpret the symptoms, and attempt a diagnosis then not entirely " as men without hope " we may in company with our fellow-men set about taking the first steps towards curing the disease.

We are fortunate here in not having to spend time justifying its being within the province of a religious body to discuss the very material manifestations of disease in an obviously sick society. Many of the causes we see only " in a glass darkly ", but we clearly see a deep-seated spiritual malaise and widespread human wrongdoing. And we know that

* See Erika Mann's *School for Barbarians*. 1939.

† Orwell's Essay on Boys' Reading, *Inside the Whale*. 1940.

in our own history the periods when we have best been able to make our distinctive contribution have been when reliance upon inward vision was matched with determination to translate that vision into an outward order, and to attempt to penetrate the life of the world with the living principles of spiritual religion. So heroic an attempt must never be confused with, nor condemned as "creaturely activity", the vision is too compelling and the translation of it into action needs too stringent a discipline for such an easy designation.

Nor need we fear to meet among Friends the warning attitude that to take social action involves embracing a political programme and putting a religious drive behind it. For us the very reverse must always be the sequence of our activity. If, fallible registering instruments as we are, we can claim to have received any light on the causes of this sickness of society, and the resulting human bondage, then however overwhelming our consciousness of insufficiency for the tasks involved, we are as it were doomed to act. Only as we reach a far clearer vision of man as "a sort of first-fruits of creation" with all that that bears with it of the idea of his being set apart for consecration, shall we measure the extent of the wrong done to his spirit by so grossly imperfect a society. Only then shall we realize how, in order to effect his liberation, "an opposite affection should overpoweringly break over us";* and how before we can hope to be used as liberators of our fellow men, we ourselves must be freed from those flaws which must powerfully distort the light we seek, and from those chains which hold us back from following the path it shows us.

Along with many of our generation we have been in bondage to spirits less easily recognizable by us though no less real than those from which Paul sought to free the early churches.

To the spirit of materialism, the enemy alike of Christianity and the human cause.

To the spirit of schism, with its inability to set its lesser loyalties within the framework of some great

* William James : *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 212.

compelling cause ; so that all we now have of some of the finest progressive parties which once set out to serve the cause of man, are mere vestigial remains.

To the easy tolerance of sin arising from our having learnt from psychology more exactly what man *is* and confusing that with what he ought to be.

To the confusion of thought, fostered by ill-digested educational psychology, which held that liberty must be allowed to degenerate into licence rather than that "self-expression", however devastating its manifestations, should ever be curbed. And to the fallacy that, far from its being laid upon us to give our children the finest spiritual nurture we know, it was our duty to launch them like little rudderless ships on an uncharted sea.

To the spirit of exclusiveness which so often led those who held the most progressive views to be those least able to co-operate with ordinary men in ordinary enterprises.

But these are searching times. We are discovering more of the nature of the free spirit. We are learning that the chains we fashion for ourselves, chains forged of our desire to consume and to possess, can be infinitely more cramping than the chains of circumstance.

We are privileged people. We have our lives. To learn the laws of the free spirit is a part, and no small part of our "reasonable service".

IV

The Glory of God is a living man and the life of man is the Vision of God.—
IRENÆUS.

IF we believed man to be fundamentally irresponsible, fit only to be a tool, we might be justified in believing in totalitarian methods of government. If we believed him to be totally irredeemable, utterly self-seeking and amoral, we might be justified in believing he should be ruled over in the manner of a convict settlement. But just because we make the infinitely far-reaching assertion that there is something of

God in every man, we can never be absolved from attempting to free that spark so that it shall be operative in his life, and of attempting to create some form of community life that shall safeguard and foster the individuality of all its members.

I see this obligation laid upon us by virtue of the nature of our beliefs in the relationship of man and God, and of man and man. It is no merely perverse political desire to upset what Matthew Arnold calls the English "religion of inequality" that prompts a determination towards a greater equality, but a conviction that only thus will a more healthy, sane and integrated community be created, in whose air men can breathe and live and grow—and a conviction that this follows from our belief that man is made in the image of God. How do we see these divine possibilities in man? We see them in impulses towards mutual helpfulness, co-operation and self-sacrificing love. We see them in the instinctive and unexacting hospitality of the great mass of men and women (so noticeably more constant and dependable than in those cumbered with great possessions). We see them in the deep satisfaction men have in co-operating anonymously in some great enterprise that commands their loyalty. Is it possible that while other branches of the Christian Church have their own particular contribution to make to the salvation of man, ours should be the "answering of that of God" in him? Seeking out, drawing out, responding to and fostering his divine possibilities. Let us, if we will, wrestle with whatever of sin we are aware is making us unserviceable instruments, but let us build upon the good in others.

It was said of an early saint that he was as a rod of iron to himself, but as a well-spring of tenderness to others. Aware, that, is to say, of sin in himself, but only of the humanity, needful, pitiful, lovable in those he served. It is easy enough to see sin, original or any other kind, rampant about us, but it takes imagination, the supreme realism of the spirit, to see below the surface appearance of things, their essence. Persistent unwearying love alone can effect such vision, and understanding, reconciling love would be its result.

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

With the sanity of a man made whole, George Fox urged men to look away from sin and towards the light.

Mind that which is pure in you to guide you to God.*

Weary, bewildered, in the grip of vast inexorable forces, made to feel of no account, man needs reassurance, his self-respect (which Christ, in healing men, so surely built upon) re-establishing, before he can in any way take hold of such a conception as that "the creation itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God". "The liberty of the glory of the children of God," what can that mean to men surrounded by mounting evidence of increasing enslavement, torture, hunger, famine and death?†

As with peace, so with liberty. If it has been one of the ends we sought, no one would guess it from the means we take to achieve it nor from the structure that has so far resulted. In fact, some of the liberties that have existed have been proof in themselves that false ideas of liberty have been operative and that the State has neglected its primary function of safeguarding through order and equity the liberty of the individual. There has been liberty to create scarcity, to plan monopoly, to destroy the very means of life, and for the victim there has been liberty to waste his

* "He calls upon Friends so to bear themselves toward all men—to answer that of God, or to answer the witness of God in them as he puts it—in such a way as to call up the good in them. To Friends who had been captured in the Mediterranean by Turks and Moors, and were held prisoners in North Africa awaiting ransom he gives counsel so to act that their lives, conversation and words 'may answer the spirit of God both in the Turks and Moors, and the rest of the captives'."—A NEAVE BRAYSHAW, *The Personality of George Fox*, p. 18.

† The phrase that Europe is sliding back towards an age of slavery has been so often used as propagandist overstatement that we don't realize it is actually coming true. These labour battalions are in every respect equal to slave gangs. It is a complete delusion to believe that school-book horrors of antiquity are worse (relatively or absolutely) than contemporary reality. Facts and proofs abound; but consciousness lags behind; it is easier for the imagination to grasp past than present.—KOESTLER, *Scum of the Earth*, 1941, p. 227.

youth, his strength, his manhood, unwanted and purposeless. Small wonder then that men, seeing no true liberty in their precarious lives, have judged it visionary, impossible of attainment, and have largely abandoned the search, seeking now a lesser, though they feel perhaps an attainable good, security. In this hope they have readily sacrificed what liberty they had to the demands of totalitarian authority. Thus the initiative has passed for the time being to those who, in order to ensure (they think) a certain liberty for the many, are ready and eager to jeopardize the many freedoms of the few.

We here are chiefly among those who have enjoyed the reality of both political and economic freedom (though the enjoying of it may have been and should have been lessened by the knowledge of the price that others had to pay). We shall therefore find it difficult to be unprejudiced, when the fabric of society becomes more closely woven, over the probable loss of freedom which will result. ("To suppose," says Trotter*, "that when one has admitted the liability to prejudice one can free oneself from it by a direct voluntary effort, is a common belief and an entirely fallacious one". Minorities, he believes, are particularly susceptible to this fallacy.) But we shall have the chance to prove our belief in liberty by the extent to which we devote ourselves hereafter to achieving it for those who have not got it. We have constantly to remind ourselves that the reason men have turned to tyranny, hoping it will give them order and security, is because the liberty we talked of so easily as if it were already achieved, had had no effective expression in their daily lives. (Just as in the Christian Churches in the pre-war world the most idealistic of the young turned towards Communism because they found no attempt among Christian leaders to bring to actuality the light they had—"to bring to fact their dreams of good".)

Can we look with a certain confidence to an increasing equality (or rather to the freer atmosphere which such equality would bring) to liberate those qualities in man

* *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, p. 221.

which are our justification for believing that he has within him divine possibilities? One uses the word equality even now with hesitation, for it is hedged about with prejudice and confusion, and there is still no general consent, as Matthew Arnold pointed out some 65 years ago, as to the duty of pursuing it as an end. "Certainly equality will never of itself give us a perfect civilization. But with such inequalities as ours a perfect civilization is impossible." So far, I hope, he wins general agreement, and further, for the greater assurance which he pictures a greater equality would bring to man. "Can it be denied that to live in a society of equals tends in general to make man's spirits expand and his faculties work easily and actively. . . . Can it be denied that to be heavily overshadowed, to be profoundly insignificant has, on the whole, a depressing and benumbing effect on the character."* Some individuals, he admits, react, but "the question is about the common bulk of mankind, persons without extraordinary gifts or exceptional energy and who will ever require, in order to make the best of themselves, encouragement and directly favouring circumstances".

Let us prepare ourselves to consider as dispassionately as we may his more emphatic stricture on our English adherence to what he calls the "religion of inequality" by considering whether in fact our present system does encourage and foster the innately decent qualities of the average man. The impulse to generosity? Fear, which so distorts the power to see truth and thus destroys the power to act rightly, makes generosity rare and difficult. "The world is waiting," wrote D. H. Lawrence after the last war, "for a new wave of generosity or a great new wave of death." But fear, the daily insecurity that urged individuals, classes, nations to scramble for the spoil and hold hard what they had, killed generosity and helped to usher in "the great new wave of death".

The impulse to co-operation? Only now when the exigencies of the moment make clear the advantages of the

* Matthew Arnold: *Mixed Essays*, p. 10.

co-operative spirit are we discovering how little true co-operation we had in common practice. You cannot leave such capacity to languish untried, unexercised, except when it becomes obviously and urgently desirable, and then expect to improvise it. (Seldom can society have received clearer demonstrations in imperial, in national, in industrial affairs, of the fact that "it reaps in the wet what it sows in the fine".)

