

*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

JUNE, 1931

←————→  
VOLUME XLV      NUMBER 901

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Wieboldt Hall, 339 East Chicago Avenue  
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Spectroheliogram of the sun showing calcium flocculi

*Frontispiece to The Open Court.*

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## THE EPIC OF THE SUN<sup>1</sup>

BY J. V. NASH

Through silent fields of cosmic space  
The flaming sun in youthful splendor rolled  
Alone, no planets round it circling,  
While other suns on far horizons went their distant ways.  
Thus countless aeons passed, unconscious all,  
At last another solar presence,  
From out the depths of this our lens-shaped galaxy,  
Rolled slowly onward toward the precincts of our sun.  
On came, through thousand centuries, this second sun,  
Not near approaching, but swinging by the solar orb  
Still many million miles away.  
And as it passed, great tidal waves began to surge  
Upon the agitated face of this our mother sun.

Higher and higher heaved the flaming waves,  
Until two mammoth arms of fiery solar stuff,  
Spiral shaped, with knotlike nuclei, on either side  
Leaped out into surrounding space.  
Out, out, they rushed, in answer to the call  
Of that far-distant passing star.  
But then our sun, like yearning parent,  
Restrained the fleeing children of its breast.  
The other sun, now drifting far away, released its pull;  
The knotlike nuclei of planetesimals, gathering into planets,  
Responded to the call of their maternal sun.  
But Nature's laws of motion and dynamics  
Decreed that they should ne'er return

<sup>1</sup>For reading the manuscript of these verses and offering valuable criticisms and suggestions, the writer is indebted to Dr. F. R. Moulton, eminent astronomer and co-discoverer of the Planetesimal hypothesis.

Into the cosmic womb from whence they sprang,  
 But that they should, for million aeons,  
 Each in its separate orbit circle round the sun.

Thus was born our planetary family.  
 Children nine there are: Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars,  
 A waste of space, thick strewn with planetoids,  
 Then giant Jupiter, then Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune,  
 Circling in the distant voids.  
 And e'en beyond dim Neptune's orbit,  
 Long hidden in the outer deeps, the planet Pluto,  
 Now newly seen and named by man.  
 Round some, attendant moons in orbits wheel:  
 One round Earth and two round Mars,  
 Nine each round Jupiter and Saturn,  
 Four round Uranus and one round Neptune.  
 Saturn, too, a mysterious ring of dust encircles  
 Above the equatorial belt.

And in and out among the planets wander comets—  
 Strange, erratic, cosmic wayfarers;  
 Yet each in separate orbit held.  
 A fiery head, with fanlike, gaseous, glowing tail,  
 Each circles round the blazing sun,  
 Then dashes back toward depths of space abysmal,  
 Its tail reversed and slowly disappearing.  
 The passage of a comet's orbit oft consumes  
 Of years some hundreds and e'en thousands.  
 Whence come these comets?  
 They, too, are children of our sun,  
 Born of its internal fires,  
 Without the aid of any distant passing star.  
 Great storms that rage upon the solar disk  
 Throw flaming gaseous matter out into the void.  
 This, cooling, condenses into swarming grains  
 Of elemental stuff, called chondrulites,  
 Which wander off to distant bounds of space,  
 Where radiation from the stars and solar pull  
 Thrust them backward toward the sun in ceaseless cycles.  
 From chondrulitic wastage come the meteors

Or "falling stars," which flame across the sky,  
And meteorites, those bits of cosmic substance,  
Which now and then descend upon the earth.

Meanwhile, what of this our earthly sphere?  
Age after age it moved along its orbit,  
Ingathering scattered stuff strewn in its path;  
Thus slowly grew by planetesimals' infall  
Until it reached its present size,  
At least two billion years ago.  
Oxygen and hydrogen, occluded in its rocky core,  
Escaping and uniting in proportion one to two,  
Formed oceans vast of water, while above  
The lithosphere and hydrosphere a blanket soft  
Of air—an atmosphere—was slowly formed.

Behold at last the earth a fit abode for life,  
Sustained by light and heat from parent sun.  
In shallow pools where land meets sea,  
And tides wash in and out,  
Came gentle stirrings of a vital force.  
The plants were first, in simple forms, then animals.  
So now began the slow and painful march,  
From low amoeba through the fish and reptile,  
And the long ascent of mammals,  
To Pithecanthropus, Sinanthropus, Neanderthaler,  
Men of Heidelberg and Piltdown,  
And well-shaped folk of Cro-Magnon,  
When Europe's mighty ice-sheet melted and retreated.

Through war and travail, drought and famine,  
Disease, and superstition's grisly clutch,  
Onward struggled mankind, falling but to rise again—  
To rise above that Nature red in tooth and claw  
Out of which it came to conscious life:  
Its choicest spirits in the van, with eyes intent  
On far-off goals, and the sunrise of a newer day,  
When man will be in truth the lord of earth,  
Incarnate spirit, ruled by law of love,  
The secret aim of Evolution's pulsing urge,  
From clash of passing suns to man's millennium.

## SOME REASONS FOR THE POPULARITY OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

BY SWAMI DHIRANANDA

SIR Edwin Arnold did a great service to India and also to the English speaking nations of the world when he brought out his unique translation of the Bhagavad-Gita, the most popular religio-philosophical poem of that country written in Sanskrit. As a Scripture the poem may not have for the orthodox Hindus exactly the same antiquity and authority as the Vedas, which are Sruti (revelation), but its outstanding position as the most reliable Smriti (tradition) making a powerful and sweeping appeal to the head and heart of the nation, has remained unchallenged for more than twenty-five hundred years. Many are the languages, castes and customs of the Hindus but there is only *one* Bhagavad-Gita for them all, literate and illiterate. Quote to them a fragment from the sacred dialogue contained in the book and you will know from their reaction that you have touched the pulse of their highest spiritual aspirations. What is the secret of influence throughout the ages of this little book of only seven hundred verses when there are so many imposing volumes of sacred literature scarcely known to the masses by their names?

We will not here undertake the task, by its nature practically hopeless, of establishing with scholarly certainty the authorship of the book or the date of its composition, except to mention a few conclusions. Most Orientalists of the East and West agree that the Gita was known before the second century B.C.; some say, however, for instance, Radhakrishnan, that it was current probably in its earliest form in the fifth century B. C., while a few go as far back as a thousand years B.C.! The eminent scholar Professor Goldstucker has definitely proved that Panini,<sup>1</sup> the great gram-

<sup>1</sup>Bankim Chatterji, *Krishna Charitra*. Bhandarkar places Panini in the seventh century B. C.



marian flourished before Buddha, i.e. sixth century B.C. And Panini writes of Arjuna and Krishna (the principal characters of the Gita) as objects of worship (5.3.98). From this it appears that before Panini lived the Krishna-cult had had time to definitely crystallize itself and draw many followers to it. In the Gita, as we shall see, we find that crystallization: Krishna is worshiped therein as Deity Himself. Some scholars following this line of reasoning and strengthening it with other facts think that it is not improbable that the Gita was composed before Panini, i.e. before the sixth century B. C.

Another point to be remembered is that the Gita never mentions Buddha (sixth century B.C.), or Buddhistic religion or thought in any shape or manner, though other important systems of thought or schemes of discipline are referred to in the book. If Buddhism was a powerful religion, which it must have been, assuming the status of a state religion within about two centuries from the death of its founder, it seems plausible that it would find some mention in the Gita, the most unique book of the period, if the Gita was written later. Though argument from silence is unconvincing, nevertheless one is thus led to suspect that the Gita was written before Buddha, i.e. before the sixth century B. C. The word *Brahmanirvana*<sup>2</sup>—the only word savoring of Buddhism—is now well known as having a Vedantic significance and not at all a Buddhistic one.

Telang in the *Sacred Books of the East* (edited by Max Muller) after a searching examination of facts, however, arrives at a conservative conclusion. He says that the Gita stands between the age of the Upanishads and that of later classical Sanskrit literature and hence must have been written earlier than the third century B. C., though it is altogether impossible to say at present how much earlier.

Tilak<sup>3</sup> concludes from internal evidences that the Gita, which occurs in the *Bhishma Parva* (sixth canto) of the great epic *Mahabharat*, formed a genuine part of its earliest and original structure and was not a later interpolation in its text. There are many of course who challenge this statement. On the opposite extreme, however, we have scholars, who blind to the consideration of history and marked doctrinal differences, have gone to the unjustifiable length

<sup>2</sup>Gita 2.72; 5.24, 25; 6.15.

<sup>3</sup>See Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*

in asserting that the Gospels influenced the tone and character of the Bhagavad-Gita. That this is not true will appear later from our discussion of its tenets.

The Gita embodies the philosophical and practical counsels which Lord Krishna gave to his friend and disciple, Arjuna, at the battlefield of Kurukshetra when the latter was dejected at the sight of his friends and relatives present in the contending armies and was unwilling to fight for the righteous cause which he espoused after due deliberation and years of unjust and compulsory suffering. Amidst other things in the first chapter we hear the sounds of trumpets, conch-shells and many other martial noises; we also hear the agonized utterances of the divided-self of Arjuna but as the poem proceeds the drama disappears and the din of the battlefield fades into the distance and we are left alone with a God solemnly and yet lovingly talking to a resigned man of the highest problems of conduct and metaphysics. The elaborate dialogue may not have been an actual occurrence on the field of battle, but at a grave crisis like this, pertinent instructions on morality and philosophy, verbally or "psychically" imparted, were perfectly in order, especially in India; and it was these that were probably expanded into the present form of the Gita.

The charm of the Gita lies in its simplicity, brevity and profundity, all worked into a beautiful scheme of salvation that fastens man's attention more to the here and now. Do actions, perform your duties, as determined by nature within (dharma—the law of your being 3.33-35)<sup>4</sup> and circumstances without—perform them with wisdom, inner aloofness and devotion to the Lord.<sup>5</sup> He will accept your homage and ferry you over the turbulent sea of samsara (worldly existence) to the shore of eternal peace which is Himself.<sup>6</sup> This plan is simple and yet profound. It is within the reach of all, the lettered and the unlettered, the pious and the sinner.<sup>7</sup> It appeals to the heart and yet exercises intellectual, intuitive and active powers that go to make up a whole man. Hence its immediate acceptance is inevitable. Abstruse philosophical concepts were given before in India by the sages, but they must have had

<sup>4</sup>Gita 2.31-33 (see also 3.45)

<sup>5</sup>Gita 2.38; 3.30; 5.10; 9.27-28.

<sup>6</sup>Gita 12.7

<sup>7</sup>Gita 9.30, 32, 33

a chilling effect on the average man; ritualistic subtleties were followed and paraded with pomp and grandeur, but they turned by and by into a dead weight of routine, a weight which the priests bore for profit and the masses tolerated because they did not know better. So when a message like Gita's was given out that was not logic-chopping in philosophy but an attempt to maintain, all the same, logical consistency and clarity in the exposition of its themes, a message that did not become drowned under the many voices of a vast volume of Scriptural injunctions but like a clear bell rang out its truth through only 700 verses, a message that minimized the importance of ritualism and stressed personal piety in thought and conduct, a message that gave God to all and did not reserve Him for the elect few—it is no wonder that when a message of this sort was preached, India's heart was set on fire. Even to this day the flame of devotion for that book is noticeable everywhere.

