

The
OPEN COURT

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

FOUNDED BY EDWARD C. HEGELER

JULY, 1931

←—————→
VOLUME XLV

NUMBER 902

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Chicago, Illinois

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

EDITED BY

FRANK THILLY

and G. WATTS CUNNINGHAM

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Volume XLV (No. 7)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>Frontispiece</i>	
<i>Lessing.</i> BIRGER RICHARD HEADSTROM	385
<i>The Bahá'í Temple of Universal Peace.</i> ALBERT VAIL	411
<i>Changing a World.</i> OUISE VAUPEL	418
<i>Upanishadic Conception of Mind.</i> KURT F. LEIDECKER	425
<i>Psychology and the New Humanism.</i> D. E. PHILLIPS	430
<i>The Early Legalist School of Chinese Political Thought.</i> LEONARD TOMKINSON	438

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GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING
(1729-1781)

Frontispiece to The Open Court

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LESSING

BY BIRGER RICHARD HEADSTROM

A BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

GOTTHOLD Ephraim Lessing, one of the greatest figures in German literature, was born at Kamenz, in Upper Lusatia, Saxony, on the 22nd of January, 1729. His father was a Lutheran minister, a man of high ideals and a steadfast character, but, unfortunately, somewhat narrow-minded in his views, a fault which later was to be a source of much vexation to the poet. Furthermore, he was very industrious; and it is said that he rarely allowed himself any relaxation; rarely took a walk; and paid visits only when his duties as pastor made them obligatory. Obviously, such an example could have nothing but the happiest influence on his children.

And to provide his sons with a university training, which he considered indispensable for success, he often denied himself even those things which are necessary to a normal existence. As Lessing's brother Karl says, he did this "with almost unimaginable self-denial...and literally starved himself. He gave away the last penny for his children with a willingness scarcely paralleled." And when we read that he was accustomed to help the needy despite his own meager circumstances, we are vividly reminded of the kind-hearted poet of "Nathan" who, poor himself, shared with those still poorer. With a touch of humour, Karl remarks that his father did not know the meaning of the expression: "to give of his superfluity" for never in his life had he known what superfluity was. And with moving fervor he adds that "he considered it his foremost duty to give to the poor out of his poverty. In his house it was the rule and custom to send no beggar from the door without some alms. And one may be sure that at that time the gates of Kamenz were open to all sort of tramps."

Karl's judgment shows the characteristic conscious energy of his father's whole moral nature. "To be forced to surmount all the hardships of life seemed to him a comfort, and he was neither proud of it nor did he complain about the ingratitude of the world for not rewarding him deservedly." And, finally, in his theological convictions, we see that honest search for truth, and that gentle forbearance of differing opinions, which made Lessing the noblest representative of scientific truth and religious toleration. "If striving after perfect insight," writes Karl, "and actions in harmony with it are enlightenment, then my father belongs to the most enlightened theologians of his time. He fought against many prejudices of Christianity and began to reform it with the noblest of purpose. What he considered true, he defended with whole-hearted sincerity."

Lessing grew up under the influence of a beautiful family life. Piety, respect for his parents, and strict obedience were, without question, the virtues inculcated upon him; and in this the greatest influence was his mother, who, above all else, displayed true moral energy for she was able, in straitened circumstances, to give to a large family care and training, and withal earn the reputation of a model wife. Thus, the constant example of earnest, steadfast performance of duty, as exemplified by his parents who knew nothing of the effeminate pleasures of life, became a standard for Lessing, who only under such influence could unfold that sturdy, prematurely strong character which he developed ever afterwards in the same direction. Yet, the best heritage given him was unquestionably the keen sense of justice and a strong love for truth, ever the pride of former generations.

At the age of seven he was given in charge of a student such as it was customary to employ in teaching the young, though it is certain that his father superintended his instruction and taught him religion. As he was the eldest son his father wished him to follow in his footsteps; and with this end in view Lessing was sent some five years later to the famous monastery school of St. Afra, in Meissen, which had been consecrated, according to a Latin inscription, to "Christ and studies," and where he was to prepare for the university.

From an account of its organization one is able to form a fairly clear idea of the methods and subjects of instruction which Lessing received at the Afraneum. It seems that all the pupils were taught

together and that Latin was the most important subject: in fact, half the time was devoted to this subject alone. A great deal of importance was also attached to Greek, and a little attention was given to French and Hebrew. Religion, of course, was most important, especially for future divines. But mathematics, science, and history were sadly neglected. And in the upper classes, as well as in the lower, Latin translations took the place of systematic training in composition in the mother tongue. Even in oral instruction the students did not learn much German, as the Greek authors were translated into Latin while philosophy and other studies were conducted in the same language. Indeed, the ideal of St. Afra seemed to be: ability to write Latin easily, to produce Latin verses, and to acquire a verbal knowledge of Lutheran dogma.

Moreover, the strict discipline of the school, the constant study, and the almost total absence of recreation could exert nothing but a most baneful influence on the growing and developing students. Lessing, however, was fortunate at this critical period in his life in having for a teacher a mathematician, Klimm, whose broad-mindedness and common sense did much to offset the harmful tendencies of the school. Yet, despite the pedantic atmosphere in which he moved, the five years which Lessing spent at St. Afra were decisive for the tenor of his entire life, for it was there that his interest in classical antiquity was encouraged. And, happily, he soon became conscious of his poetic talents and so was able to make his best studies subservient to it. "Theophrastus, Plautus, and Terence were my world; I studied them within the narrow limits of monastic discipline entirely to my satisfaction. I must confess, in spite of the danger of being laughed at, that among all works of wit comedy is the one I approached first. In those years when I knew people only out of books I was busy creating fools in whose existence I was not interested."

In view of this interest it was inevitable that he should attempt a comedy of his own, which he called "The Young Scholar," and which was intended to humourously scourge his own narrow-mindedness and that of his surroundings. Later on he explained the origin of such a work by saying: "A young pedant was the only sort of fool who at that time could not possibly be unknown to me. Having grown up among this sort of vermin, was it to be wondered at that I aimed my first shafts of satire against it?"

On the 30th of June, 1746, Lessing was graduated from St. Afra; and in the following September he entered the University of Leipzig. At first he continued his monastic existence and saw little of the thriving and industrious city, which, at a later time, the young Goethe called "a little Paris." Gradually, however, he began to realize that though books might make him a wise man they would never make him a human being. "So he goes out among other people and notices that he is an unfavorable contrast to his surroundings: he finds his body is stiff and clumsy, his habits boorish, his social manners awkward, and his behaviour unfriendly; and accordingly he tries to remedy the mistakes of his earlier education by learning to fence, to dance, and to ride, in which he makes such rapid progress that soon the jeering of his friends is transformed into admiration."

This newly-won standpoint he now attempted to strengthen by means which seemed to him "far more agreeable but perhaps just as useful" as the study of books, to wit: by attending the theatre. It was, no doubt, a happy coincidence that when Lessing became interested in the stage Leipzig was being entertained with presentations by the Neuberin company—perhaps the most talented company of players in Germany at that time—for thus he was able to witness the best in dramatic art. Then, too, his interest in the theatre was further promoted by his friendship with a young journalist, Mylius, who had already written two plays for the Neuberin and who could thus give him many valuable suggestions as to stage management.

Under these circumstances it was not long before Lessing began to give expression to his own dramatic instincts; and by a combination of causes was eventually influenced to finish his "Young Scholar," which he had begun at St. Afra, and which he gave to the Neuberin, who welcomed it as the forerunner of a new epoch in German national drama. The comedy perfectly satisfied the demands of the stage, and, what was more, compared most favorably with the tragedies of Gottsched. But above all else, its unusual success tended to more and more convince its author that he had real talent for dramatic art.

While Lessing was in high spirits over his success, a most embarrassing correspondence ensued between his father and himself. The former had instituted inquiries concerning his son and

had become bitterly indignant on learning that he was leading a more independent life than he deemed suitable. But when he discovered that Lessing was associating with actors and actresses he became furious, and, with all the passion of his violent temperament, he heaped on his son the strongest of reproaches, saying that he was acting without conscience and contrary to his parent's intentions by spending his time with evil companions and thereby inviting temporal and eternal damnation, instead of assiduously devoting himself to his studies and thus being a credit to his family. Lessing tried to pacify his father with a number of conciliating letters, but they only resulted, in the end, of his being ordered to return home.

Surprisingly enough Lessing did not receive the reproofs which he had expected; on the contrary his parent's greeting was very warm and friendly when they observed the favourable change in his behaviour and that his morals were unspoiled. His father, especially, was very much pleased with his wealth of learning, but his mother was terribly disappointed at not having the prospect of seeing him in the pulpit of Kamenz despite his willingness to convince her of his ability for theology by writing a sermon as proof that he could become a minister at any time. Unquestionably, Lessing's visit home at this time was greatly beneficial: in one particular the unbiased criticism of his relatives somewhat cooled his infatuation for the theatre which, if left unbridled, would perhaps have carried him to the point where everything connected with it would have filled him with disgust, for it is said that upon receiving the first of his father's letters he had become so enraged that he had resolved to go to Hamburg and become an actor.

Shortly before Easter (1748) Lessing was permitted to return to Leipzig, where he registered as a student in medicine although he does not appear to have studied it very much. Indeed, it is rather amusing to learn that, according to his own statement, the first lectures he attended were on obstetrics. Most of his time he spent on his dramatic works; and with his friends, especially Mylius, he attended rehearsals and performances, and thereby acquired a most exact knowledge of stage management and technicalities. But what was, perhaps, most important of all was the competition with a student-friend in the composition of plays, as

this greatly influenced the development of his latent ability to greater artistic expression.

And now began the first of those financial embarrassments that were to continue intermittently throughout his life. He became surety for some shiftless actors who decamped leaving him to shoulder the burden of their debts. His position at this time was so hopeless that he considered going on the stage as a means of liquidating his debts, but the wise counsels of his friends prevented him from taking such a rash step. Meanwhile, Leipzig had become intolerable to him, and so we find him going to Wittenberg, ostensibly to visit his cousin, who was a student at the University, but in reality to escape the persecutions of his creditors.

He planned to remain only a short time in Wittenberg and then to journey on to Berlin, whither his friend Mylius had gone some time before. Against his wishes, however, he had to remain for he fell seriously ill, evidently in consequence of the nerve-racking incidents connected with his financial difficulties of the past weeks in Leipzig. Moreover, he learned shortly after his arrival that Mylius had failed to find conditions in Berlin as favorable as he had expected and intended to return. This news put an end to his plans of going to the Prussian capital, and instead he matriculated at the University as "*studiosus medicinae*," a step which did not prove to be a happy one as he soon discovered that here also he had no interest in medicine and none whatsoever in theology. Lessing's position was by no means an enviable one, for there was, besides the uncertainty of his future, the discouraging aspect of his material circumstances. But when he suddenly learned that Mylius after all had remained in Berlin, where he had become editor of a newspaper, all doubts as to the course he should follow seemed magically dispelled: he left for Berlin in such haste that he left his clothes and books behind which were, however, later redeemed by his father.

Lessing's decision to go to Berlin seems to have been a happy one for he soon found congenial employment there, which effected a slight improvement in his financial circumstances. Unfortunately, however, when his parents learned of his whereabouts, and, from ill-informed friends, that he was living a godless life their indignation was once more aroused, and again they demanded his return. But this time he paid no heed to their command; instead he

wrote to his mother explaining as clearly and convincingly as he could the reason for his refusal and the exact state of affairs. But this letter did not pacify his parents, and his father again demanded his return. Lessing again refused; and his letter to his father at this time deserves our serious attention because of its marked earnestness and moral superiority, as well as for the clarity and firmness exhibited by this youth of twenty in discussing his studies and plans for the future. Moreover, it is very evident how difficult and oppressive were the conditions he was forced to fight, placed as he was on his own resources and receiving no help from his home.

“You insist on my coming home,” he writes. “You are afraid I may go to Vienna to become a writer of comedies there. You say that I am working like a slave and enduring hunger and affliction at the same time. You even write quite plainly that all I had told you about various opportunities of earning a living here was all a mass of lies. I beg you most earnestly to put yourself in my place for a moment and consider how such unfounded reproaches must pain me. . . . But most of all I am surprised that you could repeat your old objection to comedies. I never promised you that I would never read any more of them and you have always been far too sensible toward me to really demand it. . . . Do not say that only comedians know me. If they know me then all those who have seen my work performed by them know me. However, I can show you letters not written by comedians to prove that my correspondence is not merely based on plays. And it is a pleasure to me to enlarge it every day. . . .

“You say my manuscripts show that I have begun much but have completed little. Is that to be wondered at? ‘Musae secessum scribentis et otia quærent’ But ‘nondum nobis deus hæc otia fecit?’ Nevertheless, were I to name everything I have written, scattered about here and there, it would amount to a good deal (even omitting my plays because most people imagine they are things requiring little work of the author and being as little credit to him). But I shall be very careful not to tell you the slightest thing about my various writings as they would please you perhaps less than my plays. I only wish I had always written comedies: I would now be in far different circumstances. Those I sent to Vienna and Hanover were paid very well. Please do have the goodness to wait

a few months more and you shall see that I am not idle in Berlin and that I do not work only for other people."

It would seem that such words, uttered with the deepest conviction, could not have failed to be effective, yet his parents gave more credence to the doubtful information of their correspondents than to the sincere words of their own son. His father again severely reproached him for the obstinacy with which he clung to his dramatic writing and his "scandalous habits." And Lessing, in a letter dated the 28th of April, 1749, replied: "I do not believe that the severest judge of morals can find fault with me on this account 'Vita verecunda est, Musa jocosa mihi.' And you must know me very little if you believe my feelings harmonize with them in the least. The poems do not at all deserve the title which you have given them. If they did, the odes and songs of the greatest poet of our time, Herr von Hagedorn, should be given a much worse name. Indeed, the reason for their existence is merely my wish to practice writing all kinds of poetry. If we do not experiment to find out what sphere of work is congenial to us we often get into a wrong one where we can barely rise to mediocrity, while in another we might soar to admirable heights. Perhaps you will also have discovered that I broke off in the middle of this kind of work and became wary of practising such trifles. If the title of 'German Moliere' could be given me with good reason I should be sure of eternal fame. To tell you the truth I have the keenest desire to earn it, but its greatness and my own impotency together are enough to extinguish the highest ambition. Seneca gives us the advice: 'Omnem operam impende, ut te aliqua dote notabilem facias.' But it is very difficult to become famous in a profession in which so many have already excelled. Was it then so very unwise of me to choose something for my early writings on which as yet very few of my compatriots have tried their strength? And would it not be foolish of me to stop before I had produced some real masterpiece?"