Lowes Dickinson tries to seize and define the spirit of existing society, its flower, "that in which its institutions issue and by which they must be judged". "All its characteristics," he says, "follow from its fundamental inequity." "It is a class-state, which means that everyone is born, without rhyme or reason, into an advantageous or disadvantageous position. Consequently, the main object of everyone is to rise, as it is called, or prevent himself from falling. This is true of all the individuals within each class, and also of the classes themselves, in their relation to one another. From this point of view, competition is the most obvious mark of society; and the inner correlative of competition is egotism. Further, since the fundamental inequity is one of property, the competition is for money; thus cupidity is its motive—a cupidity intensified almost beyond belief by the fact that the mass of men live on the borders of starvation,* while the few, however rich they are, never think they have enough to save them from the possibility of falling to the same level. Egotism and cupidity—these, then, to begin with, are the most obvious components of the spirit of our society."† He goes on to add antagonism, involved in the class system, with its veiled or overt discord; irresponsibility, the attitude of the receivers of dividends as to the exploitation involved in the production of their incomes, and isolation—the separation of members of society by barriers formed of different manners, interests, morals, conventions, which so greatly impoverishes the common life. If this be accepted as a recognizable definition of the

* For recent confirmatory evidence, see Sorsby: *Medicine and Mankind*.

† Lowes Dickinson: *Justice and Liberty*, pp. 169-170.

spirit of the society we live in, was Matthew Arnold putting it too strongly when he said roundly that "our love of inequality is really the vulgarity in us?"* It is probably the nature of vulgarity as it is of privilege to be unconscious of itself, so that such a proposition needs pondering on before its truth can be recognized and accepted. But clearly we have built upon the motives which drive men to seek their own advantage, and it is not realistic to expect such a society to flower in generous qualities of mutual trust, co-operation and goodwill. These, the reaction of human nature against our institutions, rather than the components of its spirit, are the earnest of the Society that is to be, and on them we must build.

Behind the dread of a growing equality has been the muddled sense that it will lead to an increasing lack of variety. This is strange when one thinks of the immeasurable loss which the community suffers from the *lack of variety* in developed gifts and rich individuality, because of glaring educational inequalities. One would imagine to listen to the apologists of a system of private enterprise and ownership that it had shown a capacity to achieve variety in life and talent, in architecture and thought. But in fact it has produced mile upon mile of slums and suburbs of an unparalleled drabness and uniformity, and people to whom increasing standardization in entertainment, in life and in thought is no hardship. How could it be otherwise? Inequality in educational opportunity condemns the large proportion of the population to spend their whole school life in classes so large that they cannot possibly be treated as individuals. (Our reaction to such a state of affairs for our fellows has hitherto been what Tawney calls one of "tranquil inhumanity"). "Because men are men, social institutions—property rights and the organization of industry, and the system of public health and education—should be planned, as far as possible, to emphasize and strengthen, not the class differences which divide, but the common humanity which unites them".†

* Matthew Arnold : *Mixed Essays*, p. 70.

† Tawney : *Equality*, 1931, p. 50.

Fundamentally, this is not a matter for economic adjustment nor for social planning, but for a new spiritual relation. Extremes of wealth and poverty subtly emphasize to the individual in both cases the futility and insignificance of his life and his isolation from the community. Both try to compensate in various material, anti-social satisfactions and for both we desire the health that comes from the knowledge of being necessary and purposive members of society.

In the new atmosphere of equality and liberty, instinct with reverence for the spirit in man, we shall recognize such a phrase as, "You are not paid to think", for the blasphemy it is. It will be recognized, too, that to make a man "feel small" is always an unworthy exercise of power.

Then the State, far from being the repressive and restricting force we fear, will be the true guardian of freedom.

The last end of the State is not to dominate men nor to restrain them by fear—rather it is to free each man from fear—that he may live and act with full security and without injury to himself and his neighbours. The end of the State is not to make rational beings into brute beasts and machines. It is to enable their minds and bodies to function safely. Thus the end of the State is really liberty.*

In the face of the horrors that men are perpetrating against men it would be easy now to be cynical. But to me the wonder is that in spite of the diabolical weapons to his hand, the spirit is not always seared. We bewail the rising tide of bitterness but we must at the same time recognize the existence of the spirit which rejects all injunctions to hate, and the warm and sane humanity from which all the propaganda of hate glances off unheeded. No, all patience and heroism, selflessness in saving life, humour and courage in the face of death, are our warrant that, err as we may in all other ways, in this we are eternally right, that there is in man a spark of the divine life which, as we believe in it, trust it and build on it, will lead into ways of peace.

Christ taught that the ultimate good for man is to serve one another. (The implications of our duty to our neighbour

* Ll. Powys.

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must no longer be regarded as "the social gospel", a mere optional appendage to our faith, but as a law of life.) To develop this power which is there in varying degree we need an order of society which will encourage and not hinder its exercise, so that men may grow into the likeness of their Creator.

V

We have, because human, an inalienable prerogative of responsibility which we cannot devolve; no, not as was once thought, even upon the stars. We can only share it with others.—SIR CHARLES SHERINGTON.

The sensitiveness to social evils is increasing and it is good that it should increase. But the good is not unmixed. In proportion as the general sympathy gets wider, as the social imagination gets more comprehensive and more responsive, so will the number of those increase who according to their temper either rush frantically to the first quack remedy that presents itself, or, too clear-sighted to be sanguine but not callous enough to be indifferent, yield themselves bondsmen to a sceptical despair. For the first of these classes I know not that anything can be done. There is no cure for stupidity. But for the second, the faith that what we see is but a part, and a small part, of a general scheme which will complete the destiny, not merely of humanity but (which is a very different thing) of every man, woman and child born into the world, has supplied, and may again supply consolation and encouragement, energy and hope.*

The warning here against short-cut cures by means of quack remedies is timely and salutary. As the inner conflicts and confusions of capitalist society have come more sharply to the surface, the temptation to smooth over their extravagances with superficial palliatives has increased. In 1918 we had a chance which we may have once again to build on new foundations. Then we spoke of "reconstruction" and "rationalization". Is the word "planning" to be merely an echo of this inadequate tinkering? Is it to be again merely a magic word the uttering of which saves all necessity for the determining of radical change? If those

* Balfour: *The Religion of Humanity*, 1905.

who plan are still hide-bound by traditions of organizing for narrow sectional interests, then "planning" will surely be barely a stage beyond the discredited "rationalization" of the 20's.

We are members of a society which has permitted under the plea of economic necessity conditions which we have well known to be morally indefensible. It is no oversimplification to say that the failure to cut through the tangled net of economic and financial chaos in which we are enmeshed, is fundamentally a failure of love. No community could permit such class distinctions in health and in education as we tolerate, whose members had any compelling vision of the love of God for man, nor of the humanity of St. John's great assurance: "Now we know that we have passed from death into life, because we have love for the brethren." The Christian democrat is bound to consider a tyrannous dictatorship the extreme short-cut from chaos to order. It has beguiled many with its attainment of a surface efficiency. And this in its turn has only intensified the deep wrong done to men, depriving them yet further of responsibility and control, and perpetrating the subtle cruelty of which Plato gave warning: "I am speaking of the man who can get the better of people on a large scale; you must fix your eye on him, if you want to judge how much it is to one's own interest not to be just. You can see that best in the most consummate form of injustice, which rewards wrongdoing with supreme welfare and happiness, and reduces its victims, if they won't retaliate in kind, to misery. That form is despotism, which uses force or fraud to plunder the goods of others, public or private, sacred or profane, and to do it in a wholesale way. If you are caught committing any one of these crimes on a small scale, you are punished and disgraced; they call it sacrilege, kidnapping, burglary, theft and brigandage. But if, besides taking their property, you turn all your countrymen into slaves, you will hear no more of those ugly names; your countrymen themselves will call you the happiest of men and bless your name."*

* Plato's *Republic*, i, 343. Professor F. M. Cornford's translation, p. 25.

The very fact of the obliviousness of men to the bonds with which they are bound should make us suspicious. Custom blinds them to the shrewdness of their masters in rendering their servitude relatively tolerable, and emphasizing constantly how few men really desire responsibility. And attention is diverted from the real trend of events, as C. S. Lewis has recently pointed out : " Whenever all men are really hastening to be slaves or tyrants, we make liberalism the prime bogey."* It is not that we have to combat open advocacy of Machiavellian principles. It was clear enough when, some years ago, Lord Birkenhead deplored the idea that to secure for himself the " glittering prizes " should not forever be the aim of the able and the strong man, that there was a sufficiently strong Christian conscience in the county to express shocked disapproval. (And Hitler himself has of course helped to discredit the practices of the ruthless egoist.)

The trouble is rather that of a society which with extraordinary powers of self-deception lays claim to the title of Christian civilization long after it has lost the right to do so. We know that for most men ruthless competitive scramble is what they actually see about them, and true co-operation and fellowship are visions and dreams.

Those who want to see the ship swing on to a new tack have behind them the knowledge that leading thinkers, philosophers and scientists have long been saying in no uncertain terms that unless man learns to co-operate, learns the technique of group life, he is doomed. There is Trotter in *The Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* : " It looks as if the gregarious animal has entered on a pathway which must of necessity lead to increasing complexity and co-ordination, to a more and more stringent intensity of integration, or to extinction."

And Sir Charles Sherrington in *Man on his Nature* : " Only by contribution to human fellowship can the liquidation of *Homo Praedatorius*, doomed by an evolution which is never standing still, be hastened."

* *The Screwtape Letters*. 1942.

SWARTHMORE LECTURE

The considered judgment of scientists is here in line with traditional Christian hope. But whereas they naturally visualize this co-operative society, slowly evolving, materializing in some dimly remote future, the concerned Christian sees it always laid upon him to take some step or steps, however intractable the material, towards perfecting the mode of our human association, and so bringing nearer the Kingdom of God on earth.

How embody in the fabric of community life our conviction that the co-operative principle is the line in evolution for man to follow? How give back to men faith that the future lies not with man predatory, but with man co-operative?