The unique speaker of the Gita has a great deal to do with its popularity. There is no more elusive and interesting personality in Indian prehistoric times than Krishna. Krishna is an enigma from the standpoint of critical history and from that of personality. There are quite a few Krishnas, the scholars<sup>8</sup> say; how or whether they are related to one another none knows for certain. Krishna was the name of a Vedic seer, the composer of a Vedic hymn (Rig-Veda 8.74). There was a non-Aryan chief by the name of Krishna ready with a large army to fight Indra (Rig-Veda 8.96. 13-15). We come across a Krishna in the Chhandyogya Upanishad 3.17.6, but nothing is said about him except that he was the son of Devaki and a great pupil of the sage Ghora Angirasa. Most probably that is the same Krishna that we are interested in, in our present studies.

The philosophical colorfulness of the Krishna-cult, however, does not become manifest until the Pancharatra or Bhagavad religion begins after the Upanishad age to work upon it to supply a personal God for the masses and identifies Krishna with the god Vishnu of the Vedas (Rig-Veda 1.155.5) and of the Upanishads (Katha 1.3,9). In the latter, the place of Vishnu is spoken of as the abode of the Highest Reality. The Krishna-Vasudeva-Vishnu-cult starts to bloom in full splendour not so much perhaps in the earlier strata of the great epic Mahabharat as in its later strata.

<sup>8</sup>See Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*

There we find Krishna, the son of Devaki, with his remarkably versatile and in a way enigmatic personality. He is a powerful king, great warrior, world-famous statesman, genuine lover, sincere friend, an exalted champion of truth and virtue, keenest philosopher and—to a few possessing insight—incarnation of the Deity.

The author of the Gita-Vyasa or whoever it was, as there are some doubts as to the authenticity of the authorship—could not use Krishna to a better advantage for popular benefit than when he made him the principal speaker of the divine discourse. Whether the discourse fell from the lips of Krishna himself we do not know, as historical accuracy is a very slippery thing in ancient Indian writing. We like to think that it did, and probably it did. Be that as it may, there is no doubt about the fact that the speaker was a great spiritual genius having the power and vision which only inspired souls possess—if we are to judge from the character of the book itself. However we find that Krishna, who in the Great Epic mainly played the role of an exalted hero and only sometimes that of the incarnation of the Deity and sometimes also that of the Supreme Deity in person (the last two roles under especial circumstances), we find in the Gita that Krishna is completely and without reservation identified with Vishnu or the Deity Himself. The Krishna-cult put off its swaddling clothes which it wore before and is as it were invested in the Gita with kingly robe, staff and crown. The most perfect hero and God Himself the speaker! That is an added reason why the Gita is stamped with such authority in popular minds in India.

Sorrow starts, as a rule, the quest for salvation. Pessimism, whether in its fretful form as in Schopenhauerian outlook or in its cold analytic form as in Buddhist thought, may not be the final attitude of a philosopher, but there is no denying the fact that sorrows and sufferings of the world have often moved great minds to seize great truths. Arjuna's sorrow was the prelude to a perpetual smile that helped philosophy and man.

The tears of Arjuna, in the first chapter of the Gita, were however shed not because the world was unkind to him. His sorrow arose out of his troubled conscience, his disturbed mind, the mind that leaned toward affection but was not able to take in the cosmic view of things which Krishna was to inject into him later. He was torn by a conflict of motives, though the one side of the

conflict is hardly mentioned in the Gita. How could he take part in the war that would mean the destruction of his near and dear ones and those whom he respected? Life was not worth living without them. This is the human and sentimental aspect of one side of the conflict. Furthermore, killing is a sin, especially killing one's own friends and relatives, a sin which brings other sins in its train. This is the religious aspect. The other side of the inner conflict, implied rather than expressed in the Gita, present in Arjuna's mind subconsciously, is as follows: How could he, a prince of the warrior caste whose duty it was to protect virtue refuse to take part in the war that was for a righteous cause, a war that he did not bring on himself, but which he tried his best to prevent, a war which his ambitious and crooked cousins welcomed avidly? And who were they but those who trickily deprived him and his brothers of all inheritance even after the latter showed unbounded patience and consideration? So the inner conflict is between personal affection and religious scruple in killing on the one hand, and personal claim and religious duty of caste on the other. So it has a personal issue and a religious issue. However, to a religious mind like Arjuna's the personal issue with its elements of affection and claim takes a strong religious hue and becomes finally blended with the religious issue: that is, it is religiously wrong to kill relatives and superiors and again it is religiously wrong not to engage in a righteous war. If it were not for this mental conflict on the religious plane it is quite improbable that a manly hero of Arjuna's calibre could have felt the depth of unmanly sorrow that he did on the eve of the battle.

Further if it is said that Arjuna's sorrow was not due to any inner conflict but purely and simply because of the thought of killing his relatives and committing a sin, it may be remarked in reply that there is no sorrow in the world that does not arise out of some conflict: sorrow invades us when we have what we do not want to have or when we do not have what we want to have—physically, mentally and spiritually.

Arjuna's sorrow is more than a shedding of private tears. It has a wider appeal because of its deep significance. His sorrow is the symbol of the sorrow of any struggling aspirant. The poignant drama of any devotee's life is derived from divided loyalties, as between affection and duty, the lower and the higher, the immediate

ideal he lives and the grander ideal he dimly senses and unconsciously longs to reach. So this sorrow strikes a psychological note that finds an echo not only in the Hindu devotee for whom the book was written but also in all those that are travelling the moral and spiritual path.

Arjuna was so depressed that he slumped down on the floor of his chariot and tearfully said to his friend, the charioteer, Lord Krishna: "I will not fight. I would rather live the life of a beggar than fight and kill and be victorious and have all the kingdom of the earth." This sounds like a noble philosophy worthy of the great soul that Arjuna was, but Krishna showed him later that this seeming wisdom on his part did not arise from a dispassionate appraisal of all values and all sides of the question but was caused by a form of mental weakness or depression which should be consequently rejected. Even the noblest and most religious resolution that is born of spineless sentimentality and biased judgment is not the sign of true wisdom, which is always begotten of strength and superior nonchalance. Krishna pointed out that the soul is imperishable, it can never be killed even though the bodies of soldiers are killed in the war. He was not however advocating war for the sake of war, but for the sake of righteousness. He was not a believer in "peace at any price"—at the price of justice, self-respect, righteousness. Nor was he advocating the killing of affection, but that attachment that shackles the soul and distorts judgment. He also pointed out that Arjuna should be faithful to the law of his being, to his duty as a warrior and champion of virtue. It was *in* Arjuna to do all these so he could not and should not get away from these.<sup>9</sup>

The eventual complete self-surrender<sup>10</sup> of Arjuna to his friend and guide, Krishna, at his hour of bewilderment and his whole-hearted willingness to obey whatever he advised was an illustration of the age-old attitude of an Indian chela (disciple) to the guru (preceptor), hence so stimulating to the Indian imagination.

The Gita can be said to be an attempt at synthesis and synopsis of the best of what preceded in India in philosophy and religion. This is another reason for its influence with the followers of all the schools of thought that were represented in the book.

<sup>9</sup>Gita 2.31-33

<sup>10</sup>Gita 2.7

On the philosophical side, the Gita represents, notwithstanding what some of the scholars may say to the contrary, a reconciliation—the best of its kind—that can possibly be effected under the circumstances between Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga philosophies that were contending for intellectual supremacy in certain minds at that time. This reconciliation or synthesis between the three systems is not so much on the plane of logic (though it is partly so) as that of life—the life of the Spirit, the life of realization and of intuition which Gita and other literature of India extol so much. It is the dictum of Eastern philosophy, especially Vedanta, that speculative thought can never satisfactorily solve the ultimate problem of the relation between God, world and soul, and so if Gita, following that tradition, wanted to establish a harmony between some widely differing or contradictory concepts of the three systems, it could only do so, not on the plane of thought or argument, but on that of cosmic intuition where Truth is supposed to reconcile all contradictions. Gita's eclectic metaphysic which is dogmatic and not based on arguments and which apparently claims infallibility has either to be supported on this view, or taken as a possible independent gesture at truth having no reconciliatory merit except in the patching up with divergent details. Not considering the Gita's place in history characterized as it was by the custom of making simple and authoritative statements without logical elaboration of their foundation, Gita withholds from giving arguments, it may be conjectured, probably because arguments can be challenged and their force weakened if tested by axioms of the inferior logic-plane or because giving arguments would detract from the infinite dignity of the supreme God who is supposed instead to make only straightforward assertions about profound truths. Whether the grand scheme of reality arrived at by cosmic intuition, which the author or the speaker of the Gita must have possessed, is possible of logical verification the Gita does not say nor can its critics perhaps speculatively gainsay.

Gita takes the idealistic monism of the Vedanta that there is One Reality<sup>11</sup> and yet does not say that the world is maya or illusion in the sense that it does not exist (as some scholars falsely interpret maya to mean). The world is, but it is entirely dependent upon that Reality. 13.13,27. The Reality is not buried in the world but rather

<sup>11</sup>Gita 7.7

the world is Its insignificant aspect 10.42. Gita takes the Vedantic position that the soul within us is the same as the Brahma<sup>12</sup> (Spirit) and yet seems to give some concession to Sankhya philosophy when it says that from Brahma come many souls,<sup>13</sup> though really they are not many (which Sankhya believes they are) as there is One Reality. Creation is caused from unconscious prakriti (primordial nature), it being stimulated to conscious activity by its proximity to Purusha (Spirit)<sup>14</sup>—this is merely a grafting of the scheme of Sankhya (which denies Absolute Spirit or Brahma) on the scheme of Advaita (monistic) Vedanta that takes care of creative activity through the hypothesis of aparavidya. The unintelligent pradhana (prakriti of Sankhya) is thus accommodated by conscious Intelligence, Brahma (of Vedanta) in the Gita. The three gunas of Sankhya were pressed into service for supplying the constituent modes of being and also for affording a basis of classification of many mental, moral and spiritual states of man.<sup>15</sup> Gita's theory of detailed evolution of the world is according to Sankhya scheme, also is its theory that the three gunas composing prakriti or primordial nature are the real workers, and the soul is free, actionless. "Those who realize this distinction go to the Cosmic Lord"—this however is Vedanta of the Vishishtadwaita type,<sup>16</sup> and not a Sankhya proposition.