Lessing's literary activity at this time was as diverse as it was feverish, and consequently he finished little that he began. With Mylius he founded his first periodical, "Contributions to the History and Development of the Theatre"; and in the preface to these "Contributions" stated that the future of the German national theatre lay in an imitation of the English rather than of the French

drama. There also appeared in these "Contributions", of which only four parts were issued, a life of Plautus and a translation of the *Captivi*, of which he said it was the best play ever put on the stage.

Because of his work an intellectual estrangement gradually developed between him and his family, for their narrow views could never be in sympathy with his love for the theatre. But his relations with his parents, and brothers and sisters, were, nevertheless, always characterized by the same feelings of faithfulness and respect which he had felt towards them as a boy; and, perhaps, it was a feeling of duty which, at length, influenced him to submit to his father's wish to leave Berlin, and, by securing his degree, to finish, at least, to all appearances his study at the University. But it is very likely that the distracting intercourse which he carried on with his many friends had no mean part in forming his decision, for in Berlin it was difficult for him to concentrate on his work. And so we find him leaving the Prussian city in the last days of December (1751) to return to the more quiet Wittenberg.

At first he did not find the quiet which he sought for he had the misfortune to become embroiled with Voltaire, who was then a guest of Frederick, in an affair that was destined to have the most serious and lasting consequences for him. Towards the end of December, shortly before his departure for Wittenberg, he had borrowed from Voltaire's secretary, with whom he was intimate, a choice copy of "*Siecle de Louis XIV.*," but on the condition that he was not to show it to anyone as Voltaire intended to present the first volumes to the king. This Lessing, unhappily, failed to do; and so when Voltaire learned that others had seen the book before he had presented it to the court he became furious and demanded its instant return. Here the affair might have ended, but in the meantime Lessing had left Berlin and, what was worse, had taken the book with him. This thoughtlessness on the part of Lessing instantly aroused Voltaire's suspicions, and he dictated to his secretary a letter in which he accused Lessing of the basest motives; and which Lessing answered in part as follows: "Sir: You could really think me capable of the greatest fraud? You treat me no better than a thief of whom one cannot get hold.... Here is your copy; I have never intended to keep it. I would have sent it to you without your letter which seems most extraordinary

to me. You ascribe intentions I am not in the least guilty of. You imagine I have begun to translate a book the translation of which is already in the press. No, good friend, in literary matters I do not like to trespass on anyone's grounds. I assure you when I do translate I want to do it well; and to translate Voltaire well one must become the devil's own, which I would not like to be. I hope you will admire this fancy; it is not mine."

Such a reply only added more fuel to the kindling fire, and before long the affair was common property, gossip even having it that Lessing had betaken himself to Wittenberg to escape Voltaire's revenge. Nor was this the limit of the slanderous attacks directed against him for the Frenchman Risbeck, in one of his books, writes: "Only my sympathy with everything connected with my Fatherland induced me to commit an offense against a friend here in this country similar to the one Lessing perpetrated on Voltaire by translating his book, 'The Times of Louis XIV.'" But such statements were just as asinine as the foolish tale that Voltaire, to avenge himself against his merciless critic, had Frenchified the name Lessing in "Le Singe" (The Monkey).

Moreover, to ascribe Lessing's later severe criticism of Voltaire's works to personal chagrin would be to contradict our knowledge of his character as well as the historical facts of literature. Some time before their differences he had been perfectly clear in his judgment about Voltaire, for immediately after the notorious law-suit in which the favorite of the Prussian king had become involved with a Jew, Hirsch, over some petty financial dealings he had openly expressed his contempt for the man. And in this connection, we have the epigram which ends with the poignant words:

"Um kurz und gut den Grund zu fassen,
Warum die List
Dem Juden nicht gelungen ist,
So fällt die Antwort ungefähr:
Herr V. war ein grössrer Schelm als er."

In every way he recognized the avarice of the rich French poet, which Goethe also characterizes so strikingly: "It is unusual that a person should make himself so dependent in order to be independent." And Frederick, himself, wrote to his favorite: "As you have won the lawsuit I wish you joy of it. I am very much

pleased that this wretched affair has at length come to an end. I hope you will have no more squabbling either with the Old or the New Testament, for thereby your honour is always hurt, and with all your talents which you, the finest intellect of France, possess you cannot hide the blemishes you have made and which disgrace your reputation." And in answer to the question why the great poet, read by the whole world and posterity, was a rich miser, Lessing gives us, in a witty epigram, the sarcastic words:

"Weil nach des Schicksals ew'gem Schluss
Ein jeder Dichter darben muss."

Moreover, on a paper which contains a note on a fable of Phaedrus he says that "the real moral of the affair is that it is a very ticklish thing to settle a quarrel where both sides are known to be frauds. For example, during the lawsuit here between Voltaire and the Jew Hirsch a few years ago, one could have said to the Jew very fittingly: 'Tu non videris perdidisse quod petis!' (Thou dost not seem to have lost that which thou art asking for). And to Voltaire: 'Te credo surripuisse, quod pulchre negas!' (I believe thou has stolen that which thou skilfully deniest)."

Lessing always maintained this sarcastic attitude in most of his opinions on Voltaire;¹ and, especially, in his "Dramaturgy" he

"Here lieth one, who if ye truly prate
Ye pious folk, here lieth all too late.
Forgive his *Henriade*, O God of mercies,
Forgive his tragedies and little verses;
I will not ask forgiveness for the rest
Of what he wrote, for that was much the best."

turned upon his former persecutor that wit which, according to the expression of Heine, "plays like the cat with a mouse before it kills it."

With the passing of his affair with the French poet, Lessing found the quiet for which he had gone to Wittenberg. He remained there for about a year; and in December (1752) we find him returning to Berlin. His literary labors now became extraordinarily diverse, and we find dramatic and critical writings alternating with translations. And, to be sure, he still received the old complaints from his parents but to which, however, he maintained a discreet silence as his circumstances could not be changed by correspondence.

About this time he again had the misfortune to become embroiled in another affair which, equally as well, was to have an important

¹When Voltaire died in 1778, Lessing wrote the following epitaph on him:

bearing on his future. By his adverse criticism of a translation of Horace by S. G. Lange, a minister in Laublingen and also a favorite of Frederick's, he earned that man's undying hatred. One might question what was the real underlying reason of his attack on a book which in no way could have had any significance in the literary world. Nor can one easily understand why he failed to heed the warning of a Prof. Nicolai, who wrote him: "I would not advise anyone who hopes to make his fortune in Prussia to openly attack Herr Lange, for by certain methods of his he can accomplish a great deal at court." But as it was, Lessing published his criticism, and thereby exposed himself to the charge of having an ulterior purpose in mind. He promptly replied to this charge, however, with his annihilating "Vademecum" which not only held Lange up to open ridicule but, what was more, earned for its author the reputation of a critic to be both honored and feared. In fact, so well was his answer received that the distinguished Professor Michaelis even declared that his (Lessing's) "Vademecum" would live long after Lange's writing was forgotten. And this reminds us of Heine's words that Lessing's adversaries are related to him as insects to amber: by it they are preserved for posterity. Finally, it is very probable that as long as Lange lived he tried to avenge himself on his critic, and took every opportunity of slandering him in the presence of his "most gracious master, the king."

Lessing's second stay in Berlin was one of the brightest periods in his life, for his work met with encouraging success and he made many warm friendships that were to endure until his death. In 1755, he again came forward as a dramatist with a play that was destined not only to be the death-blow to the dramatic theories of Gottsched's school but to lay, as well, the foundation of a national drama. "Miss Sara Sampson" (a tragedy of common life), produced at Frankfort-on-the-Oder on the 10th of July before an audience "bathed in tears," was based on George Lillo's "Merchant of London" (1731) and was thereby a practical illustration of Lessing's assertion that the salvation of the drama was to be effected only by shaking off the trammels of French classicism and imitating the freer, more natural style of the English. As a whole, the play is very faulty and within twenty years was out-of-date. But it was the first of those plays of social life and social problems which have formed, since the end of the eighteenth

century, a constant element in the dramatic literature of Northern Europe.

Shortly after the presentation of "Miss Sara Sampson," a variety of circumstances again made it desirable for him to leave Berlin; and this time we find him hastening in the direction of Leipzig. Shortly after his arrival in the city, which had been for him the gateway to the world, he became acquainted with the young son of a rich merchant, from whom he received the offer to attend him as companion on a three year's tour throughout the continent. Such an opportunity of seeing the world he eagerly accepted; and in his enthusiasm he wrote to his friend, Mendelssohn: "I shall travel not as tutor, not with the burden of having a boy under my care, not according to the orders of a willful family, but merely as the companion of a man who lacks neither money nor intentions to make the trip as profitable to me as I could wish to make it."

But as events turned out they had gone no further than Amsterdam when the Seven Years War broke out and put an end to their plans; and soon after Lessing found himself once more in Leipzig and in unsettled circumstances. Moreover, his embarrassing position was made the worse by illness; and he found himself in a "hundred entanglements and embarrassments." It seems that all his friends did to help him at this time was to offer him their sympathy—as one of them wrote to his staunchest friend, Kleist, a Prussian major: "I am terribly grieved that a man like Lessing is obliged to worry about his daily bread and that the little he needs is impossible to get." Only the faithful Kleist never wearied in looking about for something, yet all his efforts seemed destined to failure.

Meanwhile, Lessing took a deep interest in the political, as well as literary, events of the time. And when he heard of the taking of Berlin, and of its being laid under contribution by Austrian troops, he was profoundly shocked. "What a frightful thing it was after all!" he wrote to Mendelssohn. "Do make peace soon or name a spot where I shall no longer hear the laments of unfortunates. Berlin will not be this spot any more." Still of his longing to be there, he says: "I long, more than you can believe, to be in Berlin again soon for the life I am obliged to lead here is disastrous to all my intentions and inclinations."

The defeat of the French at Rossbach, however, soon put him in gay spirits; and, when he received Gleim's poem on the victory, he wrote: "What would I give if one could translate the whole song into French! The wittiest Frenchman would be so ashamed as though he had lost the battle of Rossbach a second time."

Often his desperate circumstances would make him furious; and then his acrid humour would find its fullest expression, as when he wrote to Ramler: "Just see how much harm the war is doing me! The king of Prussia and I shall have a mighty account to settle between us. I am only waiting for peace to come to an understanding with him one way or another. Since he, he alone, is to blame for my not seeing the world, would it not be fit that he should give me a pension so that I might forget the world? You are thinking, of course, he will never do that! I think so too, and therefore I wish...that none but wretched verses may be made on his victories. But why need I wish that? It must happen anyway if only Herr von Kleist and you would promise me to make none. Oh, I beg of you to promise me!"

The year 1757 came to a close without any improvement in his circumstances; and in the following year he returned to Berlin where he still hoped he might secure something permanent. He now completed his "Theatrical Library," which he had begun some years before, and with Ramler edited an edition of Logau's epigrams. But the depressing influence of his unsettled life made it difficult for his mind to endure the strain of intense work, possible only under conditions of comfort and security, and he developed a certain over-sensitiveness which was gradually to take the morbid form of torturing mental depression, irritability without cause, and often even continued incapacity for work.

Yet in spite of this there now followed one of the most active periods of his life. He published a collection of prose "Fables" of his own, translated Diderot's dramatic works, completed "Philotas," a tragic dramatic episode in one act inspired by the war, and together with Mendelssohn and Nicolai began his famous "Literary-Letters." In these "Literary-Letters" in which an attempt was made for the first time to criticise reasonably and scientifically, in other words to preserve the judgment from the tyranny of tradition and empiricism, Lessing's critical powers found their greatest expression. The "Letters" cover most of the important

literary topics of the day: Wieland and Klopstock, translations, the historical tragedy, the pretensions of the Copenhagen theologians, and, above all, Shakespeare, who, he says, observed the Aristotelian laws more faithfully than either Corneille and Racine. In their essentials of method, they are the foundation of modern criticism, and, are, moreover, a monument to eighteenth century criticism for in them is to be found the best in the aesthetic theories of the time. And, finally, it was these "Letters" which led Macaulay to call him "the first critic in Europe."

And then came the day when he learned that Kleist had been severely wounded in the battle of Kunersdorf. "He still lives, our dear Kleist," he wrote to Gleim, "his wish has been fulfilled; he has fought and proved himself a brave man. He will soon recover from his little wound and this occurrence will make him more content with himself. Meanwhile, comfort yourself with this agreeable hope, dearest Gleim, till we hear more accurate news about him." But his hopes faded more and more, while a feeling of bitter grief mingled with his solicitude about his noble friend. "He is said to have not less than six wounds, daring man that he is," he again wrote to Gleim. "He distinguished himself wonderfully on that unfortunate day. He paid no attention to his first wounds, but still remained on his horse before his battalion; and when at last he fell he still called to his men from where he lay on the ground, and encouraged them as best he could. But it was of no avail; he had to remain lying on the battle-ground and thus with others severely wounded fell into the hands of the Russians." At last he knew the bitter truth. "Ah, dearest friend, it is too true. He is dead. . . ."