In Rufus Jones's *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, he traces the causes of their failure to fulfil the promise of fruitful participation in the building of American civilization which at first seemed likely. In the early days, "their supreme passion was the cultivation of inward religion and of an outward life consistent with the vision of their souls". So sure were they that they had found a new spiritual principle that would revolutionize social, civic and religious life, that they could not be content to exercise it only in the affairs of their own society but faithfully attempted to penetrate with its influence all sides of the life of the world around them. They found the world stubbornly unresponsive, not only not persuaded but positively hostile, and gradually the movement underwent a radical change of ideal. The aim slowly narrowed down to the formation of a "spiritual remnant" set apart to guard and preserve "the truth" in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation: "The world vision faded out and the attention focused on Quakerism as an end in itself." "Men spent their precious lives, not in propagating the living principles of spiritual religion in the great life of the world, but in perfecting and transmitting a 'System within the Society'." Gradually withdrawing from civic tasks, they missed the chance which every man and woman needs of tempering his narrow individualism in the companionship and through the experience of larger groups of men. "They missed the personal enlargement

which comes when one is forced to make his own ideals fit into larger systems of thought and is compelled to reshape them in the light of facts." (Is it fantastic to suggest that had they not turned away from their "perverse and crooked generation" the even greater crookednesses and perversities of present day American society—large-scale municipal corruption—police and troops dispersing strikers with tear gas—might never have grown to their present proportions?)

Here we have an impressive warning of the consequences to Friends (and possibly to society) of a withdrawal from the struggle necessarily involved in "propagating the living principles of spiritual religion in the great life of the world".

In these days we know all too well the struggle that comes when loyalties conflict, compromise becomes impossible and withdrawal becomes necessary. But integrity dictates to every man where his line shall be drawn—he does not then separate himself in heart and mind from his fellow men, from their present suffering and their future hope. For together we are responsible for conditions we have long known to be intolerable; together in our differing ways we must bear the heat and burden of the day with those who suffer the results of our indifference. And together we must take the slow laborious steps which shall steadily lead men into the ways of peace.

The fact of our humanity binds us in an inescapable responsibility; it binds us as we come to know what it means, as Wordsworth did, to have "submitted to a new control".

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the kind!
 Such happiness, wherever it be known,
 Is to be pitied; for tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me here—
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.*

* From *Elegiac Stanzas*.

VI

The end of law is not to abolish or restrain but to prescribe and enlarge freedom.—
LOCKE.

THE tides are not all running against a closer sense of world community. Science itself, blamed for so much of the horrors let loose upon the world, has contributed to a growing sense of inter-relation and interdependence, through airways and wireless. And with the return of sanity, this consciousness of inter-relation can be expected to grow and when once achieved will not be easily reversed. (It is part of the wrong done by the would-be self-sufficient states, that an artificial thrombosis has as it were prevented the life-blood of the world from circulating. The circulation of ideas, of internationalism, was always discouraged by Hitler, the meeting of international societies prohibited, and now even the circulation of the staff of life itself is slowing down.) But the power of forces which cut across this slowly deepening sense of world interdependence must not be under-estimated. Hitherto they have been stronger in making for conflict and schism than those making for co-operation and unity. Centres of irresponsible power, they have during these last years when the expressed will of the people has been for peace and co-operation, thwarted such purposes with sinister result. In the attempted progress of society towards integration, there are difficulties enough without the backward pull of powerful and ruthless adventurers.

In the world of Wall Street and the City, liberty not balanced by responsibility has degenerated into license and has played havoc with the lives of men.* Clearly society cannot afford to tolerate so expensive an anarchy.

The Christian social conscience has greatly contributed to the growth of an increasingly fine system of social services.

Here too, the drag of conditions of living and of work holds back what might otherwise be steady progress—an expensive liberty to permit to private ownership. It is an

* For recent evidence of this, see Ambassador Dodd's Diary, 1941.

uphill task for the health services to remedy the results of letting young citizens grow up in unhealthy surroundings, to deal with the mental results of insecurity and poverty ; for the prison services to deal with products of a system which permits deep deprivations to the majority of its youth and countenances such cruel wrong as to turn them unemployed on to the streets at 16, to make way for their cheaper brothers and sisters of 14.

In these and many other ways society is better at patching up the symptoms of its diseases than at tackling their cause and facing "the heavy intellectual and moral labour of founding a scientific statecraft which man has always shirked".*

It has been one of the special temptations of our day to speak as if the word of God may have sufficed for those in ampler, quieter times, but as for us, we are in the grip of vast inexorable forces—we are the victims of some gigantic machine which we ourselves have set in motion and can no longer control. The precepts of old, we say, do not suffice for our peculiar difficulties or, alternatively, they are too difficult to apply in these more complicated days. But those books which impress us most with their eternal significance and truth, Isaiah—the Psalms—the Gospels, were written in time of crisis by men and for men who must have felt themselves just as much threatened by forces every whit as overwhelming, just as much the prey of circumstance as we do now.

It is for us unceasingly to search for the Covenant of the Lord in our time. What grounds have we for hope that it may not be presumptuous in us to think we can contribute helpfully to the search? With a certain liberating faith, the Friend of the seventeenth century faced a society where class separation was well-nigh that of castes. "He met it with the simple single idea that every man, high or low, ignorant or learned, rich or poor, white or coloured, good or bad, was to be treated as a potential child of God and so a brother."† Simplicity of this order has great effective power, for it

* Trotter : *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*.

† Rufus Jones : *Quakerism and the Simple Life*.

involves singleness of aim and purpose. It was in this spirit that mighty work was done, freeing of slaves, reforming of prisons, attacking entrenched evils everywhere. In this spirit a mighty stand has now to be taken against a continuing and increasing enslavement of men. Our rejection of all totalitarian claims rests on the supreme and infinite value we attach to the individual personality as being the inmost nature of one made in the image of God ; thus it follows that there must be a sphere in which separate personal responsibility can be operative. And it is often forgotten that in stressing such elementary rights, the contention is that only thus can the fulfilment of individual duties and the exercise of individual choice be rendered possible.

In varying degree men have been endowed with creative gifts ; if there is no opportunity for their expression and exercise they will undoubtedly atrophy. They have been given the power to respond to the promptings of the Spirit, and only by responding and, in their measure, creating, can they grow into the likeness of their Creator. The denial of opportunity for the exercise of these powers and the consequent deep-seated sense of frustration have been, I believe, at least as potent a cause for the embracing of totalitarian security and the loss of faith in democratic liberty, as has been the search for a more solid economic foundation for life. It is the sharp deterioration in the functioning of the economic side of our civilization that has led to the main emphasis of reformers being necessarily laid here. But the true Friend will always work for the liberation of the whole man, not only so that the outstanding " occasions of stumbling " shall be removed but that man may, through the exercise of his rights and duties, his responsibilities and choices, come at last to his full stature.

A powerful modern film* traces the havoc wrought in one man's life by his having been deprived of a normal home life and background (a treasured sledge is used as a symbol of all he had lost in being deprived of affection and security). His forcible uprooting from his home and the separation

* Orson Welles : *Citizen Kane*.

from his parents makes him feel insignificant and insecure. As a young man he has generous instincts and campaigns against financial rackets. In this he is foiled by some obscure operations of Wall Street. So he swims with the stream, seeking compensating satisfaction in possessions—owning newspapers—owning a wife—launching a political career—all have to contribute to an insatiable desire for power (clearly indicating his original deprivations). All this he loses too ; and his attempt to compensate for it is a still greater possessiveness, still greater assertion of power—a still greater ruthlessness in achieving it. Through it all his insignificance is as marked in splendour (his voice echoes in his palace) as it was when he first lost his secure niche in the scheme of things and was thrown into an alien and unheeding world. He is isolated from the stream of common life. And when the final frustration comes, and his wife leaves him, there is a terrifying orgy of destruction. The whole sordid tragedy was one of deep deprivation and frustration leading to an increasingly overpowering passion to reach a sense of security through possessions and through the power possessions bring.

In attempting to trace the cause of the orgy of destruction we are living through, similar deprivations and frustrations may well be suspected as contributory. The soil in which human life may reasonably be expected to flourish has not been provided. When the environment of an animal is lacking in certain factors necessary for growth, it does not fulfil its biological destiny. Not many men and women nowadays have the air of being at home on earth. Millions are cut off from humanizing and healing contact with nature. It is impossible that this has no effect on individual and social health. It is one of the cruellest of deprivations. The sense of frustration due to having been deprived of all further education when having just been brought to the threshold of its possibilities is beginning to be realized ; its consequences will continue to be harvested until this cruelty too, ceases to be perpetrated. It is right and natural that there should be much discussion of better religious and civic education

in the future. But it must be recognized that even at present standards there is a widespread exasperation born of an inability to see the principles they are taught practised in the world they are growing up in, most grave in its consequences to the attitude of the younger generation both to the Christian Church and to the State. Unless we are infinitely more vigorous in our attempts to square our most un-Christian practices with our Christian precepts, better teaching will only serve to widen the gulf which the naturally clear-eyed young can only too easily perceive yawns between the teaching, for instance, of the Sermon on the Mount, and the practices of the nominally Christian country whose citizens they are preparing to be. The contrast is dismaying and shocking, and the psychological disturbance set up is likely to have profound repercussions.

We want for all citizens, as we do for ourselves, the opportunity (without hindrances so far as it is in our power to remove them) of being "doers of the word, not hearers only". "For," says James, "if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror, for he beholdeth himself (i.e. receives an impression of his real self) and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (i.e. what manner of man God intended him to be). That way lies no true health for the individual, nor surely for a society whose members habitually fail to bring their faith and belief into the sphere of action, a power which so easily atrophies from lack of use.

VII

It is an indelible principle of eternal truth that practice and exercise is the life of all . . . if therefore you would be happy, your life must be as full of operation as God of treasure.—TRAHERNE.

If an ideal is to result, an ideal must be willed; and whether it can result or no is not, so far as we can see fatally determined but depends upon our choice. Only that choice must not be made in the void, as of a castle in the air, but here on earth, of a site which

we seem to be really able to occupy, with materials we really can command.*

It is so much easier to preach world brotherhood than to compose the antagonisms of a Parish Council ; to inveigh against the exploitation of native races than to be entirely undemanding and unpossessive in all our personal relationships. We are so constituted that we can only reach out to unknown good in terms of the good we know and see. A man whose goodwill is kept for people he has never seen and thus is largely imaginary and of little avail, while his ill-will is kept for those he lives with and is all too real, will never have that shining and attractive power which makes it easier for others to believe in God. "The Word was made flesh" ; and in terms of the flesh it has to be renewed and re-lived.†

If men then are to believe in the power of good will and co-operation to build a new world, they must see it operative, lively, effective in the relationships of daily life. To this end it is difficult to overestimate what the effect would be of the entrance into public life, that is to say, into the world of small, insignificant and often tedious committees, where the routine business of democracy is largely carried on, of people whose attitude would not be aggressive, not defensive, but patiently and persistently constructive. (Has not experience of our method of conducting our business meetings taught us something of positive value that we might offer here ?)