There is maintained in the book a tentative dualism<sup>17</sup> of matter and spirit (Sankhya's dualism being absolute in a sense) which is overcome beautifully with one stroke by passages of idealistic theism in chapter 7 verses 4 and 5 and in chapter 15 verse 18. The para prakriti (self-conscious spiritual principle resident in creation) and apara prakriti<sup>18</sup> (creation with its constituent elements and beings), corresponding to two substances or categories akshara (imperishable) and kshara<sup>19</sup> (perishable) are pointed out in the Gita to be the two aspects of Purushottam, the Supreme Purusha or Lord, who in a sense is beyond both. We meet with another word, kutastha, in that connection. We believe that kutastha (another name for

<sup>12</sup>Gita 13. 2, 22, 31; 15.7 (according to Ramanuja)

<sup>13</sup>Gita 13.30; 15.7

<sup>14</sup>Gita 9.10; 13.26, 33; 14.3.

<sup>15</sup>Gita 17.4—22; 18.19—39

<sup>16</sup>Gita 14.19

<sup>17</sup>Gita 13.20

<sup>18</sup>Gita 7.4-5

<sup>19</sup>Gita 15.16



akshara or para prakriti—the imperishable self-conscious spiritual principle of the universe) which any one would like to identify with Supreme Purusha or Lord God, is added to and yet kept separate by a hair's breadth as it were from Supreme Purusha or Lord, ostensibly with the purpose of satisfying the orthodox philosophic mind who wants an impersonal Absolute, by according this old philosophical concept of *kutastha* an honorable position and also satisfying the devotee's mind who wants a personal God, by establishing its connection with and apparent subordination to the theistic concept (i.e. Supreme Purusha, Lord God). This further proves that theism<sup>20</sup> is the last word of religious philosophy in the Gita, and though there are rigid monistic utterances in the book they are thought to be in harmony with the former without any need of further argument. Which is the final truth—theism or abstract monism, a personal God or an impersonal Absolute—is a question which only the cosmic intuition of great sages, the intuition that refuses to be imprisoned in language, can perhaps answer only privately. But somehow or other many sages including the author of the Gita feel<sup>21</sup> that they are justified in saying that God is both personal and impersonal, as we ordinarily understand these words, at the same time and in the same breath. Thus they seem to imply that in transcendental matters, which are beyond logic, they can take liberty with logic and with impunity contradict the logical Axiom of Contradiction. The Axiom of Contradiction says that a thing can never be its diametrically opposite at the same moment. But in the opinion of the Gita and other Scriptures it appears that that is possible: God can be both personal and impersonal at the same time and in the same breath. Whereas there are others who are suspicious of all language and intellectual concepts. They declare that God is neither personal nor impersonal; He can only be described as "not this", "not this".

The concept of God that we find in the Gita is of a more comprehensive kind than the concept of God as given in Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy.<sup>22</sup> With Patanjali, God<sup>23</sup> is merely a special kind

<sup>20</sup>Theistic leaning—Gita 18.56 etc.

<sup>21</sup>13.14

<sup>22</sup>And this without undertaking to establish the anteriority of either the Gita or Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy. If the Gita is prior, which most evidences tend to show it is, Patanjali's concept of God may be well supposed to have been prevalent then in some circles.

<sup>23</sup>Patanjali 1.24-26

of Self or Purusha, Immortal, Omniscient, uncontaminated by space, time or samskara, Teacher of ancient teachers. But it was not mentioned by him as to whether God is the creator, or whether He pervades and holds everything and every being in his unmanifested form. This position Gita, however, states explicitly and it is a more satisfactory concept of God than Patanjali's 7.7; 9.4-6. Whether Patanjali's position is due to his lack of explicitness or deliberate omission because of his different philosophical view of God cannot be told. The scholars think, and perhaps justly, that the latter alternative is true. However, this has not been the case with all Yogi Philosophers since or before, as some of them seem to have held views similar to Gita's.

The author of the Gita has thus picked out different concepts from previous fields of philosophy and gathered and built them into one magnificent superstructure in his own way, but he has not attempted to fortify his steps or conclusions with any impenetrable wall of logic. There are gaps left in thought, and sometimes the same words are used at different places in such a way as to admit of different interpretations. For instance, the words jnana and yoga are employed without any warning sometimes to signify jnana method and yogic method and sometimes the goal or the perfected state of jnana and yoga. Further when Gita deals with a particular train of thought or subject of discourse it lays exclusive emphasis on its elaboration without always trying, according to a system, to link it up with or fit it into other trains of thought or subjects of discourse. Also, the ultimate synthesis, as we pointed out before, is left to be made not on the plane of logic, but on that of the highest religious experience. These are some of the reasons why the Gita has yielded to so many interpretations at the hands of the greatest Indian philosophers of every age. Any book that can thus stimulate the brilliant minds of history and impel them to unravel its meaning and make it a support of their systems must have some uniqueness and some claim to popularity.

On the religious side, the Gita has carried over to its age the spirit of the Upanishads. The spirit of "upasana" (worship) has become devotion (bhakti) in the Gita and is emphasized. Hunger for Reality is manifest in the messages of both, only the philosophic exclusiveness of the Upanishads has given place to a cos-

mopolitan inclusion in the Gita. It was the thinker-devotee that was entitled to brahmajñana, (knowledge of God), now even the sinners and people occupying lower strata of society<sup>24</sup> were promised salvation. Brahma was a stupendous Reality, awesome in Its transcendence and elusive in Its immanence, but now in the Gita Brahma has become the God of love. The cry of the masses was answered by the author of the Gita with a gift of the God of the heart. Some of the thin abstractions that had satisfied the Upanishad philosophers had to be replaced by a concrete Reality for the benefit of the average man. Though the Gita is a philosophic poem, its appeal is popular. Its composition was thus an answer to a vital need of society.

The Gita is cautious in its boldness. It wants to strike out new paths and yet not offend the past. In the stronghold of orthodoxy it has the courage to say that the revealed Vedas, the most sacred Scriptures of the Hindus, deal with (or may we say, are contaminated by) three gunas (substantive aspects of Nature, which are inferior to the soul), "Be thou free, O Arjuna, from the triad of gunas."<sup>25</sup> yet it does not definitely ask people to look upon old sacrificial acts of Vedas as worthless and specifically turn away from them. It rather encourages rites and ceremonial actions according to injunctions of Scriptures. It wants to retain them for those that may be benefited by them and at the same time point out the higher method. The Gita takes old orthodox concepts and breathes into them a larger and stronger life. Ceremonial sacrifice (jajna) is enlarged in its connotation to include any act done to the glory of God<sup>26</sup> or for the sake of liberation.<sup>27</sup> Renunciation (sannyasa, tyaga) which to many originally meant giving up *all* actions, means for Gita eschewing only attachment to fruits of action and maddening thirst for them. 18.3, 5, 6. The caste system was taken for granted and tolerated, and yet there is no mention of the caste being determined by birth but rather that it is governed by "merit and action."<sup>28</sup>

Gita's observation on Vedas and caste must have satisfied the

<sup>24</sup>Gita 9.30, 32

<sup>25</sup>Gita 2.45 Subordinate position of the Vedas accorded in 2.46; 6.44

<sup>26</sup>3.9; 4.23 (According to commentators, Sankar, Madhusudan, Sridharswami)

<sup>27</sup>4.24-32

<sup>28</sup>Gita 4.13; 18.41-44.

liberal non-conformist element in the community whose worthy mouthpiece appeared later in the person of Buddha who disregarded the authority of the Vedas and abolished caste altogether. The liberal tone of the Gita shows that it must have been composed either at a time when "modernistic" ideas came to be regarded as not too revolutionary as the faintly heard rumbles of new religious demands presaged the later rising of a reforming faith like Buddha's or when a certain sensible adjustment of social and religious ideas within the pale of Hinduism became a necessity for its own preservation after the storm of early Buddhism blew over, tearing away many of the Hindu believers. The first alternative seems to be correct, as the Gita seems to give more the impression of certain spontaneity of expression than it would give if written under any circumstantial pressure.

For the ordinary seeker of religious life Gita has attempted a synthesis of four traditional paths to the supreme goal (1) the path of discrimination (path of jnana), the path of knowledge involving analysis and integration from plain and practical concepts to the highest and most fugitive philosophical ones, the path of following an impersonal Absolute;<sup>29</sup> (2) the path of devotion, love and worship (path of bhakti), of prayer to a personal God, the Lord, not so much characterized by intellectual hair-splitting;<sup>30</sup> (3) the path of energetic action (path of karma), of ceremonial sacrifice, of duty and service in the name of the Lord, neither marked so much by intellectual acrobatics nor by the irresistible overflow of the heart's feelings as in the second path,<sup>31</sup> (4) the path of meditation (dhyana yoga or abhyasa yoga<sup>32</sup>), a whole-hearted plunge into the contemplation of the soul, mystic syllables as Om or of inner psychic facts and experiences; control of one's own recalcitrant nature through a rigid course of discipline, with the help of definite psycho-physical methods (as breathing etc.). There were times in India when many people were exclusive followers of one or the other of these paths.<sup>33</sup> But an ordinary man, no

<sup>29</sup>Gita 3.3; 4.24, 25, 27, 38; 9.15

<sup>30</sup>Gita 8.22; 9.13, 14.26, 27, 34; 10.8; 11.54, 55; 14.26

<sup>31</sup>Gita 3.3, 4, 5.

<sup>32</sup>Gita 4.29; 5.27; 6.10-32, 35; 8.8, 10, 12, 13, 28; 12.9.

<sup>33</sup>Some recognize in the Gita only the first three paths, the path of knowledge, the path of devotion and the path of action, identifying the fourth one, the path of dhyana-yoga or abhyasa-yoga, either with the first or with

matter how much he wants to tread exclusively the path of his choice, cannot help crossing other paths at times. For him to be, for instance, a strict philosopher and a mute devotee of the impersonal Absolute and not at times of mental stress to feel a yearning to pray to a personal God for protection or love, is difficult, if not impossible. One cannot always be a stoic or absolutist in the sense of a cold calculating juggler with abstract concepts, positing an august Reality that is indifferent to the cries of the human heart. That is what some of the jnanis in India (the followers of the first path) practically made themselves to be.

The author of the Gita seems to be aware of the psychological needs of humanity. The above four paths may be said roughly to correspond to the four faculties of human nature: the path of knowledge to the faculty of thinking, that of devotion, to the faculty of feeling, that of action to the faculty of willing, that of dhyana and abhayasa yoga to the faculty of intuition.<sup>34</sup> The implication of the Gita is that religion, rather than starve or suppress the above four natural faculties, would encourage them and tend and feed them on the pasture of God. As God is the reconciliation of highest ideals, so true religion is the harmony and proportionate development of all our faculties. Man can not do without thinking any more than he can do without feeling, willing or intuiting, hence the plan of four paths that is given to him by Gita, thus encouraging him to exercise his four faculties in the right way, is quite a natural suggestion. But when it comes to the prescription of the degree or amount of exercise needed for each faculty in the direction of God, Gita is silent. In that matter Gita's intention has to be gathered from its scattered hints. Gita makes allowance for great diversities of human nature, the diversities that have necessarily to be moulded and shaped, each in its own way. So the fourfold attempt may lead to many permutations and combinations according to the inclination of individuals—one may energize more the third. But for the sake of clarity and to be faithful to the spirit of emphasis on yoga in its technical sense as laid by the Gita (6.10-32 etc.), separate treatment of the fourth path seems to be more than justified.