The death of Kleist was undoubtedly the greatest blow Lessing could suffer standing as he was then on the threshold of manhood, for he never again found as staunch a friend. To seek forgetfulness he turned to his literary labours with feverish activity; and to his father, who had probably suggested he should seek some kind of a position, he wrote April 3rd, 1760: "So long as I still can support myself by my work, and that fairly comfortably, I haven't the least desire to be the slave of an office. If one is offered me I shall accept it; but to take the smallest step towards securing one I am perhaps not too conscientious but too lazy and careless." A few months later he was offered the position as secretary to the gover-

nor of Breslau, which he accepted as the increasing coolness of his relations with Nicolai, the occupation of the city by the Austrians and Russians, and the vast amount of work in which he was engaged and which gradually began to undermine his health, together with his penurious way of living, made a change highly desirable.

The post as secretary was a very lucrative one, but, unfortunately, Lessing did not know how to conserve his finances. Moreover, his generosity went the lengths of absurdity: and when anyone remonstrated with him, telling him to be less generous and to think more of his future, he always returned the characteristic answer: "I hope I shall never be in need as long as I have these three fingers and as long as this here will not fail me." And saying this he would show the three fingers with which he held his pen and point to his forehead. It is said that he carried gold and silver coins in the same pocket and gave away whichever came first to his hand: if a poor beggar returned the gold coin he would praise him for his honesty but would allow him to keep it with the remark "that fate had decreed it thus." And when he was criticized for often supporting unworthy people he would say: "Great God! if we, too, received only what we deserved I wonder how much we would have?"

His perverted way of living during this period—he gambled and drank to an excess—eventually laid him on his back. A "burning," that is a typhoid fever, attacked him of which Karl says: "He suffered much from it; but most of all he was tormented by the conversation of his physician whose principal subject was Gottsched, and which disgusted him even in his well days. When the sickness reached its crisis, he lay there very gently with a significant expression of countenance. This so struck his friend that he asked sympathetically what he was thinking of at the moment. 'I am just now anxious to discover what will take place in my soul while on the point of death.' When it was shown to him that this would be impossible he said quite abruptly: 'You are deceiving me!' After he had recovered his intellect received a curious tension which he had not experienced for several years."

He felt the effects of this illness for some time afterwards, frequently suffering from dizziness and other disorders; and in a letter to Ramler remarked that when the last traces disappeared he would feel "newborn." Yet this illness had the beneficial result

of giving him a correct idea of the relation between the intellectual and physical sides of his nature. "All changes of temperament, I believe, are connected with the activities of our animal economy." And, moreover, to his illness he ascribed a happy influence on his spiritual life: "The momentous epoch of my life draws near; I am beginning to be a man and flatter myself that in this burning fever I have run through the last bit of my youthful follies. Fortunate illness!"

As is usually the case with such a sickness, his weakness persisted for many weeks; and on this feebleness he once said: "For some time now I have considered sickliness worse than sickness. A disgusting life when one is up and vegetating, and is thought to be well without being so." Likewise, he complained on his ability to work as formerly: "I still cannot get into it, try as I may." But above all else he regretted that he could not put the finishing touches to his favorite work since he "did not wish to work with half a head."

This favorite work was his comedy "Minna von Barnhelm"² which, on publication in 1767, at once placed him at the head of the dramatic writers of his time. Though Lessing can hardly lay claim to originality, and, especially in "Minna" to the plot to which Shakespeare, Farquhar, Moliere, and Goldoni have all contributed, the play is a masterpiece of eighteenth-century comedy: its most distinctive feature is its close touch with the events of the time. It is, as Goethe said, "die wahrste Ausgeburt des sieben jährigen Krieges, die erste, aus dem bedeutenden Leben gegriffene Theaterproduction, von specifisch temporärem Gehalt." And, finally, it is one of the very few comedies of that period that can still interest a modern audience.

Lessing spent five years in Breslau; and when he failed to secure the advancement which he sought he returned to Berlin, after first paying a visit to his home for the first time in nine years. Although he did not return to the Prussian capital for "the miserable business of earning his daily bread" he did not, however, entertain very great hopes of securing a permanent position there. Yet, with the death of the court-librarian shortly after

²In a letter dated August 20th, 1764, Lessing wrote to Ramler: "If it is not better than all my former dramatic pieces, I am firmly resolved to have nothing more to do with the theatre." Certainly his confidence was not misplaced.

his arrival, his hopes revived in that direction for the position was one suitable to his talents. But, obviously, Frederick³ could not be expected to appoint to such an important position a man of whom he had received unfavorable accounts from Voltaire and his "most devoted servant" Lange, and to which, perhaps, had been added the voice of Gottsched, whom Lessing had called a "most stupid poet." Thus, he was refused the coveted post and once more thrown upon his own resources, with the added realization that he had lost his last chance of ever securing in Berlin anything of permanent value.

But in the meantime he had published his important work "Laokoon." In this work Lessing was associated with one of the master-minds of the eighteenth century, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, whose monumental "History of Art" laid the foundations on which the whole modern study of art has been built up. In an earlier booklet, Winckelmann had expressed the opinion that the characteristic of Greek masterpieces was "a noble simplicity and a calm grandeur, both in posture and expression," and this thought gradually brought order into a train of ideas which had long occupied Lessing's mind. He discovered the logical weakness in Winckelmann's unfavorable comparison of the agonizing cries in Virgil's description of Laokoon and his sons with the silent suffering of the plastic figures, and pointed out that the aim of Virgil, as of the unknown sculptor of Laokoon, was "beauty," the difference between their manner of expressing pain being the inevitable consequence of the nature of their art. In a word, the medium of the sculptor was space; that of the poet, time. The importance of Lessing's treatise is that it swept away the confused ideas that existed as to the proper province of poetry, which, in the descriptions of nature so popular at that time, was encroaching on the province of the painter. By this work Lessing counteracted the growing fondness for descriptive writing and removed many obstacles which were impeding the advance of German poetry.

³"There were never two men more created for each other than Lessing and Frederick the Great, and Frederick could not have found anywhere a subject who could have served him with greater faithfulness and a more worthy aim, or a writer who would have so fully compensated him for the loss of what attracted him in his beloved French. But the unproved and unjust accusation made years before by a Frenchman, whom the king despised as much as he hated him, was sufficient reason for striking out the name of this German poet and scholar for ever from the list of those who might serve him." (Scherer: A History of German Literature).

And though many of his ideas have lost their potency because of the more catholic aesthetics of Romanticism, yet, by defining the boundaries of the various arts, he introduced a new principle into aesthetics that was destined to influence the latter development of the science.

In 1767, at a time when his pecuniary difficulties were most vexing, he received the offer of critic and literary adviser to the National Theatre in Hamburg, which a group of wealthy Hamburg citizens had resolved to establish. But from the very beginning the theatre proved a failure, and a variety of causes finally led it to close its doors after some eighteen months of existence. Yet the experiment occupies an honourable place in the history of the German drama as the first attempt to nationalize the theatre. Moreover, by Lessing's connection with it we have his "Hamburg Dramaturgy" in which he continued what he had begun in his earlier dramatic periodicals. As in earlier years in conflict with Gottsched he advanced the classic movement which Gottsched had inaugurated, he now, in like opposition to Voltaire, completed what Voltaire had begun. In a word, the "Hamburg Dramaturgy" contains the ripest opinions of eighteenth-century classicism on the subject of the drama; in it Lessing not only denies the merits of French classic tragedy but turns to Sophocles and Shakespeare whose greatness he measures by the theories of Aristotle, for to him the drama of all time either stood or fell on the laws of the Greek critic. In fact, Lessing grasped, as no one before him had done, the true meaning of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and, accordingly, a large part of the "Dramaturgy" is devoted to an elucidation of the great philosopher.

Lessing spent three years in Hamburg—three years of struggle and disappointment. He had utterly failed in improving his material circumstances, indeed, they had become worse; and added to the depressing events which accompanied the failure of the theatre was his misfortune to become engaged in a conflict with a professor of the University of Halle, C. A. Klotz, who was reputed an authority on antiquarian questions, but who rather had imposed his shallow pretensions and critical knowledge on the literary world, where for a time he seemed to have attained a certain distinction. By having criticized some of his trifles, Lessing had offended the professor, who immediately began a re-

lentless war on him in a journal which he maintained as a sort of literary bludgeon. Lessing took up his pen and "openly declared war on Klotz," who, at first, had almost the entire public on his side, for, as Lessing said, "he had scolded many and coaxed more" to submit to his dictation. Klotz was brought completely to the ground by the crushing weight of Lessing's blows and his withering contempt. "I should be sorry," he said, "to have this investigation of mine estimated by its origin. For what called it forth is so contemptible that only my manner of using it is my excuse for using it at all." His work, which is contained in his "Antiquarian Letters" was thorough, and the unhappy professor stood convicted before all men, not only of ignorance and superficiality but of dishonesty as well. In fact, so terrible was Lessing's victory that Klotz died a few years later as a result; and on his death Lessing's friend, Eva König, wrote to him: "I was glad to think that you may have contributed greatly to his salvation, since you probably brought him to comprehend himself."

But Lessing's contempt for Klotz was equalled only by his indignation for those who had "permitted him to carp and criticize unhissed." He had to carry on the battle single-handed "fighting a nest of hornets," as Herder said. And here as always he was better fitted to crush than to convert. In Goethe's words: "he was the highest intellect, and only the highest could learn from him. He was dangerous to half intelligence."

Such in brief was the hopeless result of his stay in Hamburg. However, he had made the acquaintance of Eva König, the wife of a Hamburg merchant, between whom a friendship developed that was undoubtedly the only bright spot in his ill-starred life. As an intimate friend of the family, he was often in her house and had every opportunity to observe her rare charms and excellent qualities. Indeed, his admiration imperceptibly developed into a deep attachment; and some two years after the death of her husband, convinced that his affection was returned, he proposed marriage, which she refused as she feared to load new cares on his shoulders by her unsettled circumstances, caused by the confused affairs of her husband which had not as yet been straightened out. And with this disappointment there still remained the everlasting doubts concerning his future. A call to Vienna as teacher of dramatic art had failed to appeal to him, and he was in the greatest

despair when the Duke of Brunswick offered him the position of librarian in Wolfenbüttel, which he accepted, entering into his new duties in April of the year 1770.

In Wolfenbüttel, Lessing was destined to spend many long years of suffering, brightened only by the short period of his married life, for it is hardly conceivable that the kindness of the ducal home could be a compensation for the gloomy solitude boring him in "dear, lonely Wolfenbüttel"; nor that after a life of constant change he could appreciate the pleasant contrast of leisure which permitted him to pursue his studies without interruption. Moreover, his many liabilities, and importunate relatives, were not calculated to make things any easier for him. His correspondence with his mother, brothers, and sisters at this time is painful reading; and when his father died his family circumstances became, naturally, worse than ever: only the thought of Eva gave him courage to live. In a letter to her, dated September 8, 1770, he writes in part as follows: "I am now sadder than ever. My old father has died. . . . Since receiving this news, six days ago, I am unfit for anything. Added to this I am sitting here alone, forsaken by all human beings, and am involved in some work that is nothing less than pleasant. Truly, I am playing a sad role in my own eyes. And yet I am convinced everything around me will and must brighten up again. I will always look forwards and as little as possible backwards. Do the same, my dearest friend, and do not lose your great firmness and courage, which you usually possess in all your doings."

The strain caused by his father's death and his added worry over his mother's situation again made him fall ill, while his constant low spirits became more and more morbid; and thus he wrote to his brother, May 26th, 1771: "I am no longer ill, to be sure, but if I said that I was as I would wish to be I would have to tell a lie. Among all wretched people I believe the most wretched is he who is obliged to work with his head when he is unconscious of having a head." Similarly he wrote to Gleim, June 6th: "Book-dust affects my nerves more and more, and soon they will be incapable of certain delicate vibrations." Four weeks later, July 4th, he uttered the same complaints to his brother concerning this complete inability for intellectual work: "Even this letter I am writing in a half dream-like state. For a long time now I have been absolutely unable to fix my thoughts upon the same subject, and every

line, even when it is not to be printed, forces, cold sweat from me as is really true of these lines I am now writing." Yet, strange as it may seem, his literary activity was most extraordinary. Thus, he completed his "Emilia Galotti,"⁴ which he had begun in Hamburg, a drama that unquestionably exerted the greatest influence upon the subsequent development of dramatic art, being to a large extent a forerunner of the "Sturm und Drang"; published his "Miscellaneous Writings"; and began his contributions "On History and Literature" among which was the theological work destined to give rise to the controversy that was to be so fateful for him.

Still, his material circumstances never seemed to improve; and in a letter to Eva we cannot fail to see how deep-rooted his morbid condition had become, nourished by his many difficulties and cares and ever-repeating disappointments: "All life is now often so disgusting to me—so disgusting. I dream away my days rather than live in them. Continual work which wearies me without giving me pleasure, a life here which, by its absolute lack of all society, is becoming unsupportable, a prospect of this precious sameness forever,—all these things which have such a bad influence on my body that I do not know whether I am ill or well."

Two years later he tried to escape this gloomy condition by visiting Berlin, Dresden, Prague, and Vienna where he saw Eva, who had in the meantime put her affairs in order. And at last it seemed that his long-cherished dream of union with his beloved friend might become a reality. But the irony of fate still pursued him: he was no longer the free man, the free "sparrow on the housetop" of which he loved to speak but an appurtenance of Wolfenbüttel. For, as he was arranging for his marriage, the duke's son requested him to follow him to Italy. "Small comfort to him that he had been feted and applauded in Vienna as no German author had been. Small comfort to him, bitter irony rather, that the Italy he had so longed to see should be granted to him at last—at the one moment of his life when it was an unwelcome boon.

And now while his bride is waiting for him, as he had waited so long for her, he must wander aimlessly over the land he would have studied, must see his fruitless stay prolonged for weeks and

⁴Of Emilia Galotti, Goethe said: "It rose in Grecian majesty like the sacred isle of Delos, out of the deluge of Gottsched, Weisse, and Gellert, that it might mercifully receive the goddess in her travail."

months, must suffer agony from lost letters, till his puzzled mind is shaken, and all the while he must smile on courtiers and pay his court to princes."