If we made the fullest possible use of the machinery of democracy exactly as it is without any further legislation, we should find that it had in it vast possibilities for progressive and enlightened work, which far too often remain untried for lack of individuals determined to use the machinery in

* G. Lowes Dickinson : *Justice and Liberty*, p. 208.

† When we are tempted to interminable discussion of "Some far off divine event", let us remember the words of Ralph Cudworth : "Will it avail any to say, Lord, we confess we have not done these works, but we have spent many an hour in hearing and talking of Thy Word—nay, we have maintained to the utmost of our power and to our own great prejudice, many opinions and tenets."—*Sermons*, vol. IV, p. 213.

the interests of the common good up to the limit of its powers. Let us take concrete instances—Local Government authorities have wide permissive powers, but these are not used unless men and women who as a matter of course always put the common interest before private interest, are there to employ them. In the treatment of delinquents there are wise and enlightened provisions laid down for dealing with young offenders—precautions as to privacy and informality and the whole wise humanity of the probation system, but unless there are people at hand, magistrates and officials alike, who *trust* the generous approach, the machinery will be useless.

In the whole field of public assistance the same holds good ; where officials and members of statutory bodies alike regard their work as a vocation and a trust, fine curative and creative work can be achieved and the interdependence of the humane and scientific ways of dealing with human beings can be studied. But all this presupposes that those who undertake the work are alive to its possibilities, free from prejudice, not set in traditional modes of thought and willing to experiment. "Education being what it is," Trotter points out, "the scientific method, the method of experience has so little chance of suggestionizing force."* There is always the opportunity in public administration for weight to be thrown on the side of the scientific method, the method of experience—as opposed to the traditional, the formal, the non-experimental.

Here is where we might be serviceable. We claim to hold a faith based on experience, a trust that "the Lord hath still more light and truth to break forth from his Holy Word" and a belief that such faith can be worked out experimentally, lived out in the world. Trotter draws further attention to "the very serious fact that governing power in communities tends to pass into the hands of what I have called the stable-minded, a class the members of which are characteristically insensitive to experience, closed to the entry of new ideas and obsessed with the satisfactoriness of things as they are".

* Trotter : *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War.* .

We should, of course, hope that it could never be said of us that we were "insensitive to experience", and in that way we might hope to be of service. But the sensitive are not always the wise, and their impatience may lead them to attempt unprofitable short-cuts, and so they become unserviceable.

The quality of wisdom a man brings to these tasks will depend, too, on his appreciation of the true value of experience. For "experience is not a matter of having actually swum the Hellespont, or danced with the Dervishes, or slept in a doss-house. It is a matter of sensibility and intuition, of seeing and hearing the significant things, of paying attention, at the right moments, of understanding and co-ordinating. Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him".*

There is a vast field here for experiment and adventure, but "who is sufficient for these things"? Rather than submit to the toilsome, undramatic task of progress by persuasion and reconciliation, some would prefer to destroy what has been laboriously built up through the faithfulness of our forefathers. Step by step, through their vision and their courage, a fine structure has been built, unfinished but with great possibilities for growth, so that to-day "many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see". Are those who would pluck up this imperfect democratic society by the roots quite sure that they have given a promising young plant the chances of healthy growth? that they have been resolute in pulling out the weeds that would choke it? and have patiently tended the soil? pruning and fertilizing in due season?

The best gardeners are patient—aware that violent methods too often result not only in present desolation, but in future barrenness and sterility.

It is sad to note in the dawning of a realization of new obligations a tendency to lose respect for well-tried principles.

The inability to translate precept into practice has the effect of gradual weakening of moral fibre. But an even

* Aldous Huxley: Introduction to *Texts and Pretexts*, 1932, p. 5.

quicker decadence is brought about by espousing opportunism, denying altogether the necessity to act on principle.

Quakerism can never come to terms with those for whom the end justifies the means, nor those who by embracing a closed system of thought render themselves "waterproof against reality".

We need something of the sturdy realism of John Bellers to set up against all justifications of ruthlessness. "Beating their brains out to put sense into them is a great mistake," and something of the deep imaginative pity of the old revolutionary soliloquizing in Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* :

Revolutionaries should not think through other people's minds.
Or perhaps they should ?

Or even ought to ?

How can one change the world if one identifies oneself with everybody ?

How else can one change it ?

He who understands and forgives—where would he find a motive to act ?

Where would he not ?

Understanding, identification, forgiveness are the fruits of patience and so few are willing to "let patience have her perfect work".

VIII

But when the earth becomes a common treasury, as it must, for reason and all the prophecies of Scripture point to it, enmity will cease, for none will desire a larger share than another.—WINSTANLEY.

To those who believe in the continuing revelation of an ever-present Spirit, it is not open to hark back with nostalgic longing to the ways of other times—the simple communism of the Early Church—the monasticism of the Middle Ages—for what do we mean by such words as "the living Christ" if not that we believe in a continuing revelation which, as we are alive to it and awake to its message, will bring us light even for this dark day. "Has been and shall be spell

not eternity—only is, is eternal.” The very purpose surely of our not sealing up the truth we have in credal containers is that we may never be blind to any new form of beauty, never deaf to new truth. Nothing can take from us the responsibility of attempting fresh interpretations of our faith in terms of the language of each new generation ; nevertheless because the terms one then uses have by particular association acquired accretions which make it difficult if not impossible to get through to the rock of their general sense, it is sometimes better to convey a message which one believes to have universal application, in terms of a different age. (Equality—communism—nationalization—all bristle with present day associations of partisanship and prejudice.) Particularly is this the case with seventeenth century writers, when democracy as they preached it had its roots deep in religion, and out of what seemed at the time spiritual battles, centring in problems of Church government, grew clear assertions of man’s rights as man.

And because before we can discover the essence of true democracy we have got to understand more of the relation of religion to the sense of community, I want to draw your attention to the writings of Gerrard Winstanley* which bear directly on that relationship. We shall not find a developed doctrinal system so much as a series of acute perceptions and deep insights and occasional flashes of universal truth which bridge the gulf of the years and enable him to speak to our condition across three centuries intelligibly and suggestively.

Science has thrown us into a greater interdependence and

* Little is known of his life. He was born in Lancashire, probably in 1609. The activities of the “Digger Movement” with which his name is associated, lasted only from April 1649 till early the following year, and centred round a scheme for cultivating common land at St. George’s Hill, near Weybridge, Surrey, for the support of the poor of the neighbourhood. Great opposition was naturally met with and real hardship suffered at the hands of local landowners and hooligans. Houses they had built were destroyed and their crops ruined. All the pamphlets from which I quote were written between 1648 and 1652. A complete edition, together with a most valuable introduction has just been published by Professor George H. Sabine of Cornell University

inter-relation than we were ready to sustain, our awareness of each other as members of one human family not having reached the stage of fitting us to plan on the basis of any such civilized conception. Here we have a teacher who tells us uncompromisingly : " There is but Bondage or Freedom, Particular Interest or Common Interest ". We have come to a sad pass through lack of attention to " the common interest " and we may fitly listen to the sane and far-sighted teaching of this man who saw clearly that the true liberty of each was the condition of a healthy social life for all.

" I desire all of you seriously in love and humility to consider this business of public Community which I am carried forth in the power of love and clear light of universal Righteousness to advance as much as I can." He is modest about his contribution but sees what it might well mean to the future. " Though this platform be like a piece of timber roughly hewed, yet the discreet workman may take it and frame a handsome building out of it."

Puritan in the sense that to him religion was concerned with the whole of life, and he would have the new Commonwealth built on the pattern revealed in the Sermon on the Mount ; Seeker in that he would point men from an outward authority to an inner experience for guidance ; he has close spiritual kinship with the early Friends—in fact, his biographer Berens, considers that " his earlier writings were the quiver whence the early Quakers derived many of their arrows and their most pointed doctrines ", and that " the founders of the Society of Friends adopted almost in their entirety the views and doctrines of Winstanley ". A contemporary of George Fox, Thomas Coomber, Dean of Durham writing in 1678 said, " The very draughts and even body of Quakerism are to be found in the several works of Gerrard Winstanley, a zealous Leveller . . ." On the other hand, Rufus Jones says he sees no signs of Fox having been in any degree influenced by Winstanley. To me, the two men seem very much akin in spirit ; the messages of both are equally firmly based on the necessity for firsthand spiritual experience. " God has need of witnesses that can prove their testimony

not from books but from their own experienced knowledge," and again, "the writings of the prophets are dry shells until God gives experience of his love such as the prophets had".* "So that you do not look for a God now, as formerly you did, to be (in) a place of glory beyond the sun, moon and stars, nor imagine a divine being you know not where, but you see him ruling within you, and not only in you, but you see him to be the spirit and power that dwells in every man and woman; yea, in every creature, according to his orb, within the globe of the creation." "But he that looks for a God within himself and submits himself to the spirit of righteousness that shines within, this man knows whom he worships for he is made subject to and hath community with that spirit that made all flesh in every creature within the globe." "Souls have no peace until they have community with the spirit within them, but when they feel the spirit of righteousness governing their flesh, they begin to know God and they will be brought into community with the whole globe."

"Winstanley differed from Fox and the Quakers chiefly in believing that this consciousness of human brotherhood must at once become the principle of a new form of community. For him true religion required the immediate creation of a society that substituted community and mutual aid for individualism and competition. He could not content himself with a religious experience that ended with a change of personal morality, nor imagine a moral reform that did not include the elimination of poverty and the removal of political oppression."†

He is at one with us as touching silence and prayer.

". . . this abundance of talk that is amongst people by arguments, by disputes, by declaring expositions upon

* Compare with Fox, "I told him (Cromwell) that all Christendom (so-called) had the scriptures, but they wanted the power and the spirit that those had who gave forth the scriptures; and that was the reason they were not in fellowship with the Son, nor with the Father, nor with the Scriptures, nor with one another."—*Journal*, edited by Rufus Jones, vol. I, p. 214.