<sup>34</sup>The orthodox psychology of the West, however, does not recognize the last one, intuition, except in the sense of an ordinary form of instinct, and the reason being for this that it does not yet fully understand the mystic perceptions belonging to a different unexplored province. Consult, however, Bergson and others of intuitionist school and also recognized Christian mystics for Western treatment of intuition.

on the path of knowledge than on the path of devotion another more on the path of work or devotion than on the path of knowledge or yogic practice etc., etc. This is in line with the principle of modern pedagogy—to let the learner follow the bend of his mind rather than to force him into a particular curriculum.

The four paths meet, cross and re-cross one another very often in the Gita. In truth, there is a certain mutuality between them all. Performance of duties and selfless work without any inner psychological attachment<sup>35</sup> to results is held up as an ideal in the Gita—and this in order to purify one's own self<sup>36</sup> and to draw others to the cause of virtue by setting a good example<sup>37</sup> (the social bearing of an individualistic religion). This is karma marga (path of action). But what is the spiritual technique of work and the performance of duties? The technique is to work by being equilibrated,<sup>38</sup> by being grounded in contemplative life, to work with understanding or discrimination between self and not-self, good and bad.

If you do not meditate on inner life, nor discipline your outer and psychic forces, attachment to work, which should be avoided, will steal into you in spite of yourself and selfishness will overcome your resolve to be selfless; the aim of work will be forgotten and unhappiness will be the final outcome. Certainly, meditation is a needed corrective of the mechanical habit of work turned in many sections of the western world into a gospel without a goal. This is dhyana marga or abhyasa yoga in its narrow and technical sense (the path of meditation).

But mystic meditation is to be coupled with and helped by the attitude of discrimination in and dispassion for everything.<sup>39</sup> Also, the objects of meditation are often furnished by inner philosophic discrimination e.g., the concepts of the imperishableness of soul, transcendence and immanence of God, the severing of identification between soul and body etc., etc. These and such-like concepts have to be known through study of Scriptures and from teachers and firmly fixed in the mind by daily, nay hourly effort. This is jnana marga (the path of knowledge). But knowledge can truly be established through perfection in yogic discipline and contempla-

<sup>35</sup>Gita 3.19; 18.5, 6

<sup>36</sup>Gita 5.11

<sup>37</sup>Gita 3.20

<sup>38</sup>Gita 2.48, 50

<sup>39</sup>Gita 6.35

tion 4.38. And again, yogic contemplation becomes steadfast when it is combined with knowledge. 6.8. They are interdependent.

The Gita goes farther. It says,<sup>40</sup> "Those who fixing their mind on Me (God), worship Me (God), ever steadfast endowed with supreme devotion, are the best yogis". This implies Gita's desire to combine yoga practice with love of God. It appears that without warmth of heart and strong devotion of the soul, attempts made along the other paths seem to remain incomplete. The God of love has to be approached with real love,<sup>41</sup> as love is the unction of the Infinite. This is bhakti marga (the path of devotion). The whole tone of Gita is dominated by the consideration of theistic worship<sup>42</sup> and bhakti (devotion and love) and of its combination with action, knowledge and yoga.

Thus the Gita, on its religious side, has tried to synthesize the above four ancient paths, showing the necessity of *each in a measure in the life of all*. This attitude has given sanction to all the paths and showed their mutual dependence; it is also a step to its broader outlook which we will mention in conclusion.

In the meantime let us note in passing that, even after all we have said, Gita in one passage<sup>43</sup> seems to give preference to the yogi, calling him superior to those that tread the path of action and austerities and those that stress learning, knowledge or discrimination (jnana). On the surface this looks like a contradiction of the spirit of synthesis we found in the Gita. But as a matter of fact this accords with its deeper purpose. Since yoga, not in the sense of preliminary inner perceptions but in that of *full* intuitional realization of Reality, is better than all the methods and ways, whether of action or discrimination, much the same as reaching the goal is better than going toward it. This verse does not mean however that ways of yoga or its kindergarten realizations are superior to the higher states of consciousness attained by a man of action or discrimination. It should be remarked here that in the Gita and Upanishads dhyana-yoga or abhyasa-yoga in one of its technical senses (i.e. in the sense of a means to reach the goal and not the goal itself) is closely allied to jnana-yoga and is in a way the foundation of the rest of the paths, since without a contemplative or equi-

<sup>40</sup>Gita 12.2. See also 6.47

<sup>41</sup>Gita 12.14

<sup>42</sup>Gita 11.54, 55; 8.22; 9.14, 26-29; 12.14; 18.55.

<sup>43</sup>Gita 6.46

brated state of mind (dhyana or yoga) no path mentioned in the Gita will lead very far. The highest state of knowledge and highest state of yoga are the same.<sup>44</sup>

The above verse further implies that the ability to catch intuitional glimpses of truth as thrown up to the surface of our minds while we are serving or doing our duties or deeply plunged in philosophical thoughts is better than not to have such perception and do deeds and think thoughts mechanically. The pure mysticism of Gita, a fact which has given it the name of Yoga Shastra, voices the genius and spirit of mystic India and hence establishes one more reason for its popularity in that country. Sometimes the whole of Gita is interpreted esoterically by some, signifying an inner war on the battlefield of the human body, a war between the forces of discrimination and self on the one hand and the opposing forces of senses and mind on the other.

The whole trend<sup>45</sup> of the Gita as we have pointed out, is strongly toward a reconciliation of all the above paths in the life of a devotee, a reconciliation which is more a matter of realization "in spirit" than an eclecticism "in letter", yet the Gita is not dogmatic even about that. It admits the necessity of distinctions and particular emphasis if they help and suit the devotees. It speaks in the fourth chapter, verses 24 to 29 of many forms of sacrifice or course of action adopted by different persons: Knowledge as sacrifice, sacrifice to Gods, renunciation and self-control as sacrifice, legitimate fulfilling of desires as sacrifice, ritualistic sacrifice according to Vedas, sacrifice through yogic breathing—all forms of sacrificial acts leading finally to superior knowledge and realization. In chapter 12, verses 9 to 11, it also suggests different ways to suit different capacities. So notwithstanding its eagerness to harmonize and reconcile four different paths for the sake of an average person the Gita has no intention of standardizing the moving flow of spiritual life, or putting diversified human nature in the straight-jacket of a religious scheme. Gita leaves it to the devotees to emphasize any paths or methods according to their own inclinations.

<sup>44</sup>Gita 4.35 "When thou hast this knowledge (i.e. highest knowledge) never again shalt thou thus come to delusion, O Son of Pandu; by this thou shalt see the whole of creation in thyself and then in Me." This is where jnana and yoga coalesce. Also 4.38; 6.29-31; 8.8, 28.

<sup>45</sup>18.57



This is the most unique point about the author of the Gita which we will notice now in conclusion: his spirit of universal religious tolerance and understanding of the scope and meaning of religion. Other religious leaders have claimed for themselves, either because of their own self-sufficiency or some historical necessity, the exclusive right of pointing out to their followers the *only* way to salvation. But the thunderous declaration of the divine speaker of the Gita on the other hand is "In whatever way men worship Me (God) in the same way do I fulfill their desires. My path men follow in all ways" 4.11. This is a sublime utterance and its value is supernal, and ramification infinite. Here there is no distinction between easterner and westerner, rich or poor, literate or illiterate, common folk or brilliant leaders, Christian or non-Christian religionist. In every shape or manner, in every action, religious and so-called non-religious man is treading the path that leads him to the Infinite. But man does not know that. His ignorance has been responsible for all his fetters. A pious man is on the path of God, so is a sinner; the sinner may be a little behind, but it is the path of God just the same, and because he is behind, his sufferings are perhaps a little more. His desires of sin will be fulfilled, and that, by the law of God; his desires of sin will bring their own punishment on him, and that, too, by the law of God. Then he will march forward on the path, not through the mud and mire and thorns through which it lay before and which made him suffer and bleed but through the sunny avenue of God's perfumed garden.

All religions are God's: but to say that all ways, all faiths are His, hence there is no need of quarrel, does not justify on our part any of that sickly tolerance, or better, indifference, to other people's faiths that we entertain for the sake of convenience. Allowing different religions or paths of religion to exist side by side because the goal of all religions and paths is the same, is for the Gita not based on that safe attitude of "letting the other fellow's religion alone." It has a deep psychological reason. Whether we follow this religion or that, one path or another, do this duty or that, we cannot ignore Gita's immortal advice about the following of the law of one's being. "Better is one's dharma (nature, or law of being), though imperfectly followed than that of another well-performed. He who does the duty *ordained by his own nature* incurs no evil 3.45; 18.47. In *Hamlet*, Polonius seems to have meant the same

thing when he concluded his instruction to his son by saying "Above all, to thine own self be true." One should not relinquish action (duty)<sup>46</sup> that springs from his own nature (that which is innate), imperfect though it be, 18.84. This applies to the performance of an ordinary duty as much as the following of a particular religious path. "Devoted each to his own duty man attains highest perfection." 18.45. We already spoke of Gita's technique as to how duty is to be performed and action done. All the passages quoted above mean that if one is true to his own inner nature and also to the law by which his nature operates and evolves, he is traveling a religious path, no matter what particular religious beliefs, dogmas or ways he has adopted. This is a universal message of religion and morality based on the deepest psychology of human nature and not simply on the utterances of any particular prophet. It is here that the Gita goes beyond all the paths and all the gods and teachers of the East and West and erects a superstructure of religion and morality that houses all faiths and recognizes all human diversities. "From Whom is the evolution of all beings, by Whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty, a man attains perfection."<sup>47</sup> If we are pardoned an anachronism, Gita has thus in its own singular way linked up Kant's "categorical imperative" with his "thing in itself" about which Kant prefers to be silent. Gita has tied morality to spirituality with the golden cord of psychology. Highest perfection is thus shown by it to consist in the full knowledge, expression and mastery of our own individual potentiality, and it is this individual potentiality, be it remembered, that determines to a large extent our specific line of duty and responsibility.

The philosophy of action and duty is what stands out boldly in the religious scheme of Gita. It is noteworthy that this philosophy of action was born in a tropical country whose inhabitants are condemned as inactive and lazy, and it is equally noteworthy how, due to close contact with the West, in recent years this philosophy has

<sup>46</sup>Though the orthodox commentators interpret action, dharma or duty to mean caste action, caste dharma or caste duty, there are enough hints given all through the Gita to enable us to realize that action refers to all action, not simply to caste action or caste duty. All action flows from universal prakriti or nature 5.14. This operates through the medium of our individual nature.

<sup>47</sup>18.46

discovered itself and inspired some of the greatest leaders there and is finding an outlet in their national aspirations. Conversely, it is safe to remark that, notwithstanding the fact that many in the Occident are unwilling to accept the theory of reincarnation which the Gita takes for granted, if the Gita is taken out of its otherwise orthodox setting and interpreted in modern terms and not in a patronizing or dogmatic way, it is one Scripture of the Orient that will storm the religious heart of thousands of action-loving Westerners by its dynamic message of organic life and "self"-regulated activity. Western urge for work and Christian spirit of service will find an additional technique and balance in the Gita's philosophy of dispassionate action and re-discovery of the Self.