But, at last, after six years of almost hopeless waiting he saw his greatest wish fulfilled: on October the 8th, 1776, he celebrated his marriage to "the only woman with whom he would trust himself to live." He now took on a new lease of life, and Wolfenbüttel became a beloved home, for his Eva ruled in his "enchanted castle." And, we are told, those who were permitted to observe his happiness could not but feel inspired by a humanity which reached its noblest expression in that quiet household.

But alas! this great happiness was not destined to last: in a little more than a year his wife died after confinement. And with what bitterness he writes to a friend: "My wife is dead, and now I have gone through this experience also. I am glad that there cannot be many more experiences of this sort I shall have to pass through and am quite resigned."

When Lessing assumed his post at Wolfenbüttel, he said that he "would not have the name of librarian for nothing," and, in fact, on his very first day discovered a long lost work of medieval theology—the defence of Berengar of Tours from an accusation of heresy on the Eucharist by Lanfranc, the famous Archbishop of Canterbury. To Lessing this document was of great importance as it cleared a sympathetic character from the accusation of paltering with the truth, an act that was always most distasteful to him; and in this connection he uttered his memorable words: "The man who is faithless to truth in threatening danger may yet love her much, and truth will forgive his infidelity because he loves her. But whoever thinks to prostitute truth under masks and rouge, he may be her pimp, he has never been her lover."

This document of Berengar's naturally annoyed the Roman Catholics and pleased the Lutherans. But by his next discovery he also antagonized them, thus sowing the seeds of discord that were eventually to lead to the great controversy with Lutheran orthodoxy destined to define the closing years of his life.

The immediate cause of this controversy was his publication of a posthumous series of fragments by H. S. Reimarus, a free-thinker of Hamburg and a friend of his. Reimarus could perceive in the origin of Christianity nothing but the worldly aims of its Founder,

and the false pretensions of his disciples; and as his "Fragments" called in question the historical basis of Christianity, the German theological world, led by J. M. Goeze the chief pastor of Hamburg, instantly rose to vindicate the cause of orthodoxy against the free-thinking playwright, for they held Lessing responsible for the views set forth. Yet it did not necessarily follow that Lessing was a free-thinker or disposed to agree with his dead friend. But he did believe in freedom of discussion; and in his own words we find the issue thus stated: "The worth of a man lies not in the truth that he possesses or believes that he possesses, but in the honest endeavour that he puts forth to secure the truth; for not in the possession of, but by the search for, truth are a man's powers enlarged and it is in this alone that his ever-growing perfection consists. Possession fosters content, indolence, pride. If God had in his right hand all truth, and in his left only the ever-acting impulse after truth, though with the condition of constant erring, I would honestly turn to the left hand and say: Father give me this. Pure truth is for thee alone."

Evidently, between such a position and that of the self-constituted pope of Hamburg no truce was possible; and the controversy raged thick and fast throughout Germany. Lessing's share in this fierce conflict was, in many ways, the most remarkable achievement of his whole life, for he had to fight single-handed, rationalist and theologian alike being embittered against him. Nor have his writings called forth by this controversy—"Eine Duplik," "Eine Parabel," "Axiomata," and the "Anti-Goeze"—ever been surpassed in the literature of theological disputation.

But suddenly the war came to a close. Goeze had challenged Lessing to tell him what he meant by "Christian religion." And Lessing had replied in his "Necessary Answer to a very Unnecessary Question" that to him the Christian religion is contained in the creeds of the first four centuries, which he continued to show would form a true basis of union for all Christians, and so the wisest platform for the German state church. Such an unexpected reply confounded his opponents and they were silent. "Nowhere a sound," said Lessing. "Even every frog in the swamp is dumb."

His controversy with Goeze was, however, merely the prelude to the real battle that was to come for Lessing had formed for himself conceptions of God, the world, and the human soul in

accordance with those of Leibniz, and not altogether unlike the views held by Spinoza. As a result he produced the noble "Ernst und Falk," "Freemason Dialogues," and "The Education of the Human Race," a treatise which not only shows his attitude towards the fundamental questions of religion, but is, as well, an admirable and characteristic expression of the spirit in which he dealt with matters which had then, as so often before, been degraded by the virulence of controversy.

Then silence was suddenly imposed upon him and the right of free publication withdrawn. He had to lay down the weapons of theological warfare and resort once more to his old poetical weapons. And never had he wielded them in a nobler cause than he did now, for the question was not the triumph of one opinion over another but the victory of tolerance over intolerance. So out of the bitterness of the conflict came "Nathan the Wise," a work not only crowning his life but fittingly closing it as well. As one writer says, such a poem "could only have been produced by a man who, himself, a soldier in the Liberation War of humanity, had been chastened by suffering and had learned the bitter lessons of life." And it is strange to think that Lessing had to borrow money from a noble-minded Jew so he could live until it could be offered for sale.

After the death of his wife a change gradually took place in him; and his letters of this period bear the indelible stamp of illness and weakness. Indeed, in the summer of 1779 he was often in bed; and of this condition he complained to his brother in February of the following year, when it had become worse: "This winter is very sad for me. I have one fit of indisposition after another, not any of which is really fatal but which, nevertheless, cripples the use of my intellectual activity very much. The last attack I have just escaped was dangerous enough to be sure for it was a sore throat which developed into a quinsy sore throat; and they say I was fortunate to get through as I did. Well, yes, so be it, call it luck to be able to vegetate again." In his letters of the last period of his life there is much discouragement and indifference. It seems that he had given up all hope, nor did he possess the same courage which had helped him so often before to conquer difficulties, only idle lassitude to suffer without complaining. He died on February the 15th, 1781, the year which saw the

publication of the crowning achievement of the movement of enlightenment—a movement with which he himself had been intimately associated—Kant's "Kritik der reinen Vernunft."

The irreparable loss was great. Goethe wrote: "Less than a quarter of an hour before I heard of his death I had made a plan to visit him. We lose much in Lessing, more than we realize." So he said at thirty-two. At seventy-six, he said to Eckermann (Oct. 15, 1825): "We need a man like Lessing. For he is great by his character and tenacity of will. Clever and cultured men there are in plenty, but where is such a character?" In his funeral verses, the venerable Gleim was even more emphatic: "God said, Let there be light, and Leibniz came. God said, Let darkness be, and Lessing died."

In the history of German literature Lessing occupies a most significant position. In the first place, he was the incarnation of the best spirit of the eighteenth century and reflected as no man did the tempo of his age: he was a rationalist in the best sense of the word. In the second place, we find in him the fullest expression of the revolt against the artificial classicism of the later Renaissance and the ripest judgments of the century. He restored the drama to Germany and gave her true canons of aesthetic and dramatic criticism, and, by destroying the yoke of the intellectual tyranny which had lain on her, he prepared the way for the founder of modern thought, Immanuel Kant. And in the third place, he freed her from a petrified orthodoxy, giving her in its place a more tolerant and loftier Christianity; and by all this opened to her social and political life vistas of republican liberty. In a word, "he did more than any other of his contemporaries to solve the problems of literary and artistic reform, of social progress, of religious emancipation, which are still agitating the world; and that whatever there is of positive, constructive liberalism in German life of today has sprung more directly from him than any other man of his age."

THE BAHÁ'Í TEMPLE OF UNIVERSAL PEACE

BY ALBERT VAIL

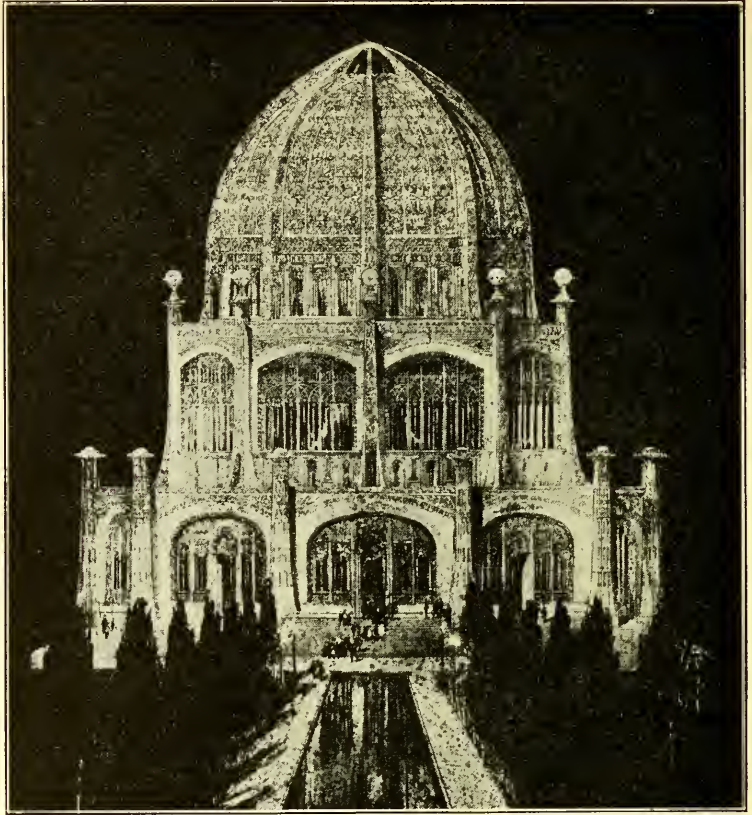
ON Sheridan Road in Wilmette, Illinois, just north of Evanston, there is rising a magnificent structure, the Bahá'í Temple. This building is unique in its architectural design, unique in its endowment, for it is being built by contributions from peoples of many lands and nations, and unique in the ideals to which it will be dedicated. In Persia, for instance, there is a village so poor its people have only one rug in the community, yet they send contributions to the Temple fund in America. Parsees, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus and Jews, of Persia and India, Russia and Japan, have with great devotion sent contributions for the building of this temple in America, often selling their precious possessions to provide the money. Such is the self-sacrifice and love which will be incorporated in this great and beautiful Temple.

What, we ask, has inspired people to sacrifice for and serve a community which they have never seen, and what will this Temple mean to them?

First, the Temple means peace—peace among nations, religions, individuals, a world living in peace, in mutual harmony, in sympathetic understanding and tolerance, a peace which will be all-encompassing, taking under its protection every weak and every great nation, every group of people who live upon this planet.

But how can we have peace among the great world religions, we ask, for the Christians, Jews, Muhammadans, Buddhists, Parsees, Confucianists have looked askance at each other and have fought one another for centuries. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the great educator and exponent of world peace, gives the answer which is perhaps the fundamental Bahá'í principle. Investigate other people's beliefs, investigate every phase of thought and every new and old idea with

a perfectly just, open mind, willing to acknowledge and accept truth, wherever we may find it. Be as open minded as is the scientist in his laboratory when he is carrying on his experiments for the sake of truth only. Studied thus, we will discover that people most fre-



THE TEMPLE AT WILMETTE

quently have followed their religion through imitation: the Buddhist has been a Buddhist because he was born into a Buddhist family; the Christian has been a Christian oftentimes by blind imitation; if a man's parents were Muhammadan he also was a Muslim. Furthermore each religion has insisted that it had the only true way of salvation and that its prophet was unique, and none other like

unto him ever had appeared or ever would appear on earth. But of course, when we investigate with perfect justice, we see that the great prophets themselves never taught anything so narrow as this. In fact, they loved each other, praised each other, approved one another. They taught the same essential truths about ethics and the constitution of the divine universe, their difference being, that each adapted his teaching to the peculiar temperament and needs of the race and time to which he came.

'Abdu'l-Bahá presents the discovery of the fundamental oneness of religions and of a progressive unfoldment of divine teaching through a succession of prophets. "Be free from prejudice," he cries. "A rose is beautiful in whatever garden it may bloom. A star has the same radiance whether it shines from the east or from the west."¹ If we could lay aside the prejudices of race, creed, nationality and class which are destroying the foundations of our civilization we might enter into a completely new social order.

Next 'Abdu'l-Bahá teaches the oneness of mankind, the essential oneness of all races. The difference between human beings does not lie, he says, in color of the skin, in details of feature, but in mental and spiritual development. Therefore every human being should be offered an education that he may take as much as his capacity will allow. That individual who reflects most perfectly the characteristics of God is nearer to God and is a superior being, whatever the color of his skin or his external appearance.

The new social order, 'Abdu'l-Bahá says, must be organized on a universal plan. An International Court, chosen by a universal congress representing all the nations of the world would settle all international problems, limiting armaments simultaneously and guarding the world's peace. The united nations should uphold the decisions of this court by an economic boycott of any nation which should go against its decisions, by refusing to lend money or ship ammunitions to a rebellious nation, by the public opinion of the world and, if necessary, by the use of the combined armies and navies of the nations. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was asked to present his plan for a world peace to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, at The Hague and in reply to this request he wrote in December, 1919:

"This recent war has proved to the world that war is destruction

¹"The Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá," "Bahá'í" Publishing Committee, New York, 1924, p. 127.

while universal peace is construction; war is death while peace is life; war is rapacity and blood-thirstiness while peace is beneficence and humaneness; war is of the world of nature while peace is of the foundation of the religion of God; war is darkness upon darkness while peace is Heavenly Light; war is the destroyer of the edifice of mankind while peace is the everlasting life of the world of humanity; war is like a devouring wolf while peace is like the angels of Heaven; war is the struggle for existence while peace is mutual aid and co-operation among the peoples of the world and the cause of the good-pleasure of the True One in the Heavenly Realm.

“There is not one soul whose conscience does not testify that in this day there is no more important matter in the world than that of Universal Peace.