† Sabine: Introduction to *The Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, 1941, p. 51.

other's word and writing, by long discourse, called preaching, shall all cease. Some shall not be able to speak, they shall be struck silent with shame by seeing themselves in a loss and in a confusion. Neither shall they care to speak till they know by experience within themselves what to speak ; but wait with quiet silence upon the Lord, till he break forth within their hearts, and give them words and power to speak. . . . Men must leave off teaching one another, and the eyes of all shall look upwards to the Father, to be taught of Him. And at this time silence shall be a man's rest and liberty, it is the gathering time, the soul's receiving time ; it is the forerunner of pure language. . . . He that speaks from the original light within can truly say, I know what I say and I know whom I worship." Prayer should not be voiced "until the Power within thee gives words to thy mouth to utter, then speak and thou canst not but speak".

What gives his conception of a righteously ordered society its particular value to us is that it was clearly the result of a deep religious experience. The universal power of love, "that living power of light that is in all things", if freed and made operative would transform all human relationships and thus all organization of society. Co-operation—"every creature . . . lending their hands to preserve each other" is the healing principle. This he desires for the good of all, saying to those in power, "I look upon you as part of the creation that must be restored."

The desire to have power over others and the desire to acquire and own land, he believes to be the root causes of the people's troubles. "The Earth is made by our Creator to be a Common Treasury of Liveliness. . . . Not one word was spoken in the beginning that one branch of mankind should rule over another. But since human flesh began to delight himself in the objects of creation more than in the spirit of reason and righteousness and selfish imagination ruling as king in the room of reason therein, and working covetousness, did set up one man to teach and rule over another—and thereby the spirit was killed and 'Man was

brought into bondage . . .” “And this is the beginning of particular interest, buying and selling the earth from one particular hand to another, saying this is mine, upholding this particular property by the law of Government of his own making, thereby restraining other fellow creatures from seeking nourishment from their Mother Earth . . .”

He is perhaps more clear-sighted than we are about the relative importance of wholesale deprivations of the means of subsistence and of small thefts. “Far better not to have had a body than to be debarred from the fruit of the earth to feed and clothe it. And if everyone did but quietly enjoy the earth for food and raiment, there would be no wars, prisons nor gallows, and this action which men call theft would be no sin. For universal love never made it a sin, but the power of covetousness made it a sin and made laws to punish it, though he himself lives in that sin in a higher manner than those he hangs and punishes.” He is ahead of his time (and of ours) in the matter of capital punishment. “But is not this the old rule, ‘He that sheds man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed?’ I answer, it is true, but not as usually it is observed. If any man can say he can give life, then he hath the power to take away life. But if the power of life and death be only in the hands of the Lord, then surely he is a murderer of the creation that taketh away the life of his fellow-creature man, by any law whatsoever. . . . For if I kill you, I am a murderer; if a third come to kill me for murdering you, he is a murderer of me; and so murder hath been called justice, when it is but the curse. . . . Therefore, O thou proud flesh that dares hang or kill thy fellow-creatures that are equal to thee in the creation, know this, that none hath the power of life and death but the Spirit, and that all punishments that are to be inflicted amongst creatures called men are only such as to make the offender to know his Maker, and live in the Community of the Righteous Law of Love one with the other.”

We have the evidence of a contemporary journal that he and his followers lived and worked in that spirit which takes

away the occasion for all wars. "The Diggers seemed rather to mind their work than to fear an army." And this was indeed the spirit that naturally followed from his assertion that "none hath the power of life and death but the Spirit", and of his belief that social righteousness destroys the seeds of war. "If you say this (levelling up) will make men fight and quarrel, I say No, it will turn swords into ploughshares. Indeed the government of kings is a breeder of wars, because men being put into the straits of poverty, are moved to fight for liberty." "We abhor fighting for freedom. It is acting of the curse and lifting him up higher. Do thou uphold it by the sword? *We* will not. We will conquer by love and patience or else we count it no freedom. Freedom gotten by the sword is an established bondage to some other part of the creation." "Weapons and swords shall destroy and cut the powers of the earth asunder, but they shall never build up." "Victory that is gotten by the sword is a victory that slaves get over one another; but victory obtained by love is victory for a king."

It was the sight of poverty in the midst of plenty which originally prompted his action in digging up common land. "Was the earth made for to preserve a few covetous proud men to live at ease, and for them to bag and barn up the pleasures of the earth from others, that these may beg or starve in a fruitful land; or was it made to preserve all her children? If any man can say that he makes corn or cattle, he may say, 'That is mine'. But if the Lord made these for the use of his creation, surely then the earth was made by the Lord to be a common treasury for all, not a particular treasury for some." "And truly this is a stain to Christian religion in England that we have so much land lie waste and so many starve for want." "But the true ancient law of God is a covenant of peace to the whole of mankind. This sets the earth free to all. This unites both Jew and Gentile into one Brotherhood, and rejects none. This makes Christ's garment whole again; and makes the kingdoms of the world to become commonwealths again. It is the Inward Power of Right Understanding, which is the true law that teaches

people in action as well as in words, to do as they would be done unto."

His remedy for this inequitable distribution of the earth's riches, in his Utopia, is "production for use". "There are particular storehouses or shops to which all tradesmen shall bring their particular works; as all instruments of iron to the iron shops—hats to the shops appointed for them—and so on. They shall receive in and deliver out again freely. For as particular families and tradesmen do make several works more than they can make use of . . . so it is all reason and equity that they should go to other storehouses to fetch any other commodity which they want and cannot make. For as other men partake of their labours, so it is reason they should partake of other men's." In fact, "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs". Startlingly Marxian, too, is his estimate of labour-value. "No man can be rich but he must be rich either by his own labours or by the labours of other men helping him. If a man have no help from his neighbours, he shall never gather an estate of hundreds and thousands a year. If other men help him to work, then are those riches his neighbours as well as his: for they be the fruits of other men's labours as well as his own. . . . But rich men receive all they have from the labourers' hand and what they give, they give away other men's labours, not their own."

But perhaps in nothing is this prophet so closely in tune with the modern spirit as in his assertion that the test of a true desire for liberty is the zeal with which it is sought for all men. "Therefore, Reader, here is a trial for thy sincerity. Thou shalt have no want of food, raiment or freedom among brethren in this way propounded. See now if thou canst be content, as the scriptures say, 'Having food and raiment therewith be content and grudge not to let thy brother have the share with thee.' Dost thou pray and fast for freedom, and give God again thanks for it? Why, know that God is not partial. For if thou pray, it must be for Freedom to all; and, if thou give thanks, it must be because freedom

covers all peoples ; for this will prove a lasting peace. But here take notice that common freedom which is the rule I would have practised, and not talked on, was thy pretence but particular freedom to thyself was thy intent. . . . The great searching of heart in these days is to find out where true freedom lies. . . . (Some) say it is true freedom that the elder brother shall be Lord of the earth and the younger brother a servant, and this is but a half-freedom and begets murmurings, wars and quarrels. All these and such like are freedoms, but they lead to bondage and are not the true foundation freedom, which settles a commonwealth in peace.”

The quickened vitality of that age of spiritual exploration is evidenced by the reiterated demand that faith shall be made plain in works. “ Yet my mind was not at rest because nothing was acted ; and thoughts ran in me that words and writings were all nothing and must die ; for action is the life of all, and if thou dost not act thou dost nothing.” “ Examine the ways of men not only their precepts.” “ For as words without actions are a cheat and kill the comfort of a righteous spirit, so words performed in action do comfort and nourish the life thereof.” “ The talking of love is no love ; it is the acting of love in righteousness which the Spirit Reason, our Father, delights in.”

This attitude he shares with distinguished contemporaries, with Descartes, for instance : “ In order to know what men’s opinions really are, I should rather note what they practised than what they said.” And Traherne : “ Philosophers are not those that speak but do great things ”. “ It is an indelible principle of eternal truth that practice and exercise is the life of all, . . . if, therefore, you would be happy your life must be as full of operation as God of treasure.”*

* All three seem to me to derive in this from one whom I have never heard mentioned as a spiritual father of either Seekers or Quakers, Giordano Bruno, burnt at the stake in Rome in 1660 because he would have men turn from an outward authority to an inner light. Hear him : “ The sole sphere of justice is the moral actions of men with regard to other men ; inward sins are sins only so far as they have outward effect and inward justice without outward practice.” Alike in his direction to look

But the action is not to be undertaken by the untutored and undisciplined. The individual is advised to "wait with a quiet and humble spirit until the Father be pleased to teach him" for "truly God is more honoured by our waiting than by the multitude of our self-actings. For the flesh grudges to give God his liberty to do with his own what He will."

The liberty of God to do with his own what he will—it needs a humble spirit indeed to learn the law of such a liberty ! But I think Winstanley can fairly lay claim to have learnt something of it through his constant willingness to be used as God wills. ". . . And what thy purpose is with the land or with my body I know not, but establish Thy power in me and then do what pleases Thee". Here he surely brings us one step nearer to learning the true law of liberty.

"If ever creation is to be restored, this is the way.

"First, community of mankind, which is comprised in the spirit of love, which is called Christ within you, or the Law written in the Heart, leading mankind unto all truth and to be of one heart and one mind.

"The second is community of the earth, for the quiet livelihood in food and raiment, without using force or restraining one another.

"These two communities, or rather one in two branches, is that true levelling which Christ shall work at his more glorious appearance. For Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all men, is the greatest, first and truest Leveller that ever was spoken of in the world."

We have got a long and difficult passage to make before we can reach our goal of a world community, but the journey would be impossible without a clear sense of the direction in which we want to go. If we attempt so to solve each problem as it arises that "the common interest" is served,

inward for light : "We have not to look for divinity at a distance from us, for we have it within us, more truly intimate to us than we are to ourselves," and to shed that light among men, "I shall not compare one who is a useless solitary with one who is in profitable intercourse with his fellows," he has the same wholeness of vision as the early Friends.

gradually the serving of a "particular" or sectional interest will be discredited and to aim at world community will become the habit of men's lives. Within this framework, the struggle for the free development of human personality will not cease and for there to be steady growth in freedom, we have to discover what is owing to the free development of others. To learn this, let us bind ourselves to the gentle apprenticeship of the Christian law of liberty.

IX

But now we are delivered from the law . . . that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.—ROMANS vii. 6.