## AN APPROACH TO GOD

BY PROFESSOR KARL SCHMIDT

THE following pages sketch an argument which is really the culmination of a whole philosophy. To present it without the columns and rafters that support it, is a hazardous enterprise. To carry it out properly would require the literary genius of a Plato, a Descartes. Yet I attempt it, if only to show that such an argument can be made today by methods designed primarily to account for our mathematics and physics.

As a general orientation may I say that my thought moves in the line of the "Great Tradition," by which I mean that fundamentally consistent mountain range of thinkers which is characterized by its high peaks: Parmenides, Heracleitos, Plato, Descartes, Leibniz, Kant. These great thinkers no doubt often seem in direct opposition to each other; yet they are fundamentally agreed, and each illuminates the others. Whatever results I have reached, can, I think, be stated in their terms and be presented as their meaning. This is particularly true for that strange doctrine of the "separation of problems" which plays an important part in my argument; Plato had it in his mind; it is the key-note in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. However these things did not dawn on me until, after a study of the great masters, I became absorbed in the work of modern logic, and the recent work on the "postulates" of mathematics. Nothing more important has happened in the history of thought than the work of these men, mathematicians and physicists, most of them, not professional philosophers. This is the background from which I view the problem of religion. I am not a theologian; I am not even very familiar with their theories; and am therefore glad to be corrected and instructed. But an approach to God is an intensely personal matter. The older Plato was quite right in saying that the exist-

ence of God could be proved; but quite wrong in thinking that all atheists should be locked up and taught by the wise men of the state until they saw the light. This forcible method would have made a confirmed atheist of me. I was brought up in a Christian Church, baptised and confirmed in it. I received instruction in the Christian religion until I was eighteen. I always listened open-mindedly and with interest. My teachers in religion were good and wise men. But long before they were through I had stopped praying, I had stopped going to church, I had stopped believing in God. When the childhood picture of God the Father left me, nothing took its place. The question: where is He, had lost all meaning when I found that He was not in the heavens. Whatever explanations were given seemed mere quibbles. My mind avidly seized upon mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology; and it did not take me long to discover that, whatever they might think they believed, these teachers of science did not believe in a God. As I developed I sensed more and more the *antagonism* between the scientific man and the man of religion: religion had been the enemy of modern science, it had, vainly it is true, but with brutal force, attempted to block the progress of scientific thinking. And I was for the men of science; their intrepidity, their honesty, their freedom from personal bias, their steadfast devotion to clarity and truth and complete disregard for any personal advantage to be gained out of their research made me align myself with them. I went to the university as a student of mathematics and natural science.

Even, some years later, after I had been irresistibly drawn to philosophy, it was the scientific problems and those of ethics, which attracted me most. When I first read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* I felt a scientist speaking to me; when I went to study with Hermann Cohen at Marburg it was his emphasis on the relation of Kant to *Newton* which impressed me most.

I am not writing an autobiography. But on some questions we cannot speak in a brief paper without stating in the beginning our personal bias.

And quite clearly my own personal experience was, on the whole, typical for most of those who went to the University thirty or forty years ago; it is still, though in the higher strata the winds are blowing in a very different direction, the frame of mind of most of us to-day. The attempt of the "humanist" school of theology to

define religion in terms which do not involve God seems significant. Let me take, for example, Professor Haydon's formulation "the joint quest for the good life."<sup>1</sup> It is clearly an attempt to save of religion what can be saved at a time when a "God" seems quite out of reach, inaccessible if existent, but most probably merely a myth, a poetical figure. The humanist school abandons God openly, honestly, sincerely; and this should command respect. It recognizes the fact that the faith of many of our educated people is corrupted or wavering; not because they do not want to believe, but because they do not see how they honestly can believe, what is presented to them by our religious leaders. "I will *show* you God and thus *prove* to you His reality," said a prominent minister to a large college audience; and then pointed to the "World," which, he said, was God's body. "And as your and my bodies have souls, why should not the World?" The speaker, it was clear, was in the clutches of a "naturalistic" philosophy; there was no reality for him except the reality of natural science. And in this, whatever their differences, he and his audience were at one. He used the "common sense" criterion: for anything to exist means: you can lay your hands on it. So, naturally, if God were to "exist," he must be "body," or at least "have" a body; and here was his body, the World! The humanist school, no doubt, feels that that kind of God is not good for much when it comes to religion; with that I agree. And as long as they have nothing better to offer, they prefer to get along with a religion that omits God altogether. Does this not leave us a noble task, they might ask? Is there not still an enterprise in which a man may enlist his best endeavors?—Yes! Yes! A proud challenge; I am all for it. But it is *ethics*, let us be clear about it, nothing less, nothing more. We may ornament it with religious poetry, it still is ethics. And if we can get no more, we will have to get along. And it is the counsel of despair; despair of any hope of finding "*room*" in this world or out of it for a God. This is our dilemma to-day. The physical sciences fill all possible space with *their* entities and their laws; and the physical sciences are triumphant. We seem to have at best the choice: cleaving to God, forsaking all physical science; or, accepting physical science, admit that the "*Götterdämmerung*" has come: a hope, a dream, a fairy tale is at last recognized for what it is: a mere myth whose historical origins we can now see clearly, whose psy-

<sup>1</sup>Haydon: *The Quest of the Ages*.

chology we begin to understand, but nevertheless a myth. And we, having at last come to the full stature of men, will put away childish things.

It does no good to insist, as some do, that science is too arrogant in its claims, which to a large extent are more like promissory notes, rather than cash payments; that it proclaims "laws," but surely cannot yet explain *everything* by its laws; and that science itself (here they want to let it be known that they are au courant in things scientific!) is in a great turmoil at present, and not as cock-sure as it was a little while ago: Newton is proved wrong to-day, (they say). Einstein may be proved wrong tomorrow. And thus the cause of religion is not yet quite hopeless!—A futile endeavor, it seems to me, to build a nest for religion in the crags and crevices of the wall which science is erecting. Think of the enormity of having one's religious needs prompt one to pray for the miscarriage of the scientific enterprise! No, if things stand as they say, let us make our choice and abide by it.

Nor does it do any good to say: a God may be mere poetry and yet be of great *benefit* to the believer. I think religious poetry and, still more, religious music, are a great asset for any civilization: no sermon ever stirred me so profoundly, and none, I believe, ever will, as an adequate performance of Bach's Mass in B minor, or Beethoven's Missa Solemnis. But this confuses the question. To say: God is mere poetry (i. e. a mere fiction), and yet say: *believe* in Him, because such believing is very beneficial for you, is something like saying to a man: No woman exists whom you can love, but *imagine* one and love her with all your heart, and it will be very beneficial for you. It is ridiculous! God *may not* exist; then do not invite people to *believe* in Him as if He existed. The philosophy of the "as if" does not apply here. No, when we begin to count up the benefits which the belief in God has brought (and, I suppose, the harm which it has wrought!), we show that the belief has *gone*; "he has not heard yet that God is *dead*."

My position is, quite simply: (1) Religion necessarily involves God. (2) Science and religion do not exclude each other: there is "*room*" for *both*. (3) My philosophy of nature not only "*permits*" God, but *demand*s Him.

I shall not spend time on the first point; I presume we would all like to agree with it, if only we could find a way to God. For that

is the important issue: does God "exist." And my argument consists of the steps enumerated above as (2) and (3): science leaves "room" for God; and science demands *God*.

My work began with a whole-hearted investigation of systems of mathematics and physics. I wanted to examine and establish their *validity*: in what does it consist, and on what does it rest? The propositions which I shall presently state were obtained to answer this kind of question, not to find a way to religion, which was then still "below the horizon." I do not establish these results in this paper. I shall have to state a few that have a direct bearing on my present problem, even though I am aware how thin and abstract they must appear to my readers. They need the background of the concrete work in Modern Logic, of the details of the investigations on the Postulates of Mathematics. But no! Fortunately I think of Professor Eddington's book *The Nature of the Physical World*, his delightful humour, his inimitable clarity and concreteness. Let him present my first point. He wants to determine the "nature" of the exact sciences. To do so he says: let us take one of the more intelligible examination questions in physics; "An elephant slides down a grassy hillside." Pray read the whole paragraph yourself (1. c. p. 251) and when you are shaking with laughter, remember that back of all this humour and madness is the clear and methodical thought of a great mathematical physicist: the special examination question is transformed, the "elephant fades out of the problem," so does the "grassy slope," until at last there emerges a *typical* problem, which is *characteristic* of physics. That it is stated in terms of "pointer-reading" is important, but irrelevant to our present purposes. Our first point appears: at the basis of our systems of mathematics, of mechanics, of physics, lie certain "*problems*" (I called them "generating problems" in an early paper),<sup>2</sup> which are *characteristic* of these sciences. The second point is that these generating problems determine the "*universes*" in which the propositions of these sciences are respectively "true"; whether they have any "truth" outside their own universe is not settled by the fact of their being true within their own universe. The third point (and here may I refer again to Eddington's book) is that problems can be "*separated*"; he does this for ethics and religion; they deal with problems which are important, but entirely *distinct*

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Studies in the Structure of Systems, No. 1, 2, 3, 4. Journal of Philosophy Vol. IX, No. 8. Vol. IX, No. 12, Vol. IX, No. 16, Vol. X, No. 3,



from the problems about "pointer-readings." In other words, the separation of problems establishes the separation of the respective universes. It limits the validity of the laws of physics, and provides room for totally different universes in which the laws of physics may be false or irrelevant; and vice versa. But to establish this we require the further point; namely, that, though every theorem of mathematics, etc. is *proved true* by showing that it follows from certain "axioms" (or "postulates" as E. V. Huntington calls them, or "hypotheses" in the Platonic manner of speak-which Riemann adopted in his famous dissertation "Über die Hypothesen welche der Geometrie zu Grunde liegen), the "postulates" themselves (by no means "evident-and-therefore-needing-no-war-rant") derive their validity from the fact that they are "*necessary for the solution of their respective generating problems.*"

These propositions suffice to make room for religion. Show that you are dealing with a legitimate problem, distinct from the generating problem of physics, and postulate whatever is necessary for the solution of this problem, paying no attention to the propositions of physics which are irrelevant, being limited in their validity to the generating problem of physics.