“The Supreme Tribunal which Baha’u’llah has described will fulfill this sacred task of establishing universal peace with the utmost might and power. And his plan is this: that the national assemblies of each country and nation—that is to say parliaments—should elect two or three persons who are the choicest men of that nation, and are well informed concerning international laws and the relations between governments and aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity in this day. The number of these representatives should be in proportion to the number of inhabitants of that country. The election of these souls who are chosen by the national assembly, that is, the parliament, must be confirmed by the upper house, the congress and the cabinet and also by the president or monarch so these persons may be the elected ones of all the nation and the government. From among these people the members of the Supreme Tribunal will be elected, and all mankind will thus have a share therein, for every one of these delegates is fully representative of his nation. When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any international question, either unanimously or by majority rule, there will no longer be any pretext for the plaintiff or ground of objection for the defendant. In case any of the governments or nations, in the execution of the irrefutable decision of the Supreme Tribunal be negligent or dilatory, the rest of the nations will rise up against it, be-

cause all the governments and nations of the world are the supporters of this Supreme Tribunal. Consider what a firm foundation this is. But by a limited and restricted *League* the purpose will not be realized as it ought and should."

When Professor Edward Granville Browne visited Bahá'u'lláh in Palestine in 1890 Bahá'u'lláh spoke to him the following ringing words on universal peace:

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us stirrers up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. . . .that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled. . . .What harm is there in this?"

Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come. . . .Is not this that which Christ foretold?. . . Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind."²

Other principles which the Bahá'í Movement declares should be universally applied throughout the world are the equality of men and women, the betterment of morals, justice to all, a universal auxiliary language to be taught in the schools of all nations in addition to the mother tongue. To bring about this new world order a universal campaign of education must be carried on. Only a new international conscience and a new international ethics can make peace permanent. Bahá'u'lláh suggests that the educators of the world come together and select from the bibles of all religions those incidents, anecdotes and ethical and spiritual teachings which will guide the children of different nations into a universal consciousness and will

²"A Traveller's Narrative", by Edward G. Browne of Cambridge University, England. Cambridge Press, 1891; Bahá'í Publishing Committee, P. O. Box 348, Grand Central Station, New York City, 1931, p. XI.

show how all the great prophets have taught the same moral precepts, the same moral attitudes, the One God.

The Temple in Wilmette when finished will incorporate in symbolic form these teachings of universal brotherhood. It will stand in a circular garden—the circle being all-inclusive. Nine paths leading from the outer edge of the gardens to the central building will symbolize the different civilizations of the world which, starting far apart, approach religious unity at the center. Though Christians and Jews, Confucianists, Taoists, Buddhists, Hindus, Parsees and Muslims may start far apart, as they approach the center of the circle they draw closer together in mutual understanding. There will be nine doors to the Temple—nine, the largest single number, is taken as a symbol of inclusiveness. As the different races and religions enter the building they will meet under the dome at the center; and the dome is very high, to symbolize the mercy of God, and His wisdom. There under the dome of unity the members of the different races and religions will be invited to worship the One God. Some may think of Him in impersonal terms, others in personal symbols; some may worship Him as the laws of nature, some as the loving Father. Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá combine these different conceptions of God into a wondrous unity.

Around the Bahá'í Temple there will be built, as time goes on, a home for orphans and for the aged, a hospice where travelers may sojourn for a time and receive physical and spiritual refreshment, hospitals and schools and ultimately colleges where science and religion can be perfectly united. Receiving the baptism of God's mercy under the dome of unity, the seeker after God will immediately long to express his thanksgiving in loving service to all mankind.

This temple, the first in America, is but one of many which will be built in all lands, by all nations, an expression of their joy that the time has come when, as the prophet of old foretold, men shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and all shall be as brothers.

About the disinterestedness and the selfless devotion of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the great Bahá'í teachers, there is no question. They gave their fortunes and their lives for the spread of these principles and the spirit which would hasten the coming of a universal peace. 'Abdu'l-Bahá for his faith spent forty years in Turkish prisons which have no likeness, and twenty thousand of Bahá'u-

'lláh's followers were put to a tortuous death while the reactionaries of Persia tried to check the spread of the teachings of universal brotherhood, the equality of men and women, and the need of universal education. Of the Bahá'í martyrdoms, Lord Curzon, in his book "Persia", wrote, "Tales of magnificent heroism illumine the blood stained pages of Bábí (Bahá'í) history—Of no small account then must be the tenets and creed that can awaken in its followers so rare and beautiful a spirit of self-sacrifice."³

³"Persia" by the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, Vol. 1, pp. 496-504, 1892.

CHANGING A WORLD

BY OUISE VAUPEL

A SOLDIER of fortune—seasoned by rich contact with the world, and molded by fate for great work—and a woman—beautiful, cultured and high born—had a vision.

They saw humanity, like a time-twisted hag, writhing under the incessant blows of visionless masters. They heard the clank of chains and the groans of slaves—barren of hope and impotent for even the most nebulous joys of life.

They sensed the heart-break and the soul-loneliness of multitudes—thirsting for even a sip of the Waters of Life.

Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler and his wife, Julie Chanler, seers, and lovers of their kind, therefore, on the Fifth of April, 1929, took the first step on the broad path of light which they were, throughout the remainder of their journey on earth-life, to traverse.

They founded the New History Society, principled upon the teachings of the heaven-sent Prophet, Baha'U'llah, and his immortal Son, Abdul Baha', who came into the world to establish the cause of Human Brotherhood and Oneness of Humanity, to unfurl the Flag of Universal Peace, to diffuse the ideals of Love, Mercy, Justice, Right and Liberty, and to expand the teachings of International Conciliation and Industrial Co-operation.

In their hearts burned the desire to awaken all forward-looking men and women, and to bid them arise and band together—irrespective of race, color, religion or creed—and banish from the world the specters of war, poverty, sickness and prejudice, and replace them with the spirit of brotherhood, peace, prosperity, health, tolerance and truth.

Mr. Chanler and his devoted wife found a whole-hearted and

enthusiastic aide in Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Persian scholar, poet, author, and former secretary of the Persian Legation to Washington. For eight years Mirza Ahmad Sohrab travelled with Abdul Baha, son of Baha'u'llah the founder of the Baha'i faith, on whose principles the New History Society is based. During these eight years he was in the closest of contact with Abdul Baha, acting as his associate, secretary and interpreter. He visited Egypt, England, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the United States and Canada, helping to spread the ideals of truth, beauty, justice and right, and laying the foundation of a Universal Faith, to which an ever-increasing number of people of every religion or conviction are subscribing.

Fired with enthusiasm, inspired by the teachings of Abdul Baha, and thrilled with the idea of establishing in the United States a movement embodying the widespread principles of peace, unity, and the banding together of all the nations of the earth for a warless world, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab clarions a universal and undenominational message. His words are constructive, his optimism irresistible.

And now, the Chanlers and Mirza Ahmad Sohrab are marshalling the vanguard of that host, whose marching feet are awakening echoes in the bleak corridors of human selfishness, and whose song of peace is winging its way around the world.

The writer has felt it an inestimable privilege to co-operate in an humble way in this great and noble enterprise. Her song, "Soldiers of Light," written in collaboration with Arthur Plettner, has helped to epitomize the beautiful principles of the New History Society, and render its purposes somewhat more lucid.

However, as Ahmad Sohrab himself has said:

"The Baha'i cause is perfect music, one marvellous rhythm, the breath of God throbbing in every blade of grass, the dawning light scattering the shadows of doubt, the song of beautiful being, the inner harmony of life, the turning of the human body and mind into a Divine Dynamo, the understanding of Reality through self by getting away from self, the consciousness of an inward knowledge, the storing of life's essences in a moment of unselfish Love and service, the cry of the soul for the unveiling of the Mysteries of Revelation."

As this is written, in June 1931, 1200 devoted followers of

Abdul Baha and his immortal Sire—1200 adherents of New History Society ideals—are enrolled in a Movement which shall, in the fullness of time, become world wide in scope. They number, among their members, men and women of every creed and color, from every part of the globe. To sit among them, as they listen reverently to the words of the Master, Baha'u'llah, and of the Masters, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Lao Tze and Krishna, is an inspiration, an experience unique in its humanitarian appeal.

This was particularly emphasized during the series of lectures, given on nine successive Sunday evenings, early in 1931, when famous speakers, representing eight different religious beliefs expounded their philosophies.

It was in the interest of a better understanding among the different world religions, and for their unity in the cause of peace that this "Parliament of World's Faiths" was arranged. For nine weeks, leaders of the world's religions spoke, bringing to the assemblage the universal principles of their individual faiths. The religions of Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius, Moses, Christ, Mohammed and Baha'u'llah were all presented by such well known leaders as Pandit Jagadish C. Chatterji, director of the India Academy of America, Dr. P. C. Chang, vice-president of Nankai University, Tientsin, China, Rabbi Louis I. Newman, Dr. John H. Lathrop, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Syud Hossain, and Dr. S. Parkes Cadman of the Federal Council of Churches of America.

The keynote of the speeches might have been interpreted in something like this: If the founders of the world's religions were alive, what would they do today? How would they teach today? In what manner would they spread their messages? How would they meet, grapple with, and solve our modern problems? Supposing that by magic, they were all found in a room, face to face, how would they treat each other? Would Buddha frown on Christ? Would Moses repudiate Zoroaster? Would Baha'u'llah leave the room in a mood of displeasure and let the other Prophets wonder why he did so? Would they argue on points of creed and dogma, or would they converse with love and amity? Would Christ be a fundamentalist or a modernist? Would Mohammed be on the side of the Shiites or the Sunnites? In brief, what would be the outlook, the point of view of these spiritual leaders of hu-

manity in the case of the interlocked and rapidly moving civilization of today?

It was altogether an inspiring and illuminating "Parliament," provocative of a fine spirit of tolerance and magnanimity toward Man, Our Brother.

The idea crystallized in this Forum was beautifully expressed by Ahmad Sohrab, who summed it up in the admonition that:

"Religion is a personal relation between man and his Maker. For God's sake do not interfere with it, do not organize it, neither try to reduce it into so many "statements." Organization in whatever form is the death-knell of religion. Do not merely preach this. Practice and *teach* it. Let no one dictate to you what you should *not* believe and *do* in your spiritual life. The ultimate authority is the Authority of the Spirit within you and not the authority of any man, dead or alive.

"God's love is in you and for you. Share it with others through association. Do not court separation from the creatures, but unite with them in love. To know yourself through your fellow men is to know God.

"Have courage. Realize your divine origin. You are the ray of the sun of Immortal Bliss. You and the Father are one. The deathless, radiant Self is in you. Reverence your Celestial station. No harm will ever come to you. God's perfect image and likeness you are, abiding in the fort of His protection. Association with all the people will lead to spiritual unfoldment, and not to the deterioration of the soul.

Live above the world of faith and infidelity; religion and atheism; orthodoxy and liberalism; angel and devil; truth and error;and you will be living with and in God.THE GOD OF ABSOLUTE GOOD; THE GOD OF ABSOLUTE BEAUTY; THE GOD OF ABSOLUTE ART; THE GOD OF ABSOLUTE PERFECTION.

The light of lights is in your heart. Uncover it and let it shine for the illumination of mankind. Overcome malice, envy, personal spite and prejudice and you are the master of Destiny.

"Do not condemn a single soul. For in condemning him you are condemning yourself. Never for an instant forget that he is also the child of God. Upon the great spiritual sea there is room for

every sail. In the limitless sky of truth there is room for every wing!

“Be gentle. Be lenient. Be forgiving. Be generous. Be merciful. Be wakeful. Be thoughtful. Be frank. Be positive. Soar in the atmosphere of freedom. Walk in thy chosen path and let no criticism disturb you in the least.

“This is the path to success, to happiness, to glory, to health, to prosperity. Let us walk in it during all the days of our lives!”

And then, early in December of last year, those two great men, Rabindranath Tagore and Albert Einstein, spoke before the members and friends of the Society. Within a week of each other, they appeared on the platform as guest speakers. Their speeches will always be remembered by those who were fortunate enough to have heard them.

It was Tagore's farewell to the United States. He chose as his subject “The First and Last Prophet of Persia” and spoke at length of his desire for unity and his approval of the New History Society and its work, expressing his hope that it would grow and continue to spread the universal principles of love and brotherhood, as taught by that great prophet, Baha'u'llah. Tagore concluded his speech with this inspired tribute.

“The first Prophet whom we know in the history of man was Zoroaster, who preached God as the universal truth of unity, the eternal source of goodness and love; and it is significant that in the same soil of Persia which gave birth to him arose the other great Prophet of the modern age, Baha'u'llah, who also preached God as profoundly one, in all races, tribes and sects, the true worship of whom consists in service that has reason for its guide, and goodness and love for its inner motive principle.

“We are here tonight to offer our homage to Baha'u'llah. He is the latest Prophet to come out of Asia. His life is certainly a glorious record of unflinching human search after truth; and his message is of great importance for the progress of civilization.”

A note of pathos at this meeting was the presence of Miss Helen Keller, famous deaf and blind woman, who had previously appeared as guest of honor of the Society. After hearing Tagore, she said: “With Rabindranath Tagore's beautiful words still echoing in your thoughts, I do not know what I can say that you will hear. . . . I think many ideas will be sacrificed for one, liberty, and

many beliefs will be destroyed. But in the loneliness and disillusionment that will follow the vanishing of the old order, the races will draw closer together, the heartache of the world will be forgotten in co-operation for the welfare of mankind, and out of the earth, soaked in blood and watered in tears, shall spring the Heavenly flower of Brotherhood."

On the never-to-be-forgotten Sunday evening of December 14, 1930, in the ballroom of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Professor Albert Einstein spoke on "Militant Pacifism."

It is said that Professor Einstein received more than four hundred invitations to appear before societies, organizations and various meetings, but out of them all he accepted but one—the invitation to address the meeting of the New History Society. It was indeed a great honor for the Society—an honor, the significance of which it is impossible to over-estimate.

In introducing Prof. Einstein, Mr. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler reminded the great audience, gathered to hear Einstein that:

"The earth has one surface. God has not divided this surface by boundaries and by barriers to separate races and creeds. Man has set out and established these imaginary lines, giving to each restricted area a name in mitigation of a nativity or nationhood. By this division prejudice is engendered; impelled by this prejudice races and nations declare war against each other. The blood of the innocent pours forth, and the earth is burned by violence. Therefore, it has been the decree of God in this Day that these prejudices and differences shall be laid aside!"