THERE are certain dangers in the make-up of a highly-individualized society such as ours, which in so far as we are aware of them and on our guard against them, can be prevented from dissipating the contribution which I believe it is within our power to make.

"Granted that a quaint and honoured peculiarness in worship and wide activity in social service are considerable, are they enough in a world where the best are desperately anxious to know whether the ideal can be contemporarily real?"* We must not hug our peculiarity. An early Friend foresaw the tendency and warned against "worshipping the form of our formlessness". To remember that peculiarity and formlessness were alike merely means to a liberation from cramping conventions and ritual observances, is to see them in their true perspective. Our separateness must not be preserved and cultivated for its own sake: else we ourselves shall lose much in integrative power and the contribution which we might make will be greatly impoverished.

And because in times of upheaval, people seeking any haven of security are apt to embrace heresies, however fantastic, which promise them certainty; and because in

* Gerald Heard: *A Quaker Mutation*.

time of building up we shall ill be able to spare men of goodwill for unprofitable experiments, it may not be out of place to consider the place of community experiments in the attempt to discover the relation of religion to a sense of community, which I take it we should all agree to be one of the most pressing problems which a religious society should be facing.

There must be few of us who have not felt at some period of our lives the powerful attraction of withdrawal into a community of like-minded people with its simplicity and regularity of life, who have not felt the attraction of a close fellowship and the self-righteous glow which the achieving of consistency gives. This desire for consistency, this passion to see whether the ideal can be made real in contemporary living is so thoroughly understandable, especially just now when the raw material out of which we have to fashion the next few steps seems so particularly intractable, that it is all the more imperative, in view of the attractiveness of community experiment, not so much to take trouble to avoid error as to avoid unnecessary repetition of it.

The inmates of most communities (outside orthodox religious groups) during the last two centuries, have been exaggerated individualists. They have had a passion for consistency, and their lives have been hedged about with taboos. (Which suggests that the line of their descent is rather from Manichaeism than from Christianity, from a paramount concern with *things* rather than with persons.) This crystallises into some form of code by which the inmate regulates his life ; in itself this may be harmless enough, but tends so easily to degenerate into that entirely un-Christian attitude of attempting to merit reward through virtue expressed by Tertullian, " If we do well, we merit of God and He becomes our debtor ".

Closely allied to this is the danger of scrupulosity, born of deadly self-centredness and leading often to despair. What this may degenerate into is well seen in the description of the Transcendentalists, the Group founded by Bronson Alcott in 1843, " The greater part of man's duty, they believed, consisted in leaving alone much that he is in the

habit of doing, and accordingly they proceeded to omit almost all the normal activities of life. They refused to recognize the existence of money and tried to substitute barter and exchange ; they not only adopted vegetarianism but also rejected butter, cheese, eggs, milk, tea, coffee, rice and molasses, and would not burn oil or tallow candles. One man would eat no root which pushed downwards instead of aspiring upwards to the Sun".* No wonder Hannah Whitall Smith writing of her experiences among many such aberrations says, " I think these things ought to be known, for they are a snare to so many poor innocent earnest souls ". In the same community, work started early in the fields, " but as they thought weeds had as much right to grow as crops and vegetables, their farm was not very successful. The Settlement was called " Fruitlands ", and it was their idea to make of it a vast orchard (though there was some talk of letting the forests creep over the ploughed lands, and living only on wild berries), but the experiment only lasted from spring to winter. When the cold weather came on and the long evenings set in with only the light of pine knots to disperse the darkness, the members abandoned their ideals and returned to their Boston lives ".† It is a morbid strain in the over-conscientious which for fear of doing wrong leads them to refrain from action altogether.

About the same time arose the " Nothingarians, with their cry of ' No God, no government, no marriage, no money, no meat, no tobacco, no Sabbath, no skirts, no Church, no war, no slaves, etc., called by their enemies ' No salt, no pepper ' theories ".‡ Caricatures warn by over-emphasis and here surely is a warning that the world will never be won by negations however wholesale and sweeping.

The Perfectionists of Oneida were famous. Their " New Commandment " was " that we love one another and that not by pairs but *en masse* ". The experiment lasted longer than some and had some particularly interesting features,

* Ray Strachey : ' *Group Movements of the Past*, 1934.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

such as the treatment of disease by severe group criticism of the patient ; but there had to be absolute submission to the personality of the leader. One of the characteristics common to all these communities is that whereas their avowed pre-occupation is with democratic co-operation, the history of the vast majority shows that their success depended on the inspiration of a powerful leader and on his death or defection they almost invariably declined and died ; and as Trotter points out,* emphasizing the moral power yielded by a true community of feeling, " Leadership is essentially a limited, and therefore exhaustible force. . . . If society continues to depend on leadership and can find no satisfactory source of moral power, it is probable that civilizations will continue to rise and fall in dreadful sameness of alternating aspiration and despair."

Some will recognize, I think, a cautionary example in a description of Robert Owen's *Harmony* (so tragically misnamed), " Among the members of the settlement there were many sincere and earnest men and women who came to New Harmony because they hoped to further Owen's views and to assist in the foundation of a new world ; but there were also many idlers and adventurers who came for what they could get, and by this element the privilege of free discussion was wildly abused. They so infinitely preferred talking to working that they kept a continual flow of controversy alive and summoned general meetings without number to discuss the affairs of the place. Seven different Constitutions were adopted in two years and each one was the occasion for a reviving and re-deciding of all the fundamental principles of social philosophy." Once again the founder of a new world counted without the obduracy of human nature. Deeply disillusioned, Owen abandoned the scheme in a very few months.

One of the recurring claims of these communities is that they have reached a higher level than the rest of society by not being dependent on capital. This is hardly borne out by the unhappy facts of their short histories. Of the nineteen

* Trotter : *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*.

experiments in Fourierism in 1843 it was said that "by the time the first payments on their mortgages became due they were usually ready to quit". And in the case of even the more successful recent community schemes in this country it was necessary to solicit regular contributions from wealthy subscribers. Behind all these failures lies a story of wasted money, ruined hopes and disillusionment of enthusiastic idealists. They withdrew from the world feeling that this is no time for what they called "comfortable compromise". But compromise is the lot of both those who live *in* and those who live *out* of the world. The effort to apply Christian principles in the daily life of the work-a-day world can never be "comfortable". We know that such effort often wears down the energy and breaks the courage of the stoutest-hearted pilgrim. But one seldom meets such utter disillusion as in men and women who have joined in communal experiments where entire consistency in freedom has been attempted—free thought, free living, free love. The results have been deep human tragedies which have taken years to heal. They had sought here untrammelled freedom. They found no law of liberty.

This, then, I do not hold should be the direction in which we should bend our energies. We are already so set apart from our fellow citizens by virtue of the beliefs we hold, that any increasing severance is to be viewed with suspicion. Our exaggerated individualism needs constant tempering by contact with the world. Would withdrawal be compensated by increased richness in the life of the spirit? The evidence suggests that it would not. "The saint of an earlier day tried to cut the knot by withdrawal. . . . He could not escape the self which he carried with him. All his problems came back in a new fashion; as far as he succeeded in cutting the bonds which bound him to his fellows he found himself shrinking and shrivelling like a severed branch."* "We gain little," warned St. Basil, "by escaping from city life if we cannot escape from ourselves."

Asceticism, whose appeal has been one factor leading to the

* Rufus Jones: *Quakerism and the Simple Life*.

withdrawal into community experiments, implies a dualism of outlook which does not accord with our sacramental view of life. "In whatever forms," says Benedict, "the idea of service be articulated—whether in praise or prayer or preaching or devotion to the temporal needs of others—it cannot be achieved by a soul whose immediate attention is absorbed by the warfare against itself." Here we have a clue to the nature of true liberty which we must later follow up.

X

*My contention is that the quality which enables a people to govern themselves is not the instinct of men to insist on their own interests but the instinct, weaker in some, stronger in others, which enables them to put the public interest before their own. A community of people as selfish and clever as Iago could only be governed like a convict settlement. A community of people as simple and selfless as Humphrey Clinker could from the outset govern themselves and in doing so would acquire wisdom and knowledge sufficient for the task.**

A COMMUNITY of simple and selfless people could govern themselves—here we have the core of the matter. If the individuals in a community were selfless, each seeking another's good before his own—in honour preferring one another—we shouldn't be searching for the technique of Christian community life. Can we do better than liken the relationship of the individuals in such an ideal community to that between the members of a well-trained orchestra? Each player is given his part, but it is not designed as a solo. If each one thinks of his part as a solo, the orchestra will be a failure, there will be no wholeness or cohesion about it. There is no room for the spirit of exclusiveness. It will be misguided for the fiddles or 'cellos to imagine that theirs are the really "soulful" or "highbrow" parts. They will probably discover that after all some despised drum or tympanum has been the backbone—keeping the beat, keeping the team together all the way through. Nor shall the brass think "we are the big noise"; they will probably find that some instrument with a small part gently insinuated among the

* Lionel Curtis: *Civitas Dei*, 1934

whole blare of trumpets has been given the theme, the very core of what the composer is saying. There will be greater liberty for each individual player as each becomes a more perfect performer on his instrument, more perfectly at one with each other, more unlikely to encroach in the least degree on another's part, less likely to usurp the least part of what should be another's share.

There is great security in being able to take it for granted that the players are there to interpret what the composer has written, and not with the remotest thought of "doing each other down" or "getting anything out of it", but with the sole object of interpreting what the composer designed, as perfectly as they can. It goes without saying that each will exercise self-control and self-discipline, for without these they would never have learned to play their instruments; but they will exercise even more than when they play solos, because in giving free rein to their own emotion they might so easily upset the balance of the whole.

A community that is in its infancy, that has only just begun to recognize itself as such, will have to be taught, like an elementary choir, to sing in unison—exquisite if perfectly done, but apt to become monotonous. When that lesson is learned, they are taught part-singing, with all its fascinations of rival tensions, and there is the marvel of the variety which, with due regard to the value of each part, can result in harmony. Later still there will be descants, apparently contravening all the rules, soaring well away from the direction of the whole, giving a prophetic indication of what a perfect individual contribution to a harmonious whole can be.

And all this will be accomplished with no self-consciousness, no parade of "sacrifice for the good of the whole", for by then the community will recognize itself as one body and will necessarily and naturally act with its own good in view.

There shall be no particular interest, but only common interest.

How can we learn that higher law of liberty?