The next concern will be to state the criteria by which the postulates and theorems are *tested*. They are already vaguely referred to when we speak of the postulates as "*necessary.*" My early paper on *Critique of Cognition and Its Principles*<sup>3</sup> is in some respects antiquated, but on the whole still states the case correctly. There are two features of it which are essential here. One is that "truth" applies only to "systems," and thus to propositions only as integral parts of systems, but not to propositions in isolation. Some such feature is made necessary e. g. by the existence of the "non-Euclidean," "non-Archimedean" etc., geometries, and it is of fundamental importance. The second is that the criteria determine "truth", even in physics, without assuming "objects and their properties" as given. The philosophy which William James has called the "philosophy of comon sense" (cf. Pragmatism, lecture V) is characterized by this latter assumption, and by its criterion of truth of propositions in terms of "agreement with its *object.*" Our procedure is thus fundamentally different from this philosophy, which is nevertheless the philosophy of the man in the street, and

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Journal of Philos. Vol. VI, No. 11, May 27, 1909.

our own when we are not philosophizing. For, whilst fundamentally inconsistent and inadequate, it has a simplicity in handling some situations which a better philosophy can express only with an almost ridiculous complexity. (Please read the delightful passage in Eddington's book<sup>4</sup> about the difficulties encountered by a modern physicist trying to enter an open doorway.)

Next we must give our definition of "existence." This definition incorporates a considerable amount of "metaphysical" theory, and requires therefore careful justification. I omit the justification and state the definition: by "*existence*" we understand what is "meant" by a "*true*" proposition; or, what a true proposition is "about." This seems to put things up-side down; we usually define truth in terms of existence; or rather the "philosophy of common sense" does!

Two more definitions and I am done with the assembling of the necessary apparatus. By "*reality*" I understand *objective* existence (or: existence as object); and by "*actuality*" I understand existence as *subject*. I will here take "object" and "subject" for granted, merely adding that the two are, for us at least, always understood to be linked together. It is well to bear in mind that actuality and reality are here *not* equivalent terms; they both mean existence, but existence of differing (and contrasted) kinds. It is hardly necessary to emphasize that the above statements and definitions lead to different *kinds* of existence (and reality), according to the respective *universes* in which the propositions which "mean" existence are true. At least it leaves this as a possibility: and thus it becomes possible to distinguish mathematical existence from physical existence, ethical existence, etc.

We begin with the "empirical self," i. e. I begin with *my* experiences, which as such are "merely" subjective; and I ask myself: are there any which *also* "mean" an *existant*, and what are the conditions which the latter must satisfy. (This, at bottom, is Kant's problem in the *Critique of Pure Reason*; here emerges "experience" in the *new* meaning given to it by Kant.) Propositions which are parts of systems embodying solutions of generating problems, and not found wanting when tested by the criteria of truth, these are the stepping stones by which I proceed from "my experiences" to "reality" in its various aspects: cosmological, ethical, aesthetical

<sup>4</sup>V. I. c. p. 342.

reality. In each case we must state the generating problem, and show that each is distinct; thereby establishing each in its own *sovereignty*: the conditions necessary for the solution of its problem, tested by the criteria of truth, are the laws of the land. Whatever laws are valid in any of the other universes is "irrelevant."

It will be noticed that "religion" is not mentioned above. Is it, after all, to be omitted from reality? Even though there may be "room" for it? I will admit that at first I expected to find the generating problem of religion on a line, so to speak, with the other three. Nothing more was necessary to establish it in its own right than to state it, and to separate it from the others. And I thought this a simple matter, if I held to the fact that religion involves God. None of the others does. God is not an hypothesis in physics. Neither is He in "ethics"; nor in "aesthetics." These are established autonomously *before* we come to God and religion. This point is important. Yet the fact remained that traditionally religion is supposed to have a very close and special relation to ethics; undoubtedly a good part of all sermons preached *is ethics*. On the other hand we should not overlook its close relation to art, and even to cosmology. I do not mean primarily the fact that at a primitive stage religion may be also a cosmology. "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth." But a good part of the speculations of Plato, of Descartes, deserve careful attention here; as well as the fact that all the great scientists, from the pre-Socratic giants down, were upheld in the *search* for laws of nature by their *belief* in the *existence* of such laws, which was based ultimately on *religious grounds*. The intimacy of these relations (quite distinct from the "interpenetration of distinct generating problems in "concrete" objects) called to mind the corresponding closeness in the case of the *psychological* problem. I do not wish to discuss this here, but for me it is concerned with the *subject*-relation of the entities of mathematics, physics, etc. Be that as it may, it made me realize that, absorbed in the "aspects of *reality*," we had quite left out of account the "*subject*" to which "*reality*," i.e. "*objective* existence," is related.

What *is* this subject? Not the "empirical I" with which we started. Yet the subject we are looking for "states" propositions, "makes" assertions, "joins" them into systems, "tests" them by criteria of truth which it had stated and tested. The subject appears

thus as an "active," "spontaneous," "creative" I; as the creator of *true propositions*; and thus as the creator of "*reality!*"

This is *inescapable*, if one defines reality as "objective existence," and existence as the meaning of true propositions. It thus becomes imperative to examine those definitions with the greatest care. The only escape would seem to be the assumption of "things in themselves," in the form of the philosophy of common sense, or at least in Locke's modified form. But even if things-in-themselves could be made intelligible, they seem to have no bearing on the procedure of the experimental scientist. No physicist compares propositions with "things-in-themselves." He makes observations, examines his data, makes hypotheses to account for the data, checks them by rules which are the criteria of truth. "Pointer-readings" and their "connections." The scientist does not take "reality" as *given*; it presents a very serious *problem*. It is an interesting fact that the president of the American Chemical Society in his recent presidential address<sup>5</sup> raises this *problem* of reality, and answers it in part by a method which corresponds very closely to our own. He does not *assume* reality. Let us say: Reality emerges as the sciences progress, as new laws are stated, new facts discovered.

"I" am the creator of reality: the position is *inescapable*. It is the proudest thing that can be said by man of man. It expresses the spirit of the present time. We have created so many "things;" let "reality" be added unto them.

And yet, though *inescapable*, it is utterly *incredible*. Not only is it sheer arrogance; it is absurd.

But how can we escape this absurdity? It is not just our personal dilemma. Take Kant. The interpretation of his language in the *Critique of Pure Reason* has varied widely. Kant, the fastidious in point of veracity and exactness, who *can* write delightfully clear German (his earlier papers prove it!) but who develops an elaborate, not to say clumsy style, expanding each sentence so as to make it express *all* the truth and nothing but the truth! Why, then, was not his meaning plain to the careful reader? Why have whole libraries of books been written about him? Why, after more than a century of keen and intensive study of his works, is there yet no

<sup>5</sup>*Irving Langmuir: Modern Concepts in Physics and their Relation to Chemistry*. The Journal of the American Chemical Society, Oct. 1929, Vol. 51, No. 10. My attention was called to this interesting paper by my colleague of the chemistry department, Professor A. T. Lincoln.

general agreement on their meaning? But consider; is not the 'object' insisted upon throughout? And yet, by taking its *coërcive* function as the characteristic condition which distinguishes the objective from the purely subjective; by recognizing that coërcion is *necessity*, and grounding all necessity in the *a priori* (which comes to mean "necessary and of universal validity"), have we not thus landed in the subjective, more subjective even than our sensations? And when he proclaims as the key-note of his new "method of thinking": "we know of things *a priori* only that which we ourselves put into them", and yet invites us to distinguish this from a mere fiction, "andichten" as he says, *the paradox is complete*. "*We ourselves*" the ground and source of *objectivity*! (May I be permitted to call attention to Eddington's repeated similar statement: "in the discovery of this system of law the mind may be regarded as regaining from Nature that which the mind has put into Nature." (l.c. p. 244)

And did not Descartes call such things as the sun of astronomy, and the mathematical entities (which are the only reality in things,) did he not call them "idées innées?" We are not trying to interpret him; we emphasize the paradox, which ultimately goes back to Plato's Doctrine of Ideas, does it not?

How shall we solve the paradox?

Not by looking *towards reality* and *beyond* it to a super-reality, an "epekeina", to an "ens realissimum": there is nothing beyond reality.

By a "*conversion*," a turning around, away from reality, *away from the objective*, and *towards a subject, beyond* the empirical Ego, beyond even Kant's transcendental I, towards the ultimate "*actuality*," "*activity*," "*creativity*." Our pride collapses, is stricken down: *We* the creators of reality, we? *No! God* is the creator! *Through us He* creates reality. But it is *He!* Man the measure of all things, man? No, said the mature Plato, not man, but God is the measure.

Great scientists have always felt this, when they explored nature and through law created cosmos out of chaos: it was God working through them. Great artists have always been aware of it: Their creation? No! God's handiwork. However deliberately they planned, however carefully they wrought, whatever effort and labor they spent on mastering the technique: the creation occurred

under the spell of "inspiration." And the prophets who come to reform and save a sinful world, in olden times and in new, do they not feel themselves the "servants of God," doing His will, carrying out His bidding?

This is the *religious* point of view. These are attempted answers to religious questions; thus to conceive reality, thus to labor, to create it in this spirit, is to be religious. It is a new and imperative problem. Physics, ethics, art give no relevant answer to it. They necessarily disregard the subject: "actuality" does not enter into their discussions. The only security to be found here is stateable in terms of generating problem and conditions necessary for its solution. All their necessity, all their truth is contained in their laws. To them we must appeal, by them we must justify, with them we demonstrate and deduce. But when once the problem of the *subject* is raised, when we ask: who creates these true propositions, who warrants them, who is the guarantor, the sanctuary of reality, in which it finds its last security, then there is no stopping: Reality cannot be left suspended from a mere point, the "I"; not even the "creative I," still "I." It is firmly grounded when it is grounded in "actuality," in the ultimate active existant. "Our heart is unquiet until it rests in Thee." Reality seemed at first to be the meaning of true propositions which "I" proposed; but God spoke through me when I spoke *truly*; and reality is *His* meaning. God is the measure of all truths.

Our troubles are not ended. How can we *know* God, actuality, the ultimate subject? Do we not inevitably, in the knowing process, make Him an object?<sup>6</sup> And does not this exclude knowledge of Him? Yes, and no! We do *not* know Him as "object," i. e. we do not know Him as "reality." God is not "reality": He is not a physical reality; He is therefore not in space, not in time; he is not eternal in a temporal sense. But He is not even an ethical or aesthetic reality; he is not good; he is not beautiful. It is to me a refreshing confirmation of the correctness of our results that I am thus able to understand those who teach a "*negative*" theology. If we are right, we confirm their statements.

But we can say *some positive* things about God. It is true, I think, that I am the only subject with which I have direct acquaintance. But there *are* other "subjects," you for instance, of whom I

<sup>6</sup>This question was raised by one of my students in Carleton, Miss Edith Watson.

may have knowledge. Not the way I know about "reality" (excepting your "bodies," of which we are not speaking now); but I can know a great deal about you from your acts, your behavior, your responses of all kinds. And so with God: we know about Him, in so far as we know His creation, reality; we learn to know His "ways," when we study mathematics, physics, ethics, art. And this is the only way.