Of the Professor's speech a great deal could be said, although it is indeed doubtful if there is a civilized country to which his message of militant pacifism has not already been carried. It seems more than probable that his "2% pacifists" will become as famous as his relativity theory. It was a magnificent challenge which he made, one never to be ignored or forgotten, and one from which great things have already sprung. "If only 2% of the men liable for war service were to refuse," said Professor Einstein, "there would not be enough jails in the world to take care of them."

By advocating a "militant pacifism" and urging the pacifists of the world to co-operate internationally, Einstein planted the seeds of a movement which, if it spreads throughout the world, will indeed insure international peace. The whole world thrilled to his

speech, editorials were written about it, organizations were formed to put into effect those things which he advocated.

Ahmad Sohrab summed up the essence of this message in these words:

“Dare to dream the dreams of God—then coin these dreams into deeds which will vibrate through the coming ages. Let your sun-kissed lips blossom into rose-gardens of smiling acts. Pave the world with Intelligence and light it with Wisdom. Be compassionate to the race of man. Seize life by never seizing it, and work untiringly in this blood-drenched superstitious world for the emergence of a race which will change that world into a moonlit and dream-visited planet.

“The New History Society has received this night a new spiritual birthday. A new chapter was opened in the record of our pilgrimage.

“Let us write on its white pages in letters of gold—actions which will transform this realm of darkness into a realm of light, this world of hatred into a world of love, this kingdom of war into the Kingdom of Peace!

“Come! Let us try!

We shall succeed!

God is with us!

Baha'u'llah is with us!

Abdul Baha is with us!

We need not fear!

“The future is bright with the effulgence of the Merciful!”

THE UPANISHADIC CONCEPTION OF MIND

BY KURT F. LEIDECKER

WHAT the Hindus understand by mind is so different from our conceptions no matter from what philosophical camp they may come that it is well to abandon the method of investigating comparatively the Eastern and Western ideas. Hindu thought cannot be explained on the basis of a parallelism because it rests on presuppositions totally different from ours. Thus far no exposition of the typical Hindu conception of mind has done full justice to the niceties embodied in the latter. Moreover, what peculiar conception there is now current in Indian thinking is firmly rooted in the past and all philosophical reflection is ultimately grounded in the Veda, especially that portion of it called the Upanishads, the earliest of which were composed about 600 B. C.

The Sanskrit *terminus technicus* for mind is *manas* which is etymologically identical with Latin *mens* and our English equivalent. The term is met with already in the pre-Upanishadic literature. The sections, however, in which it occurs yield with our present methods of interpretation little that is of interest philosophically unless it be the idea that cosmic phenomena are akin to what passes in the human being. Most instructive, and revealing the introspective observations of the Hindus at their best, are the similes in the Upanishads in which the mind figures. These similes are most artistic, imaginary and original while happy and pertinent at the same time. The interdependence of mind, for instance, with life (*prāṇa*) is illustrated by a bird tied to a string. He flutters in every direction, but, not finding a foothold, he has to settle down on his fastening. Explaining the origin of mind out of the finest essence of "food" it is likened to the butter which moves upward in the process of churning.

However, these similes do not as yet convey the precise meaning and significance of the Hindu conception. There is a classical conception in the Kaṭha Upanishad which is copied with modifications or alluded to in later literature, including the Buddhist literature. There mind is compared to the reins checking the unbridled horses which are the *indriyas* or the powers that reside behind the sense faculties. Elsewhere, mind is the charioteer of the body, it is a messenger, and again a cart.

All this imagery if not really, at least by suggestion points to a physical explanation of mind. But at the bottom of it we find concealed behind a psycho-physical a logical point of view which emphasizes the functional element throughout. Mind is essentially that which functions in conjunction with the faculty and material of creative imagination, will and sensory experience. In fact, to the Hindu, mind has no other significance.

The characteristics of mind viewed phenomenally are by no means exhausted by the above-quoted similes. A moderate degree of agility and animation, however, could be inferred. The mind is a 'procurer' (*avarodhinī*), it acts vigorously in dream as well as in waking. It is hard to manage, is restless, wandering astray, impetuous, strong, stiff, and as difficult to get under control as the wind.

By way of interpretation we may say that mind as a purely contemplative function has no meaning in this Eastern view. The character of meditating and musing which we are prone to ascribe to the Hindu temper is but a special function of mind, if we are to believe the Upanishadic records. Mind is of the active, impulsive, and volitional in the same measure as it is or makes for mental calmness.

This bifurcation of mind must be considered at length. According to the domination and preponderance of one element at the expense of the other, mind is called 'pure' or 'impure'. Whoever is familiar with Hindu ideas is able to judge at once what is meant by these predications, without knowing the passage. Whatever is dissociated from passion, rashness, and desire is considered good and praiseworthy. Consequently, that quality which changes the mind into a vehement and aggressive element is desire, *kāma*, in Sanskrit. Not that the mind is conditioned by desire. Acting spontaneously the mind releases or creates desire. Similarly, the manifestations of human nature which seem to be motivated by desire,

doubt, fear, sensory enjoyment, and the like, are really actuated by the mind. One passage, in fact, identifies all these.

Hence, it is not only the opinion of various commentators that the mind in its volitional and restless aspect is responsible for the round of rebirth. One Upanishad expressly designates the mind as the root of the tree of *saṁsāra*.

Actuation of will, then, is the work of mind, according to the Upanishadic conception. But the mind exhibits its tendency to vivacity and mobility in still another way. The control of the *in-driyas*, the powers underlying the faculties of our senses, falls to the lot of mind also. The mind, therefore, incurs the responsibility—although in an indirect fashion—for our sensuous experience, be it of a vehement or temperate type.

These powers, as we shall call them briefly, stand at the frontier of the subjective and objective, so to say. They are not, as is commonly supposed, the sense-organs. At any rate, they are spoken of as either unrestrained steeds or well-trained and willing horses. The wise and virtuous will control the urges residing behind the various senses by means of the mind. Perfect self-restraint, as far as sensuous experience goes, is the ideal of Stoics and Saṁnyāsins alike.

Yet a well-checked sense activity is not all that the Hindu requires for perfection. Because the mind possesses self-motion, it requires steadiness no less. Subjugation of the action of the sensory powers must be followed by an aversion of the mind from the objects, in the sense of aims (*artha*), which are conjoined with each particular organ. Otherwise conduct is false and deceitful, as the Bhagavad Gītā says—by the way, a fine ethical distinction of the Hindus who are generally reputed to be indifferent in matters of morality.

Thus far we have considered the mind in its more or less 'impure' form. As such it appears as a psycho-physical complex whose activity and influence extend over the various functions of the sensuous organism as well as over the exertions of will and desire. It is reckoned throughout as 'more than', or 'higher than' the sense powers. This is not only because the mind is subtler and less material than they; but mainly for the reason that it mediates the knowledge and understanding of the self or *ātman*. This is in part accomplished by the thoughts (*dhīyah*).

The Kaushītaki Upanishad conveys the impression that thoughts are existential elements (*bhūta*). They retain a kind of mobility, yet they may be steadied and fixed. Desire is only very indirectly associated with thought and thinking in general. The presumption seems to be throughout that thought itself is able to produce a certain effect, or, rather, be it. This involves, of course, the whole theory of *tapas*, *medha*, and *yoga* which cannot be dealt with here. We can say only that in this view the thing desired achieves reality in employing one's thought about it. However, thought as such tends towards the opposite of will which makes for motion and unrest. In the conception of *dhyanā* thinking has reached quiescence and stability.

In order to reconstruct for ourselves the Upanishadic conception of mind and to present a summary picture we may say that in the concept *manas* the intellectual and the volitional are combined. Although it is not described as such, the various statements made concerning it presuppose a certain set of ideas and associations which make possible these sketches, characterizations, and allusions upon which posterity relies in the restoration of the ancient mind.

Mind serves the duty of the wishing, willing, and thinking agency with a proper balance between them. The wise man is he who observes an equilibrium throughout, who remains the same (*sama*), not following his whims and passions, nor dreaming and reposing in a state of *dolce far niente*. Harmony is better than excess in either direction; even though the Hindu mind has a bent towards quiescence, this is the final solution of India's most revered book, the Bhagavad Gītā.

In point of relationship mind may be considered to have an objective and a subjective aspect. The two coincide in Hindu thought with the active and passive principles respectively. The logical relation of objectivity and subjectivity is, perhaps, more instructive than the psychological antithesis.

The *indriyas*, as faculties of sensation, mediate an external world through the various sense organs. Thoughts (*dhiyaḥ*) have to be present in order to change these sensations into perceptions. This is our Western interpretation of the checking of the *indriyas*. Perceptions or ideas are the stable elements of mind according to this theory, while sensations are continuously fluctuating. Later

speculations, however, concern themselves not so much with these two but with *citta* which has a significance of its own.

The normally functioning mind has thus a double reference in wishing and thinking. These two must be properly balanced; if not, mind lacks the objective reference, the character of mediating and exchanging subjective and objective elements and its activity will not have objective validity. In fact, this special function of the mind (*manas*) is 'to believe', 'to opine', 'to hold', and the like (*man*). The mind confined to itself may thus entertain opinions which may be well or ill founded, or it may engender guesses of the nature of a conjecture, hypothesis, or imagination for want of a precise and ascertainable idea or fact.

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE NEW HUMANISM

BY D. E. PHILLIPS

WHAT a title—New Humanism which dreads the future, looks to and worships the past; a movement behind which one recognizes the echoes of deductive speculative thinking for the past two thousand years; a movement in which rationalization plays the chief part; a movement that throws psychology overboard as a pseudo-science, yet grounds itself upon psychological assumptions; a movement that does not realize the instability of all subjective standards in literature, art, morals, and religion; a movement in search of an objective basis for conduct; a movement grounded on the false assumption of the Middle Age logic, that words have fixed meanings in them: a movement looking for objective stability where only relative, partial subjective stability exists such are the characteristics this title suggests. So strong is this current that one thinks constantly of Robinson's *The Mind in the Making*, James' *Will to Believe*, or of Dewey's *How we Think*. When the great dramatist, Ibsen, was so drastically criticized for his literary departures he rightly replied: "In the world of ideals there is no stability."

But the struggle to stabilize the ideals of art, literature, morals, and religion has always been present. The struggle has given us our objective laws and commandments and a long line of stabilizing critics. They have failed because in these forms of conduct words have no fixed meaning and because the evolution of the human soul constantly furnishes us with varied and new ideals. Vast expansions take place in the use of the same words. Look at the use of the word Christianity for nearly two thousand years. Would anyone even think of maintaining that its use has been constant, either in practice or in content-belief? Think of what Chris-

tianity meant in the early days, in the Middle Ages and of what it means now. Yet it is Christianity.

Since the attack of the New Humanism seems to be on psychology, and since the Humanists constantly emphasize this fact, it seems that psychology should no longer remain silent and let the popular mind infer that the New Humanists are correct in their assertions and assumptions. They declare that "sociology and psychology are mere pseudo-sciences." P. E. More tells us that "the question at issue is thus ultimately one of philosophy and psychology." He also says: "As between the humanist and the naturalist it is the former who stands for the great affirmation; it is the latter who through obstinate ignorance or in the name of pseudo-science, limits and contracts and distorts and denies." How perfectly simple. Throw all possible scientific study of human nature over-board and then by "the great affirmation" assume as true an old ancient psychological foundation.

These assumptions are: an inherent sense of decorum, free-will, purpose, and rational guidance of conduct. However, it is perfectly clear that they were driven to assume this foundation. To assume, as P. E. More finally does that religious authority is the basis of the New Humanism is to carry us back to Medieval thinking. To assume that the Greeks were by some strange gift of the gods blessed with an intuition of true *decorum*, is not much better. Aristotle was perhaps the greatest scholar that ever walked the earth until modern times. Yet he was just human. To teach and act as if the great minds of art, music, literature and morals have all long since passed away is too pessimistic for a growing soul. With all due respect to the shades of the mighty dead, I will build by faith on the young, uncorrupted minds of the children of our generation and of generations to come. The Middle Ages furnishes us with a good example of a whole civilization being overcome by an inferiority complex. The distinguished scholar, Davidson, summed up the Renaissance as the rehabilitation of nature and the Reformation as the rehabilitation of reason. In modern psychological terms the whole transition depended upon the recovery of self-confidence,—the removal of inferiority. So there seems to have been only three possible foundations on which the New Humanism could build;—the assumption of religious authority; the reliance on ancient authority with Aristotle as chief corner stone;

or the assertion of deductive dogmas on which to build. What one really finds is the assumption of such a psychological foundation as I have named,—*which happens to be both ancient and religious.*

Let us examine briefly this psychological foundation of the Humanists. I make no claim to any knowledge of literary criticism, but I do claim some acquaintance with the fundamentals of psychology, and for many years I have given a course entitled Psychology in Literature.

The assumption of a *sense of decorum* as "that something in man's nature that sets him apart from other animals" and that makes "humanism differ from religion," followed by the assumption of free-will which "must simply be accepted as a mystery" constitutes the foundation on which Mr. Babbitt builds. When we learn historically the endless forms which *decorum* has assumed among different peoples and at different periods of human development we wonder if decorum made religion or religion made decorum. Or do they develop hand in hand? Who has been commissioned to select the original innate type which "sets man apart from the other animals"?

In our dictionaries *decorum* means "seemliness, propriety, usage required by politeness and decency"—rather a complex affair to be inherited. But politeness and decency have in the main been conduct sanctioned by religion. Have we, or do we need anything more than a combination of natural impulses and instincts of humanity on which to base both decorum and religion? An analysis of any specific human conduct will reveal the presence of tendencies and instincts common to the higher animals. The complexity of environment gives us almost unlimited variation. There are no grounds for assuming that we have something that is unnatural and that sets us apart from nature. Have not the chief contentions of religion been that man has "something in his nature that sets him apart from animals," and that free-will makes him a moral being? I fail to see how Mr. Babbitt can separate Humanism from Religion by either of his chief assumptions.