Men have turned by a right and natural instinct from a state of lawlessness, the extent of which we had not realized,

to a desire for more binding law—a right instinct, because stern as we regard the law, lawlessness is a still harsher master. Those who have embraced the rule of law with greatest ardour, daunt us with the fanaticism of their certainty. The extremity of chaos resulting from the state of lawlessness has contributed to the passionate desire for certainty. “In matters that really interest him, man cannot support the suspense of judgment which science has so often to enjoin. He is too anxious to feel certain to have time to know.”* We believe it is a law of growth that rather than live under a minute code of rules, men should have the liberty and power of choice which will in time indefinitely increase the law-making power of each individual.

The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart ; they are “songs in the house of our pilgrimage”. But the laws of men, though for a time they may seem to show promise of an easy salvation, are conceived in evil and born in times of disaster, and their fruit is bitterness and contention.

Who shall find out the statutes of the Lord ? “He hath shown thee, O man, what is good.” And what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly—persistently—bringing whatever light you have to actuality, always attempting to translate your ideals into tangible form, when faith prompts the belief that more light will come. And to love mercy—mercy which can see beyond what is pitiable in the injured to what is pitiful in him that injures. And to walk humbly with thy God—not as the clever who emphasize their separateness from their fellows, but as the wise who are conscious of their unity with them—and above all as ready to serve.

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Glad unquestioning assent to the moral law involved in the sovereignty of God brings knowledge to the Christian of the liberty that can come of the obedience to what in his heart he knows and recognizes as his highest good ; what St. Peter calls being “as free” but yet “as servants of God”

* Trotter : *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, p. 35.

St. Teresa left it on record that the best things came to her in life not through inspiration but through obedience. We each in our measure know the laws of the life of the Spirit, but we do not obey them, and so we have no true liberty.

The Psalmist has an assurance of what will follow from obedience : “ I will walk in liberty, for I seek Thy commandments,” and foresees the mounting strength that will come to him. “ I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou hast set my heart at liberty.”*

And then with Christ there came “ the expulsive power of a new affection ”. Love, though in itself a law-making power, became greater than ordinances ; but its laws seem to the man who loves, the most natural and easy to obey, and he obeys them spontaneously and with joy because all hindrances to hearing and doing the will of God have been in him consumed by a very passion of selflessness.—He learns from his Master to serve with the ease and grace of naturalness.

“ What a nature hath my Father,” wrote Cromwell in a message to his daughter. “ He is love-free in it, unchangeable, infinite ! ” And what joy there must be for his children in serving Him, when they have reached the “ freedom of sons ”.

He that has caught the vision of law perfected unto the law of liberty, and abideth therein, becomes no more a hearer of forgetfulness but a doer of the deed, and blessed shall he be in his doing thereof.

So may we become serviceable ; “ Every creature, sweetly, in love, lending their hands to uphold each other and so preserve the whole fabric.”

XI

For man is to come into poverty of self . . . into the silence of his spirit before the Lord.—ISAAC PENNINGTON.

How far is the combination of the mystical consciousness of the presence of God and an energetic attention to the

* Psalm cxix. 45 and 32.

practical problems of life which a passion for social righteousness demands, within our reach? More than ever here it will be the path of wisdom for true seekers to admit how short a distance they have travelled and listen to the experience of those who have trodden this path before and have advanced far beyond us in spiritual knowledge.

The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then making for peace.

How to "focus the lense of the spirit", how to cleanse it so that the truth perceived is not distorted, how to translate that truth into action that will make for righteousness and peace, must ever be the great preoccupation of our lives. Is purity of heart both the condition and the result of contemplation? and can it exist apart from the active service of others? There seem to be in the experience of mystics, two lines of thought—that the presence of God in man's heart can only be discerned through a stirring of life and an impulse to activity, and on the other hand, that action, in one who would know God, is dangerous both in its effect on himself and on others, unless he is far advanced in the contemplative life.

"You will ask how," says Bernard of Clairvaux, "since the ways of God are past finding out, could I know that He was present? Why, He is living and full of energy. As soon as He comes to me, He quickens my sleeping soul, rouses and softens and goads my heart, which was sunk in torpor hard as stone, stricken with disease. He begins to pluck up and destroy, to plant and build, to water the dry places and illuminate the gloomy, to open shut doors and inflame whatever was cold, to straighten the crooked paths and make the rough places smooth. . . . By the revived activity of my heart I know His presence." "His first thought is always to direct his hearers or readers to such an exercise of contemplation as shall fit themselves most truly to serve others well. For what impresses him most about contemplation is its power to inspire action and to renew ideals."*

* Kirk: *The Vision of God*, 1931.

His own description of a saint shows how high a value he placed on the service of others, in a life set free from self. He is "one who has shown himself benevolent and charitable ; who has lived humanly among men, keeping back nothing for himself but using to the common advantage of all every grace that he possesses, who has regarded himself as the debtor to all men, to friend and foe, to wise and foolish alike. Such as these being humble at all times, were useful to all. Before all things they showed themselves dear to God and to man ; and their fragrance is held in pious memory."

The ability to be useful to all men clearly demands first that humility should become a reality. And the knowledge that this is so rare and so difficult of attainment is what leads these mystical teachers to hesitate in urging action on the unready. Bernard hesitates to over-recommend the life of active service. It seems so high a calling, so full of dangers, above all to spiritual pride, "that he dare not commend it overmuch to any who have not begun by progress in seeing God, to realize their own dependence, weakness and need of the Spirit".*

"So nothing is worse," he says, "than that a monk should be seen abroad posting from village to village and palace to palace, unless indeed he is driven into public life by that love which covers a multitude of sins."

Even in those who are so driven, one sometimes suspects that there is a tendency to rush into action in order to avoid the necessity for clear thought. Particularly in a body which has acquired a reputation for "good works" is this emphasis on depth of preparation of the soil from which such works should spring, necessary and valuable. "When we shall have come," says Lallemand, "by contemplation to possess God, we shall be able to give greater freedom to our zeal," and again, "If we have gone far in orison, we shall give much to action ; if we are but middlingly advanced in the inward life, we shall give ourselves only moderately to outward life ; if we have only very little inwardness, we shall give nothing at all to what is external". For fear, clearly, of doing from

* Kirk, *The Vision of God*, 1931.

lack of wisdom more harm than good. A thought most foreign to this hustling age ! St. John of the Cross expresses it even more forcibly ; “ Those who rush headlong into good works without having acquired through contemplation the power to act well—what do they accomplish ? Little more than nothing, sometimes nothing at all, and sometimes even harm.”

There have been periods when Friends felt that entanglement in problems of the world was to be rigorously avoided, if they were to steer a straight course, witness the Epistle from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to London in 1759 :

“ Upon the whole you may observe somewhat of our present circumstances, that our connections with the powers of the earth are reduced to small bounds, which we fervently desire may have the proper effect to establish the Church in righteousness and fix our trust in the Lord alone.” The emphasis has shifted. Some may think we too readily court “ connections with the powers of the earth ” ; but whether through inclination or sense of duty, or leisured opportunity or (is it impious to suggest ?) a clearer sense of what we owe to life and our fellow men, great value is placed now on the service we can render. All the more important, then, that we should be sure that the nature of the service we offer makes for healing and for peace. When one of the early Christian Groups had a material problem evidently involving some financial obligation, “ first they gave their own selves unto the Lord ”.*

(When we say that “ the matter is now before the Meeting,” is it always in this spirit that we embark on a discussion of the step to be taken ?) A willingness to be used, then, not in any self-conscious attitude as of one conferring a favour, but of its being the natural and reasonable response to the claims of life, is perhaps the first condition of disinterested service. “ I would fain be to the Eternal Goodness what his hands are to a man.”† The faintest element of patronage destroys wholly the value of the service given, and he who

* II Corinthians viii, 1-5.

† *Theologia Germanica*.

would render service is in this respect in a vulnerable position, for he can give or withhold, he is in a position of independence and will not easily avoid egotism. But the attitude of dependence, the attitude of the worshipper, "disinfects the soul from egoism"* and prepares the way for wholly disinterested service.

XII

When God sets you free from your bondage, you shall find the Spirit in you, and in the midst of these national hurly-burlys though you lack riches and food and clothes and even the communion of good people, you can rest quiet in God.—

WINSTANLEY.

THE attempt to learn the practice of mysticism in action will certainly provide the discipline valuable in asceticism without the distorting fallacy that the rigours in themselves will be effectual in overcoming the world.

In stressing the importance of action taken "under concern", we have been wise, wiser perhaps than we knew. And, deeply desiring as we do, that whatever actions we take and enterprises we engage in shall be healing and integrative in their effect, we must emphasize this truth that the efficacy of the action taken depends on the reality of the worship of which it is the fruit, on the intensity with which wisdom has been sought in humility. Here the intellect is harnessed to the search for truth, here the will is brought into subjection to the will of God and here the human instrument is made strong and pure to carry out the purposes which he divines God has for him; only when undertaken in this spirit can action be looked to to heal men and nations, and only action conceived, proposed, and undertaken in such a spirit of high consecration should be regarded as done "under concern". We must be careful to guard the use of the phrase so that it shall continue to enshrine this truth. The phrase was well and truly coined, but the currency may have become debased. It should be used sparingly and its value respected.

* M. Bremond : quoted by Dr. Kirk, *The Vision of God*.

Of equal importance is our use of the word "free" in connection with the proposing of some business or the undertaking of some service. The man who "feels free" means that all hindrances have been removed, all stops in his mind have vanished, but clearly there is a strong sense of being at the same time bound as to direction and purpose. To get the close quick correspondence between realization of a need and spontaneously serving it, between hearing a call to action and wisely carrying it into effect, there will have been for some an arduous initiation in subjection, for some an overmastering impetus of love, but for all a freeing of the heart from the trammels of self-preoccupation and self-interest.