Above we said: cosmological, ethical, aesthetical reality is established, and must be established autonomously, before even the *problem* of God can be raised. Laws hold in physics, in ethics, in aesthetics in their own right. They are not dependent on God. A law is not a law in physics *because* God "thought" it; an act is not good *because* He commanded it; a work of art is not beautiful *because* He inspired it. We have no direct knowledge of God's thought, will, or feeling. It is the other way around: we recognize this law, this good act, this beautiful work of art as *His*, because it is true, good, or beautiful. That is: having found it true, good, or beautiful, when we tested it, now, when we raise the *religious* problem (not incidentally, but inevitably) and make the fundamental hypothesis "*God*" as "*actuality*," we recognize Him *in* the true, the good, the beautiful, their creator, their guarantor. (In other words we never, not even here, abandon our methodological procedure that guided us throughout, and which may be termed indifferently the Platonic method of the hypothesis, or Kant's transcendental method.) This implies,—does it not?—that those who want to know Him, are invited to study "reality." But we should add: there are many ways; and you may be "*wise*" without necessarily being "*learned*."

In the foregoing, two points have clashed with traditional theories so much that it may seem doubtful whether we had any right to call this "actuality," this "creator," *God*. We said He was not a "reality" (though of course He "*exists*"; "actuality" implies that); and He was not necessarily "good." To the second I might retort, that "good is as good does": but that is flippancy. Is it not better to say: what, you puny creature, you want to measure God by *your* standards of ethics? I think this *is* the true answer. But what of the first? Has not God been *defined* as "ens realissimum"? He has. But rightly? Better: *why* was He so defined, if not to *guarantee* reality: He "*bestowed*", whatever of reality things had. And it

seemed that He could not bestow reality, unless He had it Himself in the highest degree.—But this would not elevate Him; it would degrade Him, put Him with physical entities, as a sort of *primus inter pares*. No; *no* reality can *bestow* reality. His must be a *different* kind of “existence.” It is easy to recognize in this “ens realissimum” the Platonic idea of the “good,” “which *imparts* truth (“*reality*” in A. E. Taylor’s better translation) to the object and knowledge to the subject” (Rep. Bk. VI, Jowett’s translation); but the “good” is “*beyond*” reality; it “far exceeds essence in power and dignity.” A puzzling statement to every student of Plato; on which our theory seems to throw some light.

We have spoken of religion in a purely intellectual manner, as behoves a philosopher. He must be blind, who does not see that this is only part of the story: profound emotions are linked up with our religious ideas, beautiful imagery is woven around them. What we have tried to do is to *justify* them, not to replace them. And it is interesting that our argument gives a philosophical reason for those definitions of religion which, like Schleiermacher’s, characterize it by “feelings of *dependency*.”

Not to convert the “infidel” and the “skeptic”, but to sustain the believer, to help him clarify and purify his ideas of God, has been the moving purpose of this paper.



## THE EARLY LEGALIST SCHOOL OF CHINESE POLITICAL THOUGHT

BY LEONARD TOMKINSON

### *General Introduction*

**I**T has become a commonplace of comment that China is disunited. This may be mere carping criticism, yet the idea may be expressed in a positive form: China is remarkable in its diversity. Diverse are its people alike in language, stature, customs, diet, manner of living, political and social organization—in all that affects the thought of a people. At last it is being admitted that it is an ever changing country, altering from month to month in incalculable ways. Yet popular Western writers used to speak of it as changeless, forgetting that the foundation of its philosophy was a “Book of Change”. So, too, it was often customary to speak of Chinese thought as a unity, as if there were no diversity even between writers of different ages, much less between contemporary writers and thinkers. Frequently what has been styled “Chinese” thought has been merely “Confucian” thought, and this has often been derived merely from the “Four Books” with occasional reference to the “Five Classics”. Where practical observers noticed that current practice differed widely from the precepts of the Confucian classics, it was either attributed to the common failure of people to live up to their ideals or to the corruptions of modern Western influence. Yet a closer observation would show that the alleged theories were not always even the accepted ideals of all Chinese and further investigation would reveal that there has always been a great diversity in the thought of China.

Perhaps the foregoing is something of an overstatement, for the names of Lao Tse and Chuang Tse have been well known and there have been many translations of their works and some of the super-

ficial effects of the wide-spread Chinese Buddhism have been too obvious to have been overlooked entirely. Yet even these have sometimes been omitted in discourses on "Chinese" thought, and many have failed to realise that aside from these there has been a great diversity of thought.

In view of some of the questions agitating the country today one of the most interesting of the unorthodox schools of Chinese thought was that of the Fah Chia or early Legalist School of thought. It is generally admitted that their theories were the controlling intellectual influence in the short lived Ch'in Dynasty, and it must be remembered that that Dynasty in spite of its brief duration made a permanent impress on the political system of China.

A considerable number of writings, showing a considerable diversity of opinion on some points produced during or not long before this dynasty have been classified under this heading. These have been connected with the following names: Kuan Tse, Wei Yang (Prince of Shang), Shen Tao, Li Kui, Peng Meng, Shen Pu Hai, Yin Wen Tse and Han Fei Tse—to mention only the most prominent. Many modern writers have called in question the authenticity of nearly all these writings, but it is not disputed that the bulk of them were produced in the period indicated above and their value and interest is in no way dependent upon their authorship. The two most interesting names in the above list are Kuan Tse and Wei Yang, but their authorship of the works under their names has been particularly called in question, whereas the Kuan Tse is perhaps the best known though not the most typical of all the works of Fah Chia.

It would appear that no living critic is prepared to attribute the whole of the "Kuan Tse" to the great minister of Duke Huan, or indeed to maintain that the whole work was written during one period. Parts of it appear to have been written even later than the Second Century B. C. Hirth and Grube, however, appear to have considered that the bulk of the work was actually contemporary with Kuan Chung. Hu Shih, on the other hand, refers to it in a somewhat off-hand manner as a work of the Third Century B. C. with even later additions. Sze-ma Ch'ien, however, lists some chapters as the work of Kuan Tse, and Liang Ch'i Ch'ao somewhat grudgingly admits that two or three of these may have been the work of that statesman. Hsie Yu Liang takes as usual a more conservative

view and appears to regard Kuan Tse's claim to authorship quite seriously. But perhaps we may take the view of Harlez as not far from the truth, namely, that the bulk of the book was the work of the disciples of Kuan Chung, based on oral if not written tradition. This finds support in the fact that the descendants of Kuan Chung for many years held hereditary office in Ch'i, and may well have kept the doctrines of their famous ancestor as a tradition in the family until with the changing of times and the loss of position they put them in writing and made them known.

The only other name connected with the authorship of the Kuan Tse is Yo Yi, the minister of Chao, who held office from 260 to 270 B. C., whose name is coupled with that of Kuan Chung as the author of works studied by Chu-ko Liang. Yo Yi was certainly a great admirer of Kuan Chung as may be seen from the public sacrifices to the earlier statesman which he instituted after the conquest of Ch'i.

In any case it was not by accident that the name of Kuan Chung became associated with the writings which have gone for so many centuries under his name and the same may be said of the other reputed authors of the Legalist writings. A brief study of the careers of some of them may therefore prove one useful avenue of approach to the study of these works.

### *Some Legalist Statesmen*

KUAN CHUNG, or Kuan Yi Wu first came into prominence in the disorders arising out of the disputed succession to the Dukedom of Ch'i, which finally ended in the establishment of Huan as Duke. Kuan had espoused the cause of a rival claimant who seemed to him to have a better legal right and on the defeat and death of his chief he fled to Lu. Pao Su, the friend of his youth, however, was the chief adviser of Duke Huan and pointed out to his sovereign that the services of his late enemy would be invaluable to their state. As the story goes it was feared that the rival state of Lu would not be willing that Ch'i should obtain the services of so able a minister, so that the request was made that the Duke of Lu would hand over Kuan Chung to Ch'i that he might suffer death for his "rebellion". In order to promote friendship between the states Lu agreed to do this and Kuan was sent over in a sort of cage. When,

however, he crossed the border into his native state he was immediately set free and given high office. All writers, ancient and modern, are agreed that the fame and prominence soon attained by Duke Huan and Ch'i were due mainly to the wisdom of the famous minister. In his "Historical Records" Sze-ma Ch'ien observes that it was the aim of Kuan Chung to "establish Ch'i along the sea shore, to ensure transportation, to enrich the state and increase the military power". Huai Nan Tse says: "In the time of Duke Huan the imperial dignity was at a low ebb, the feudal lords were oppressive, the barbarians were making inroads on the "Central States" (Chong Kuoh). Ch'i was a narrow state between the sea and the River: Duke Huan wished to rectify all this and thus came the book Kuan Tse." We have seen that this last remark cannot be taken literally, but the paragraph is a good summary of the aims and accomplishments of Kuan Chung. It is perhaps the economic activities referred to by Sze-ma Ch'ien that have chiefly impressed modern writers. He is said to have made statistical calculations showing that in a state of ten thousand chariots there would be ten million consumers of salt and that iron was also essential for all, the women requiring it for needles and the men for ploughs. Taxes followed and eventually state monopolies. The "Historical Records" refer to "taxes on fish and salt to succour the poor and to reward the wise and capable", but the effect of these policies was far reaching. The salt monopoly remains to this day a chief source of revenue in China, and as regards iron, not only did the products of Ch'i become essential to the other states of the Confederacy but as production increased it was exported ever further, so that Pliny remarks that "sericum ferrum" is the best. We shall have occasion to speak later of the account in the Kuan Tse of how he is supposed to have brought about the submission of Lu and Liang by his policy in relation to silk.

To an earlier generation, however, Kuan Chung was more famous for his chivalry and his military exploits than for his fiscal devices. As already mentioned it was largely due to Kuan Chung that Ch'i attained the hegemony of the semi-independent states which acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chow emperor. At the conference at which Duke Huan was appointed the first "Pa" or overlord of these states, Tso Mu Yi, a general of Lu, suddenly drew his sword and threatened the life of Huan unless he promised to re-

store certain territories conquered from Lu. The Duke assented, but afterwards was about to break the promise extracted by "force majeure", but he allowed himself to be persuaded by his minister that the reputation of holding to his word at all costs—of "swearing to his own hurt and altering not"—would be of more value to him than a few acres of his neighbour's territory. When the Hill Yung invaded Yen, Huan and Kuan marched to the rescue and drove off the barbarian invaders. The ruler of Yen escorted his rescuers back crossing with them into their own territory. This was contrary to feudal custom, but was put right by a present from Ch'i to Yen of the territory crossed. The victors then marched on the semi-barbaric state of Ch'u which had been gaining great power, but withdrew their forces when Ch'u promised to send tribute to the Chow Emperor. Many other stories tell of Kuan Chung's insistence on the maintenance of the correct feudal procedure. When the degenerate holder of the imperial title sent presents to the powerful Duke Huan, Kuan Chung insisted that his master should prostrate himself before the gifts of his feeble suzerain. Similarly he restrained the Duke from the performance of the Feng and Shan sacrifices as this was part of the imperial prerogative. He was no less punctilious in his own behaviour. In the fourth year of the Emperor Siang his younger brother endeavoured to dethrone him by calling in the aid of the Western barbarians. Siang called on the Duke of Ch'i to come to his assistance. In response Kuan Chung was sent with a large army and defeated the invaders. Very grateful for his assistance Siang wished to treat Kuan as one of the nobles of the empire, but the latter refused to have this honour thrust upon him, insisting that he wished to be looked upon merely as the minister of the Duke. On his death bed (B. C. 645) he warned his master against trusting three men who had acted in an unnatural way in relation to son, parent, and self respectively in order to gain their master's favour. His advice was disregarded with disastrous results. The greatness of Ch'i had come to an end.