Seward Collins's attempt to protect Mr. Babbitt from the accusation of religious assumptions is equally futile. When a psychologist reads that long brutal tirade of words which Mr. Collins pours out in the *Bookman*, he wonders how such a writer can speak of others as being prejudiced and narrow-minded. He calls

the whole opposition a "myth-attack", and charges the opponents with reading into Professors More and Babbitt what they did not say. Yet he devotes half of his long article to reading into Mr. Brooks what he admits Mr. Brooks said little about; and then says: "But the point is it is actually the key to everything he has written." Perhaps he is right, but why should such a procedure be wrong when exercised by others? It is probably true that the writers on each side of this dispute are promoted consciously and unconsciously by their religious attitudes and previous training,—something quite different from their free-will. Even the U. S. Senate shows this much appreciation of psychology in appointing Judges to the Supreme Court.

The intellectual struggle for recognition of something called free-will seems to be as old as human thinking. The fact that so many seem *not free* to let go of the idea and look with dread upon all sciences that seem to threaten its validity, appears to argue more for the power of tradition and teaching than for freedom. But more than that there is a great family of beliefs that have attached themselves to this one. I have no intention of entering into a defense of either side. But I do want to offer a few suggestions concerning methods of attack and of escape for those who seem so distressed.

When Mr. Babbitt says that free-will "must simply be accepted as a mystery that may be studied in its practical effect", I fear he has stepped upon psychologically dangerous ground. Psychologists have invited all theorists to join them in a search for "its practical effects." The psychologist says "show me a simple act where adequate causes for its performance cannot be found in man's natural instincts, in his training, in his surroundings, in his physical and emotional make up, in the sum total of his mental relations, in the unconscious driving force of his endocrine glands." Nearly a quarter of a century ago the famous physician Dr. Lorand said that *will power* always means a healthy condition of the endocrine glands. Since then thousands of experiments on human individuals and animals have produced "practical effects." Many a poor Cretin child without will or push has been made into a normal being.

Let us open up a typical case in practical effects. A college student about thirty years old was sure of practical freedom. He was

asked if he felt that he could develop genuine hatred for his mother. He replied "Of course I could if I wanted to." Certainly such a universal dodging of the question can no longer exist among thinking people. We do not care anything about what he *wants*. We are seeking the forces which make him want to do so and so.

The gentleman was then asked to pick out from his long experience the one act he considered most certainly a free-will act. He said it was the night he walked the floor until 2 o'clock in the morning and decided to volunteer in the Spanish-American War. But it was soon revealed that he was president of the Y. M. C. A. in his college, that forty members had already volunteered, that his father served in the Civil War, that he had received a letter from his father on the subject just that day, that he was not married and belonged to the cadet corps. As psychologists we do not care to theorize about free-will, but to analyze the strongest practical evidence that can be produced in its favor. James long ago attempted a complete analysis of these practical examples and finally concluded that we cannot prove freedom on any practical or historical grounds. Nevertheless, he held that it was wise to assert freedom for moral ends. This we take to be the attitude of most of the New Humanists. But this attitude is built upon two wrong psychological assumptions. In the main conduct is not the result of any speculation or rational thinking which the New Humanism everywhere assumes. Even their critics seem to be laboring under the same mistake. I do not know anyone who is not either a blind worshipper of the past or has only a superficial knowledge of human nature, who still clings to the idea that man's conduct is regulated by rational thinking. I am here talking about human relations and not the building of canals and skyscrapers. Of course, he reasons much about his neighbor, Jones, about his *lost* generation, about his religion, about labor and capital. But only lift up the curtain and see what is guiding his reasoning. His original nature, his training, his associations and experiences in life will be found everywhere.

Again, I am not astonished that the Humanists should assume that we could have no moral world without the freedom of the will. Their past thinking almost insured this. But I am surprised that such a keen thinker as James should not have seen that the moral order of the universe may be as real as any other part of it, even

without freedom. May not moral responsibility be a natural part of human development by which certain lines of conduct and conformity are secured? Certainly no one would maintain that the feeling of a mother's responsibility for her children is a product of free-will; yet it has moral value.

Hunger and thirst are the safeguards to physical life. The feeling of responsibility performs a similar function for moral life. Responsibility is a moral medicine to the end of begetting healthy moral life. Man is not something apart from these internal forces, being pushed on by them; he is himself the sum total of these internal forces. Human conduct is not logic, but *feeling in action*.

This is, I suppose, what P. E. More calls a false psychology that robs life of its true values. Mainly of course because these values are not given objectively,—*dream values*, he calls them. Seward Collins cries out "pseudo-humanities of sociology and psychology." This search after objectivity, after fixed values, after the unchangeable elements in human conduct will never be satisfied without accepting objective authority, and Mr. P. E. More realizes that even Pascal and Aristotle are not sufficient. That is good news. Let us hope, that we will not return to the days when no one could graduate from Oxford without signing a pledge not to teach anything contrary to Aristotle. It is Aristotle's false law about the excluded middle that gives Mr. More and others much trouble. Man is either good or bad. A thing is either right or wrong, natural or supernatural. The sooner we forget such playing with words the better. Mr. More is distressed over Pascal's saying that, "unless man has the support of the supernatural, he will fall irresistibly into Stoic pride or Epicurean relaxation." Even if he should escape what he calls *dream values* by accepting objective authority he is still confronted with the fact that words have no fixed meanings, and that all assumed objective value must be interpreted subjectively.

"Thou shalt not lie" is a general formula of definite moral value, but it will always have varied interpretations. In what ways may one lie? By what standard will you declare any specific statement a lie? Has the physician who *acts* as if you are going to get well when he believes you will die, lied to you?

Values grow out of human needs, human desires, and the teach-

ings and experiences of the ages. When we believed "this world a wilderness of woe," wealth was not only valueless but dangerous. But why should values that so originate be called dream values? Those of us who believe in evolution believe that nature is continually begetting new products. Why could not the moral order be one of them? There seems to be no reason except that Aristotelian dualism might suffer therefrom.

It seems as if the Humanists are playing with a half dozen psychological assumptions all wrapped up together. P. E. More says: "Now in one sense humanism takes its stand unhesitatingly on the affirmation of purpose. Its animus against Naturalism is based on the evident fact that the rejection of free-will deprives life of any possibility of purpose." Is this really true or only one of the "great affirmations"? Is it theoretically or practically true? Can we escape the fact that animals everywhere manifest purpose? I know there are some psychologists who deny this. But I am not one of them. One of the interesting contradictions of our Behavioristic friends is their determined *purpose* to convert the rest of us. Children manifest push and purpose in a variety of ways, long before they have been corrupted by our theological beliefs. Physicians tell us that push and purpose depend largely upon certain secretions of the glands which they can now in part artificially supply. Not long ago a physician called my attention to a young lady who had so much push and purpose that a third of her thyroid gland had to be removed.

When I was a boy, I was much confused to learn that the Presbyterians in my community did not believe in the freedom of the will. Yet they never lacked in purpose to convert the rest of us, and, to their credit, no group in the community showed any more push and purpose for the good of the community. All their actions were directed with an eye to the *future good*. Could any one say that St. Augustine, John Calvin or Jonathan Edwards lacked purpose and push?

This is all due to our inability to recognize the modern scientific background of human conduct. We return to that false assumption that conduct depends on *rationalized beliefs*. So all of the assumptions of the New Humanism are ancient and, whether true or false, smell of the ages. The freedom of the will is the chief stumbling block in the whole fabric. When we come to realize that will is

only the resultant of all the forces acting on us at any one time, that conduct is chiefly the result of concentrated feelings and that we may have a moral world without free-will, it is like the passage from blackest night to brightest day. You may call it "obstinate ignorance," if you like, and we will call the "great affirmation" arrogant ignorance.

No, Mr. Collins, this is neither a "gas-attack" nor a "myth-attack." The myths are all on the other side. They reach back to the story of Adam and Eve, to the anthropomorphic conception of man, inherent in the story of creation. It is a struggle between assumptions and "great affirmations" concerning human conduct on one hand and of a modern scientific study of conduct on the other. The psychologist says: "We are just beginning a scientific study of human conduct. We realize that our shortcomings are many. There may be insurmountable difficulties ahead, but we have no intention of turning back. The present facts, inadequate as we know them to be, compel us to a different view of human nature. Just where other facts will lead us, we do not know. We may even prove your "great affirmations," but until we do we must so far as *possible* proceed as any other science proceeds. We are entirely indifferent whether we shall establish Aristotelian dualism or modern monism. We naturally wonder why you do not attack modern chemistry and physics. They have done more than any other science to interfere with free-will, to establish a monistic conception of the universe and even the subjective interpretation of all things than the "pseudo-sciences" of which you speak. Do you know that those deeply versed in these sciences constantly remind us of the subjectivity of the whole scientific structure?"

THE EARLY LEGALIST SCHOOL OF
CHINESE POLITICAL THOUGHT

BY LEONARD TOMKINSON

THE TAO AND WU WEI IN THE LEGALIST WRITINGS.

THE word, "tao", has many meanings in the writings of the various Chinese philosophers of various ages, but to the Taoists it means the spontaneous, natural way of the universe, and that is perhaps its fundamental conception, from which the ideas which other philosophers have connected with the term have been derived. That is certainly the basic meaning of the word as used by the Legalists, through their emphasis on the idea of spontaneity varies, indeed it sometimes disappears. Where they do emphasize it, it is connected with the idea of "wu wei" or non-assertion. This idea, especially as applied to rulers, had a vogue far wider than the Taoists and Legalists. Even Confucius himself was influenced by it, and his followers were fond of quoting observations as to how the ancient sages merely "sat facing the south" and the whole empire was well ruled. The implications of the doctrine, however, as expounded by the Legalists differed considerably from the lessons drawn by Confucianists.

A classic exposition of some aspects of the practice of "wu wei" is the description of certain Legalist writers in the T'ien Sha P'ien appended to "Chuang Tse": "Public spirited and with nothing of the partisan, easy and compliant without any selfish partialities; capable of being led without any positive tendencies; following in the wake of others without any double mind; not looking round because of anxious thoughts; not scheming in the exercise of their wisdom, not choosing between parties, but going along with all; all such courses belonged to the Taoists of antiquity, and they were appreciated by P'eng Meng, T'ien P'ien and Shen Tao. When they

heard of such ways they were delighted with them. . . . The great Tao embraces all things but does not discriminate between them. They knew that all things have what they can do and what they cannot do. Hence they said 'If you select some you do not reach all, training will not reach in all directions, but the Tao is comprehensive.' Therefore Shen Tao discarded all knowledge and also all thought of himself; passivity was his guiding principle. . . . He said that the best knowledge was to have no knowledge. Conscious of his unfitness he took no charge, and laughed at those who valued ability and virtue. Remiss and evasive he did nothing and disallowed the greatest sages which the world had known. . . . He disregarded right and wrong, his only concern being to avoid trouble; he learned nothing from the wise and thoughtful and took no note of the succession of events, thinking only of carrying himself with a lofty disregard of everything. . . . What was the reason that he appeared thus complete doing nothing wrong? that whether in motion or at rest he committed no error and could be charged with no transgression? Creatures that have no knowledge are free from the troubles that arise from self-assertion and the entanglements that spring from the use of knowledge. Moving or at rest they do not depart from their proper course, and all their lives long they do not receive any praise. Hence Shen Tao said, 'Let me become like a creature without knowledge. Of what use are the minds of the sages and worthies. But a clod of earth never fails in the course proper to it.' So men of eminence and spirit laughed at him, saying 'The way of Shen Tao does not describe the conduct of living men; that it should be predicable only of the dead is strange indeed.'" (Legge—with emendations).

The reader may likewise feel that it is indeed strange that such views should have anything to do with the theories of such practical statesmen as those described in an earlier chapter. We shall have to show later how from such principles were deduced those doctrines of the importance of objective standards and unalterable laws which were the characteristic mark of the Legalist school. Here we may note that in general such inactivity and non-assertion as described in the above character were generally considered as proper to the sovereign rather than to his ministers. Yet not to him alone, for simplicity which might be considered one aspect of "wu wei" should characterise the people.

The general view of the Legalists seems to have been that the sovereign should reign rather than rule, but this view was founded on severely practical considerations. Thus the "Kuan Chung" says that a prince should practise calmness and non-assertiveness so that his ministers will not be able to assess his strong and weak points, his desires and dislikes, and so pretend to satisfy them. Thus "activity loses the throne, while calmness attains its goal." He shows that by doing away with all individual ideas and remaining silent a mysteriousness is brought about. This is desirable because "the strongest cannot assert his strength everywhere, the wisest cannot plan for every emergency. . . . The ruler who follows the way is as still as if he knew nothing and responds to circumstances like a statue."

Lu P'u Wei tells a story concerning Shen Pu Hai which illustrates this view-point: Chao Li, Marquis of Han, observed the pig selected for the sacrifice at the ancestral shrine. He decided that it was too small and ordered it to be removed. In a little while the official brought back the same animal. Chao Li asked if it were not the pig he had condemned as unfit. The official made no answer and was punished. His followers asked the Marquis how he had recognized it. The latter replied, "By its ear," for the animal's behaviour had shown that it was deaf. Shen who was present commented on the incident thus: "Deafness is recognized from the fact that the ear is the organ of hearing, blindness from the fact that the eye is the organ of sight, idle boasting may be recognized from the fact that the words should be seemly. If looking and listening are not put into action there will be no degrees of distinctness in what is seen and heard, by not seeking information the knowledge gained will be impartial. By dispensing with these three things, personal bias will not exist and order will prevail—otherwise there will be disorder. For there are limits to what can be seen, heard and known. A hundred years is not sufficient to hear all that has occurred within ten li, the clearest vision cannot penetrate the walls of a room, and the wisest cannot know every detail even in a palace covering only three mo. The wisest despise knowledge, the most benevolent forget benevolence, the most virtuous are not set upon virtue. Without word or thought calmly await events, and then to each event make the appropriate response. The part of the minister is activity, of the ruler inactivity."