If we would maintain the importance of this spiritual vitality in our work, we must be constantly on our guard as to following the fashion of the world in the matter of centralized organization. To demand of centralized officialdom that it should act always "under concern" is to demand fruits contrary to nature, so that if a body such as ours embarks on courses involving large-scale organization, constant watchfulness is needed lest the provision of machinery is mistaken for the act itself, the issuing of a minute for the practising of its message, knowledge of a principle for a life exemplifying it. As it is, we seem to find it easier to trust to organization to produce the result we want, than we do to trust our larger gatherings to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. It is of the essence of faith to act on what is beyond experience, on what appears impossible, to rely on a promised strength and only in the using to find it has been given. If charity and trust have their way with us, numbers will be no hindrance to the workings of the Spirit. We do not assume that the perfection of a string quartet is the result of the number of players involved; to do so would be to expect that in a full orchestra artistry would be lost because, perhaps, so great a number of players would involve anarchy. It can be taken for granted that each is there solely to interpret the meaning of the composer to the best of his ability. If that is so, then mistrust as to its capacity to function as a unit is misplaced and unworthy. "Those who by a travail

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of spirit are inwardly drawn to the one source of light and life for a renewal of their spiritual strength become helpful to one another.”

We have great need of help from each other these days, for inevitably we stand in a position of some isolation. We are most of us conscious in varying degrees of the lack of that sense of social solidarity which tempers the bleak winds of war to the individual in society. If we are to deserve the name of Friends we must exercise towards each other the widest possible charity. To some it is given to testify daily against the irrationality and the horror of the course on which the world is embarked. To others it is given to be powerful forces for reconciliation. Some from an overpowering conviction of the wrongness of all war, suffer the extremes of isolation from their fellows. Others from an overmastering pity and out of a sense of the responsibility we must all bear for what has come about, seek a closer present identification with their fellow-men. All alike, if they are in truth “inwardly drawn to the one source of light and life for a renewal of their spiritual strength”, may be helpful to one another. All alike are aware that if our spiritual experience becomes faint, however efficiently we organize or serve, we cease to make our specific Quaker contribution. In this we can help each other.

We belong to a spiritually shallow generation. In our Society this has been reflected in our concern over “causes”, our preoccupation with problems and in a noticeable absence of depth in spiritual experience and utterance. Many would say that one reason for our profound spiritual unease, our sense of not being at home in the world, is that we are cut off from contact with natural forces, from the raw materials of existence; and would testify to the healing effects of contact with nature, particularly in times of stress, the relief of dealing with an element whose law and order we can understand and follow. Wood-cutting, digging, sowing, reaping all give their measure of natural satisfaction. But we cannot put back the clock; we live in a mechanized age, and turning taps and pressing buttons brings us the material

power we want. We are sometimes aware of what we have lost here, but we suffer a very much deeper sense of deprivation if we allow ourselves, by barriers of indifference, pre-occupation and anxious haste, to be cut off from the source of all life and power, and we do not always recognize its effects in the impoverishment of our lives. We tend to forget that natural laws apply to our approach to and contact with the spiritual world. Awareness—spiritual perception—the condition of their stronger growth is that they should be exercised. If we do not make use of them they will assuredly become atrophied. We are constantly chagrined at our spiritual ineptitude. But we should regard it as natural if we lost one of our physical powers through entire neglect to use it.

It needs a definite and resolute habit of will to clear away the litter that obstructs the water of life, of which deep within us, we have occasionally been aware, there is a sacred fount.*

It is well that we should at times consciously direct our thoughts to this practice of silent worship. It may have so much to offer in liberation of spirit and richness of experience, to a spiritually ill-nourished generation, that we can hardly over-concentrate on making conscious attempts to learn more of its potential power both for ourselves and for others. There is something in the contention of intelligent seekers that we are strangely reluctant to discuss what they call the technique of our method of worship, and that we have not made sufficient effort to present its possibilities to the children growing up in our Meetings.

He is the true Saint, who can reveal the form of the formless to the vision of these eyes :
 Who teacheth the simple way of attaining Him, that is other than rites and ceremonies :
 Who requireth thee not to close the doors, to hold the breath and to renounce the world :
 Who maketh thee perceive the Supreme Spirit wherever the mind resteth :
 Who teacheth thee to be still amidst all thine activities.†

* J. C. Powys.

† Kabir i, 68. A Northern Indian mystic of the fifteenth century, translated by Rabindranath Tagore.

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This association of a technique with a closing of doors and a holding of breath is what makes us, I think, reluctant to discuss and dissect what is a very intimate experience ; an experience, too, which is to us above all a natural one. Man, in awe and wonder, reverent before his Maker, keeping silence because there is more here than words can express. "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him." Keeping silence, because even prayer and praise fall short of the tribute we would offer. "Praise is silent before Thee, O God." Wordsworth comes near to putting an inexpressible experience into words :

Wrapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power
That made him—it was blessedness and love.

If we are afraid that an undue concentration on technique will result in an increase of self-consciousness, then the instinct is probably sound. For to become checked in our practice of contemplation at the level of self-consciousness is to lose the power of reaching those deeper levels of consciousness from which our forebears spoke with such prophetic power and from which they were enabled to "speak to the condition" of other souls and to reach their needs. We are aware of having much to learn from them in this. Their very stillness was evidence of the encircling trust and confidence with which they turned to their Inner Guide. The very urgency and pressure of our approach is in itself an obstacle. For there are other ways of being importunate besides calling "Lord, Lord", and those who think they will be "heard for their much speaking" can be matched by those who are clamouring inwardly.

"In returning and rest ye shall be saved." Not where there is fret or strain, but where "every vessel is turned to its measure" there issues the quietness and confidence that is our strength. But a condition of reaching that quiet place is that there must be an utter willingness to be starved or fed, "to be preserved in an evenness of spirit in desertion or in consolation" as God wills.

In *A Guide to true Peace, or a Method of Attaining to Inward and Spiritual Prayer* (1813), there is a beautiful description of the steady progress of a soul embarked on a voyage of spiritual discovery :

When the vessel is thus turned, in proportion as she advances on the sea, she leaves the land behind ; and the farther she departs from the old harbour, the less difficulty and labour is requisite in moving her forward : at length she begins to get quickly under sail ; and now proceeds so swiftly in her course, that the oar which is become useless, is laid aside. How is the Pilot now employed ? He is content with spreading the sails, and holding the rudder. To spread the sails is to lay the mind open before God, that it may be acted upon by his Spirit ; to hold the rudder is to restrain the heart from wandering from the true course, recalling it gently and guiding it steadily to the dictates of the blessed Spirit, which gradually gain possession and dominion of it ; just as the wind by degrees fills the sails and impels the vessel. While the winds are fair, the mariners rest from their labours, and the vessel glides rapidly along without their toil ; and when they thus repose, and leave the vessel to the wind, they make more headway in one hour, than they had done in a length of time by all their former efforts : were they even now to attempt using the oar, they would not only fatigue themselves but retard the vessel by their ill-timed labours.

Until we have learnt the art of submission, of gently letting go our tenacious hold and becoming as instruments through which power can flow, we shall not know the meaning of this release into reality. " When the will has done its uttermost towards bringing one close to the complete unification aspired after, it seems that the very last step must be left to other forces and performed without the help of its activity." " In the same way a musician may suddenly reach a point at which pleasure in the technique of the art entirely falls away, and in some moment of inspiration he becomes the instrument through which the music flows."* Here we have " an experience which arises ", says Coleridge, " when we possess ourselves as one with the Whole . . . which is the very groundwork of knowledge ". Here it is that we occasionally glimpse what it means to be liberated from the bonds of time. So that we see what we owe to the past and what

* Wm. James : *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 706 and 708.

our responsibility is to the future ; for so much of our normal activity acknowledges only the present, repudiating the past and ignoring the future.

Past is not past to the mind then—nor future future, but the whole of eternity is present to it as one Whole—all together in its completeness.

The nature of our whole testimony on individual responsibility and freedom of conscience has perhaps led us to lay more stress on the need for men to reach an exultant peace with his Creator, than on the essentially corporate nature of our communion in worship. In that way we may have lost much that would have revealed to us the indivisibility of worship and life. There is a story of an African witch doctor, in whom the spirit had wrought mightily, who went down to the sea-shore and cast all his magic-making paraphernalia, his spells and potions into the sea, saying, "Now I have become a man, and I will meet my God alone". We have realized this to be potentially a great step forward in the history of man's religious development ; a great affirmation of man's claim as a son of God that no man shall stand between his inner life and its source of strength and power, and that the many apparent negations—no baptism, no sacraments, no professional ministry, no consecrated meeting places, must be recognized for what they are—no negations but part of this great affirmation that no time or place can determine the action of the Spirit nor any symbol adequately express it.

But just as it is impossible for an individual to take communion and not be aware of others sharing this act which sets a seal on their human brotherhood ; so the reality of this silent communion will not be known if it is thought of only as a means of satisfying the aspirations of a soul in loneliness. Casting aside notions and faults, anxieties and preoccupations which separate us both from each other and from God, together we lift up our hearts in praise and thanksgiving and are brought at the same time nearer to one another and to God. We speak rightly of "centring down", for we

start as it were at the circumference and as we approach the centre we inevitably draw nearer to one another. It is then that we may know the sense of having passed "from death into life because we love the brethren".

But not until we realize more deeply the social significance of the act of worship itself, shall we cease to think of our social concerns as something apart from our personal devotions—a mere optional appendage to them. The word "worship" is derived from an old English word "worthship", the rendering up of something that is worthy to be given. In their measure all created things render their due meed of unconscious worship, in so far as they are fulfilling the purpose for which they were created. "All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father Everlasting." Men have the power, if they will, of learning what is the purpose of God for them and of making conscious response to it. As we learn to live so that we express His spirit in our lives, we give worship to God. Worship for us is life lived as God meant it to be lived; life which expresses His spirit of love, justice, freedom, of mercy, pity and peace. If men fail in this, God's purpose is thwarted. War, cruelty, injustice and unemployment are grievous failures on man's part to fulfil the will of God for them, and we cannot approach God in prayer and in worship as if these things were not to be confessed as sin.

"Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." While men are being taught in "schools of hate", and women leave their homes and children to make bombs that will kill the children of other women, we know that the purposes of God are not being served. All things necessary have been given to man to serve the needs of the world and when their natural use is perverted, His purposes are thwarted. They were not created to be destroyed or withheld from those who needed them. Such misuse is sin. If man would worship God rightly, he must learn to direct the use of things to their right end—as part of his life of worship. In this corporate confession our communion becomes closer. We are at one in contemplating "the mystery of Godliness that was made manifest in the flesh". The knowledge that "He that

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wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit", and the faith that this life-giving Spirit is still with us, binds us together and upholds us. We believe that in whatever lies before us, in so far as we can lay hold of " the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ " we shall be " free from the law of sin and death ". In this law we shall know liberty.

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