The last sentence especially is reminiscent of a passage attributed to Shen Tao: "These are the respective paths of the sovereign and of his ministers:—the minister has duties, the sovereign has none; the sovereign ease and pleasure, his ministers toil and responsibility; the minister uses his utmost wisdom and strength to do his duties well, the sovereign does nothing but wait for the results. . . . If the sovereign delights to try to act well before his subjects, then his subjects will not dare to compete with him in well-doing lest they should seem to be rivalling him; all will praise what they know he favours, and if things go wrong they will blame their sovereign; this is the way to produce disorder. The wisdom of the sovereign is not bound to be superior to that of the whole multitude; if he uses that not wholly superior ability to try to surpass all his subjects, then they will make no efforts. But if his wisdom should surpass all, yet if he tries to undertake all the responsibilities of all his subjects, he will become exhausted and so deteriorate and become inferior."

These same ideas appear in the writings of Han Fei. In his chapter on "Displaying Authority" he says, "If the ruler shows pleasure there will be much trouble; if he shows dislike there will be hatred. . . . Let punishments and rewards descend as of themselves. . . . If the sovereign is not mysterious, his subjects will find out the causes of his actions; if things do not seem to happen inevitably people will seek out his tendencies. . . . Those who can be like heaven and earth are sages." Again he says, "A ruler who should try personally to investigate the work of all the government departments would find his time and strength insufficient. Further if such a ruler should depend on his sight then his subjects would pay attention to outward appearances; if he depended on his ears his officials would take care that things sounded right; if the ruler depended on his own thought then his ministers would make their schemes specious. It was because the former kings realised the inadequacy of these three methods that they gave up such personal and private efforts and distributed rewards and punishments according to laws and statistics."

There is a well known passage in Chuang Tse in which that philosopher describes how a certain pig-sticker was able to do his deed with one effortless thrust, because by studying the physical structure of the animal he was able to run his knife through the joints and along the line of least resistance. The doctrine of study-

ing in this case the psychology of the people and then following the line of least resistance was also applied to the science of government by some of the Legalists. In the chapter on "Paying Attention to Standards" in the "Kuan Tse" this is put somewhat crudely thus: "If the principles are not too lofty they can easily be put into practice." Again in the same compilation the observation is made that "The people hate death and like rewards; the ruler should recognise this and make use of it instead of trying to change." In discussing the methods of Kuan Tse, Sze-ma Chien recalls the story of the granting of the fiefs of Lu and Ch'i. Duke Chow enfeoffed Peh Ching with the territory which became the state of Lu. After three years the latter returned having tried to alter the habits of the people. The fief of Ch'i was granted to Duke T'ai who returned successful after five months, for he had used the customs and habits of the people and turned his efforts in the direction of making trade to flourish. These traditions, the historian observed, remained in Lu and Ch'i respectively and Kuan Chung followed the example of Duke T'ai. Kuan Tse is thus reported as saying, "The prosperity of Government depends on following the mind of the people, its failure in opposing their mind: the people hate toil and poverty and danger, so the ruler should seek to give them wealth and security." Similarly Shen Tao says, "All men have a mind to seek their own interests, to make use of this fact in employing them is to follow the Way of Nature (tao)."

We shall see later how some of the Legalists developed this idea in the direction of cynicism and Machiavellianism. In the Kuan Tse, however, the application of the idea of "tao" to government is often treated in a broader manner. From the third chapter of "External Teachings" we may quote the following passage in illustration of this: "The 'tao' is as the sun in the heavens and as his heart in man; wherefore it is said that he who has the ethereal essence lives and he who has not dies. . . . Establishing order by means of naming implies: loving and benefiting, profiting and making secure. These four come from the "tao." The ancient emperors used them and the empire was well governed. . . . Those who are timely win Heaven, those who are just win men The sage-kings did

not depend upon a show of force to protect their borders and yet there was peace on their frontiers and consequently good relations with neighbouring countries. For this again they had to promote suitable policies." Similar ideas are contained in the chapter entitled "On the Establishment of Government"; "The Earth is the basis of government, by which one can maintain order in the state; if this government is not just, secure and harmonious...the affairs of the state will not be conducted with equity...The Court is the instrument of justice, so when posts are conferred and filled according to justice the people are content, peaceable and submissive. In the contrary case government and order is impossible...The ancient kings who acquired an illustrious name, and rendered signal services and gained a fame which spread throughout the empire, which was not extinguished in after ages, would never have attained all this if they had not won the people. Today among all the rulers there is none that does not desire repose in leisure, great power in action, victory in combat and unshakeable strength in defence. But the most powerful seek to dominate the whole world while the weaker seek to preside at the confederation of princes, and yet they hardly trouble to win the hearts of the people and thus their fall is inevitable...So it is absolutely necessary to take account of the people...To win the people the best means is to render them services...and the principal service is to instruct them and govern them wisely,...to clothe the cold, nourish the hungry, be generous towards the poor, cover the naked and to provide for those who are deprived of everything...Such are the causes of virtue; when they produce their effects the people obtain what they desire, they obey their rulers and the state is well governed."

This general conception of the application of "tao" to government had a wide influence extending far beyond those who can properly be styled Legalists. This is very marked in the writings of Tong Chong Hsu, the greatest of the Han Confucianists, as the following quotations with which we may close the chapter will show:

"If the people desire nothing the ruler has no means of encouraging them; if the people dislike nothing the ruler has no means of deterring them. Without means of encouraging and de-

tering the ruler cannot enforce prohibitions and that will mean equality, the levelling of authority and the disappearance of rank. Wherefore the sages in the government of states followed the natural way of Heaven and Earth." ("On Maintaining Position and Authority").

"Heaven maintains His position on high, but bestows His mercy below. He hides His form, but makes manifest His light. His position causes respect, His mercy below displays His benevolence. Because He hides His form He is mysterious; because He makes manifest His light there is understanding. These are the characteristics of Heaven, wherefore the rulers of men should imitate them. By remaining hidden far within they should be mysterious, but by publishing abroad they should give enlightenment. They should entrust to all the capable men the carrying out of their policy, not wearying themselves with activities for thus they will be revered The way of the rulers of men should be the Way of Inactivity and unselfishness should be their treasure. They should occupy a position of inactivity and entrust the practical administration to their officials. . . . Thus without any activity on their part being manifest their work will be accomplished. Thus should the rulers of men imitate Heaven." ("The Roots of Separation and of Unity").

CHANGE AND SOCIAL EVOLUTION

If the "tao" is the spontaneous way of nature it must involve constant adaptation to a changing environment. This is also implied by the idea of ever following the line of least resistance already referred to. It is not surprising therefore to find that this conception is applied to politics by many of the Legalists, and brought them into conflict with the traditionalism of popular Confucianism. It is true that Confucius spent much time in pouring over the "Book of Change," and that many eminent interpreters of Confucianism have found spontaneous response to environment a fundamental concept of the teaching of the Sage. The actual, bold application of the principle to practical politics, however, was left largely to the Legalists.

This idea of the importance of changing with the changing times is not greatly stressed in the "Kuan Tse," but it holds an important place in the system of Shang Yang. This will already have been suggested by the remarks of his recorded by Sze-ma Ch'ien and

summarised in the biographical sketch. In the chapter entitled "The Removal of Obstructions" ("K'ai Sai") in the work attributed to him we find this view expressed in aphoristic form, "To imitate the ancients is to be always behind the times; to have regard only to the present is to be deflected by authority." Again in the same work we have this, "In national affairs sages do not imitate the ancients, nor are they bound by contemporary ideas; they act to suit the occasion, they measure the practices of the time and make laws accordingly."

Hirth tells us that when some of his ministers remonstrated with Wu Ling, King of Chao, for changing the traditional Chinese court dress for that of a Tartar ruler he replied that the manners and customs of antiquity were good enough for the ancients, but the modern man had to conform to the requirements of his time.

Han Fei Tse sums up his views on this subject somewhat neatly thus: "Not to be able to adapt to circumstances is sufficient to bring to confusion." For the same action will produce different effects under different circumstances; a truth which he brings home with the following homely illustration: "It is clear that water can overcome fire, yet if the water is put in a saucepan and a fire lit under it, the water will boil and evaporate, and so the fire will overcome the water, because the water has lost that condition by which it can overcome the fire." ("Preparedness At Home"—"Pei Nei").

But the characteristic way in which many of the Legalists expound the necessity of change is to sketch (largely from their imaginations, one suspects) the evolution of the state. Let us first take some examples from the "Shang Yang":

"Fu Hsi and Shen Nung only used persuasion and not punishment; Huang Ti, Yao and Shun used punishment but not in anger, but from then till the time of Wen and Wu each ruler established laws and appointed rites to fit the times, . . . The Yin and Hsia dynasties perished because they would not alter the rites."

"In the days when Heaven and Earth were first established and people came to be, the people knew their mothers but not their fathers; the way of life was to love their respective families and to love their own. This resulted in the making of distinctions and dangers, and when the people became numerous this resulted in disorder. In those days men strove to overcome each other by force, and this caused struggles and dissensions. Justice was not attained

by this means, and lives were lost. Wherefore the wise set up impartiality as against individualistic judgments and conduct, and this the people called benevolence ("ren"). Then affection and the nurture of the individual's family gave way to the promotion of the best men. The benevolent gave themselves to the practice of love. The best men thought the right way of life was to try to excel each other and so the multitude of the people had no government, and thus in the course of time there was again confusion. Then the sages gave their attention to land and wealth and the separation between the sexes. But distinctions without government are impracticable and so they prescribed prohibitions. Wherefore they set up officials, but when there were officials unity became necessary and so sovereigns were set up. Then the promotion of the most capable was set aside in favour of honouring those of high rank. . . . Thus each system in turn replaces the previous one. . . . What people regard as important changes, and as the age changes so the right way to act varies."

"When the ancients had not sovereigns and ministers, rulers and subjects, the people were in confusion and there was no government and so the sages made the distinctions between the noble and the lowly. They established grades, stipends and ranks. They appointed titles to distinguish between the idea of sovereign and of minister, ruler and subject. When the land became extensive and the people numerous then appeared irregularities and conspiracies; wherefore laws were established that standards might be fixed. Thus came about the idea of sovereign and minister, the distinction between the various departmental officials and the limitations fixed by law." ("On Sovereigns and Ministers").

This was quite a favorite theme of Han Fei Tse, from whose writings we will now give several extracts:

"In the most ancient times when men were few and beasts many and men could not overcome the beasts and reptiles, the sages invented nest-like buildings in the trees where they could escape all harm and danger. The people were delighted and made these sages the rulers of the Earth. . . . Then again the people ate raw fruit and gourds which sometimes went rotten and upset their stomachs so that many were ill; wherefore the sage invented fire so that they could cook their food. The people were delighted and made him ruler. In the Middle-Ancient times the Earth was covered

with water, and then Kuen and Yu confined the streams within their banks. In the Later-Ancient times Chieh and Cheo were tyrannical and violent and T'ang and Wu suppressed them. In the days of Hsia had one constructed nest-like houses, Kuen and Yu would have regarded it as a joke. In the times of Yin and Chow if one had built dykes, T'ang and Wu would have laughed. So, too, those who now praise the way of Yao and Shun, Tang, Wu and Yu as suited to the present time must be laughed at by the sages of today. Thus the sages are not ever imitating the ancients; they do not take the commonplace as their pattern, but having regard to the time are ever trying to perfect things." ("Five Kinds of Maggots").

In the following passage Han Fei expounds a materialistic—not to say an economic—interpretation of history, which should endear him to the Marxian:

"In ancient times, without the labour of men the herbs and trees produced food to eat, and though the women did not weave, the animals provided pelts for clothes; without any expenditure of effort there was sufficient for their needs, for the people were few and products abundant. Consequently people did not struggle with each other; without heavy rewards and severe punishments the people themselves maintained order. But now if a man has five sons it is not considered many, thus in his own lifetime a man may have twenty-five grandchildren. So now the population is great and produce scanty, and after much effort men have not enough for their needs; wherefore there is strife and thus rewards are increased and punishments multiplied and yet disorder cannot be avoided. . . . When Yu ruled the empire he first seized the plough before the people and himself worked the hair off his legs. . . . today no servant would toil like that. . . . Today one of those emperors would find the duties of a country magistracy beyond him. . . . In the spring when food is scarce a farmer may not adequately feed his own children, in the autumn when food abounds he may entertain distant guests. It is not that he is indifferent to his flesh and blood and loves passing strangers; the difference is one of scarcity and plenty. Thus in ancient times when they were generous with their wealth that was not a sign of benevolence but of abundance, and today when there is strife and theft that is not a sign of moral depravity but of scarcity. . . . Light punishments do not connote compassion, nor severe ones cruelty; the lightness or severity should depend on circumstances

...King Wen practised benevolence and justice ("ren i") and obtained the imperial throne; King Yen practised benevolence and justice and lost his state." (ibid.)..

Before concluding this chapter we may note that the idea of adapting the government to varying conditions was treated by Yin Wen Tse in a somewhat broader and more humane manner than by the typical Legalists. In the brief fragment attributed to him occurs the following: "When the 'tao' is not sufficient to give good government, then law must be used; when the law is not effective, policy (shu) must be used; when policy fails to give good government, force must be used; but when force has been used there must be a return to authority and then to law, and then again to 'tao'; and when this has been attained, without assertion on the part of the rulers, good government will exist of itself."

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

- I The Logic of Discovery
 - II What is the Place of Postulate Systems in the Further Progress of Thought?
 - III On the Nature of Systems of Postulates
 - IV Concerning the Postulational Treatment of Empirical Truth
 - V The Structure of Exact Thought
 - VI The Notion of Doctrinal Function
 - VII Hypothesis Growing into Veritable Principle
 - VIII What is Reasoning?
 - IX The Larger Human Worth of Mathematics
- Index

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