Following Legge we may sum up the achievements of Kuan Chung thus: He was the first to strengthen the resources of Ch'i. He then proceeded to cultivate the good will of his neighbours. Under his direction Ch'i showed forbearance and generosity in external relations, it became an asylum of fugitives and a helper of the weak and oppressed. The Duke and his minister called as-

semblies of princes where all engaged to observe the statutes of Chow and to take common measures against the unruly. "There has probably been no second example on record in which the results of philosophic thought were so immediately and successfully connected with state management as that of Kuan Chung".

Confucius's high opinion of him is well known, but it may be worth while to quote his estimate as recorded in the "Analects": "The Duke Huan assembled all the prince together, and that not with weapons of war and chariots:—it was all through the influence of Kuan Chung. Whose beneficence was like his? . . . Kuan Chung acted as prime minister to the Duke Huan, made him overlord of all the feudal chiefs and united and rectified the whole empire. Down to the present day, the people enjoy the gifts which he conferred."

It is remarkable how different from this was the opinion of Mencius, who in his discourse with Kung-sun Chow seems to refer to Kuan Chung almost with contempt more than once. The explanation of this may lie in the fact that by Mencius's day the name of Kuan Chung had already become attached to a body of Legalist theories often strongly anti-Confucianist in tendency, although these theories may have had little to do with the statesman himself.

WEI YANG (c. B.C. 370-338) was a much less "sympathetic" character than Kuan Chung. He was also known as Kung-sun Yang, being the descendant of a Duke of Wei by a concubine. He was early raised to high office in the state of Wei. His ability was recognized by Kung-shu Tso, the chief minister of that state, but before he could promote him Kung fell ill. Visited by King Huei the dying man recommended his sovereign to make Yang his chief minister, but when he saw that his sovereign was disinclined to take that advice he recommended him in that case to kill Yang. This advice the king agreed to take so Kung informed Yang and recommended him to flee, but the latter replied that as the King had disregarded his advice in the first instance he was not likely to follow it in the second and so he remained where he was.

However, when he heard that Duke Hsiao of Ch'in had issued a decree inviting men of ability from any state to seek office under him, Wei Yang betook himself thither. The following account of subsequent events is largely based on the account in the "Historical Records".

Wei Yang sought an interview with the duke through his minister, Ching Chien. At the first interview the duke slept and was afterwards indignant with his minister for introducing such a bore. Yang informed Ching that he had spoken to the duke concerning the "Imperial Way", but promised to be more interesting if he would give him another opportunity. At the next interview the sovereign did not sleep and was not annoyed, but was nevertheless not really interested. Yang told the minister he had spoken of the "Royal Way". At the third interview Hsiao evinced interest but did not speak of employing Yang, who had spoken this time of the "Way of the Overlords". Yang assured Chin that the next interview would clinch the matter. This proved to be the case. Hsiao listened enthralled and the interviews continued for several days. For, as he afterwards told his confidant, the Emperors (Yao and Shun and their predecessors) were too remote for the duke to be interested in rivalling them, whereas he was vitally interested in "strengthening the state". For, as he had said, "The fool is interested in what has been accomplished, the wise man in what has not yet sprouted", and as he went on to say, "Those who speak of perfect virtue and charity do not fit the customs of the time; those who do great things do not make their plans with the crowd." Such sentiments could not be accepted by the conservative literati and Tu Chi and Kan Long did their best to prevent the duke from employing such an adviser. Wei Yang, however, merely observed to the duke that the learned were bound to make the most of what they had read, but at best it only fitted them for minor administrative position. The ruler, he held, must know how to change with the times: "The Three Dynasties had different rites and all made the country to prosper, the five 'Pa' had different laws and yet each was in his turn supreme. T'ang and Wu by breaking with the past overthrew the dynasties that had preceded them."

This view of matters appealed to the Duke of Ch'in and he made Yang minister. Soon new laws were issued. Capital punishment was decreed for those who did not report conspiracy and rewards for those who did; double taxes for families with more than two adult sons who did not set up separate households. Those who won military glory in the service of the state were to be rewarded, whilst those who engaged in private feuds were to be punished. To en-

courage agriculture and weaving those who were poor were penalised by being subjected to forced labour. Only those with national merit were to be permitted to display wealth.

In order to make the people realise that these laws were to be obeyed, the story runs that he had a thirty foot pole raised at the south gate of the market and promised ten talents of gold to any one who should carry it to the north gate. No one touched it, so he raised the reward to fifty talents. Then one man seemed to think it worth trying and removed the pole according to the edict and was duly rewarded. The people were much impressed, but still fell short of perfect obedience. Wei Yang told the duke that this was because the heir apparent was breaking the laws with impunity and insisted accordingly that he should be punished in the person of his tutor. The duke authorised this and thereafter "gold left on the road would not be stolen". Steps were taken to insure that the laws should be known by every man in the state, but all who questioned the laws were deported. This fate even befell some who presumed to send in a memorial praising the laws.

Having thus attended to the internal administration, the state of Wei was attacked; on the first occasion without important results. Three years later he divided Ch'in into thirty one "hsien" or counties. Five years later a severe defeat was inflicted on Wei and the Duke of Ch'in received the congratulations of the Emperor. Yang now insisted that either Ch'in must destroy Wei or Wei would destroy Ch'in. He led the armies of Ch'in against his native state. The forces of the latter were led by his sometime colleague, Kung Tse Chiu. That general was decoyed into a conference on the plea that old friendship and the mutual interests of Wei and Ch'in called for peace and cooperation. Kung was treacherously seized and put to death after which the conquest of Wei was an easy matter. Ch'in annexed the country beyond the river and fifteen cities were granted Yang as the fief of Shang, whence he is often known as Shang Yang. But the old families of Ch'in were growing more and more envious, as Yang's friend Chao Liang warned him. The proud minister replied that in the past Ch'in had had the culture of the Yong and Ti barbarians, but now had learned the "distinction between father and son, men and women" (that is, the distinctive marks of Chinese civilization). Chao Liang, however, pointed out



that already Shang Yang dared not go forth without ten chariots before and armed men behind.

Five months after this interview of the great minister with Chao Liang, Duke Hsiao died and was succeeded by his son. Friends of the former tutor easily persuaded the new Duke that the hated minister was meditating rebellion. Yang fled, but when one night he endeavoured to take refuge in a cottage in disguise it was refused as being against the laws of Wei Yang, which none dared disobey, to harbour strangers without notice or passport. He fled to his native state but it is not surprising that Wei refused to receive him. Shang Yang then returned to his own fief and raised troops, but he was defeated by the forces of Ch'in, captured, and killed by being dragged asunder by four chariots, harnessed to spirited steeds.

Few historians have ventured to say any good of Wei Yang, yet Chu-ko Liang the hero of the Three Kingdoms is stated to have said that a study of Shang Yang (perhaps referring to the writings under that name) was essential for politicians and statesmen. In any case his policy was largely followed by Chang Yi, Kung-sung Yi and Wei Jan, all famous ministers of the state of Ch'in, which under such direction eventually established its military despotism over the whole of China. L. Wieger calls him "the most important of the Legalists because he was able to put his theories into practice."

HAN FEI, unlike Kuan Chung and Shang Yang, is less famous for his deeds than for his writings, but of the actual authorship of much that goes under his name there is less dispute. He was a scion of the ducal family which for many centuries had ruled the state of Han. In his youth he studied under Hsun Ch'ing, and had as fellow pupil Li Se, who is said to have admitted Fei's mental superiority.

At a later date Han Fei having observed that his state was steadily losing ground, memorialised his ruler many times. The purport of these memorials was much the same as that of his other writings. What the government needed was to make clear laws, to enrich the state and to strengthen the military forces. To give office to the clever and learned was merely to cultivate maggots (or grubs such as destroy trees). These memorials contained more than a hundred thousand words, but the ruler declined to give office to their author. Reports of them, however, found their way to

Ch'in, the ruler of which was greatly impressed with them. "If I could meet with the author I would not mind dying", he is reported to have said to his minister, Li Se. The latter recognized his sometime fellow pupil as the author. When the King of Ch'in, later the First Emperor of the Ch'in Dynasty, heard this, he prosecuted the more vigorously his war against the state of Han. The ruler of Han who had persistently refused to employ Fei now sent him hastily to the King of Ch'in. The latter was delighted but hesitated to employ him himself. Then his ministers, Li Se and Yao Chia, spake thus to the king: 'Han Fei is a scion of the ducal family of Han. Now Your Majesty is planning to absorb all the principalities, but Fei cannot but favour Han rather than Ch'in on the grounds of natural affection. To keep him here for a long time and then send him back is merely to store up trouble for yourself. How much better to slay him through the process of law!' The king was partially persuaded and had Han Fei arrested and thrown into prison. Li Se then sent him poison as from the king. The prisoner requested a personal interview with the king, but when this was denied he took the poison. The king repented too late: when he sent to the prison orders for the release of Han Fei the latter was already dead.

Sze-ma Ch'ien, to whose records most of the above account is due, says of him that he carried to excess the idea of measuring things to distinguish between right and wrong, that he was hard and merciless and that though he based his teaching on "tao teh" he was very far from Lao Tse. It is generally considered that the political theories of the Legalist School found their culmination in the writings of Han Fei.

#### *Lesser Legalist Statesmen.*

SHEN PU HAI was a contemporary of Shang Yang. He was a native of the state of Chen and was minister to the Prince of Han for fifteen years, during which period he gave Han good government and security.

LI KUI was minister to Prince Wen of Wei. He persuaded his prince that all cases of litigation in that state should be decided by the ordeal of archery. The result was that the skill of the bowmen of Wei enabled that state to defeat Ch'in. He is more deserving

of fame, however, for his theories concerning the grading of taxes according to the possible yield of the ground, based on careful statistical calculations.

SZE CHIAO, also known as Sze Tse was a native of the state of Lu, and a disciple of Shang Yang, on whose death he fled to the state of Ch'u.

TENG TSE, according to L. Wieger, was the first Legalist. He was a contemporary of Lao Tse and was put to death by Tse Ch'an for criticising his new code of laws.

Little is known beyond the writings under their names or the theories attributed to them by others of Shen Tao (one of those styled "the Masters of Ki Sha"), of Yin Wen or of most of the minor Legalists whose theories will be discussed later. Of the careers of some of the "Tsung Huen Chia" it will be best to speak when discussing the theories they illustrate.

#### *The Early Taoist Background of Legalist Theory*

The practical experience and political exigencies of the statesmen discussed in the previous chapter doubtless had much to do with the development of Legalist theory, but as already stated the tendency of most modern and much ancient criticism has been to deny their authorship of much of the writing which has gone under their names. The actual authors of much of these books being obscure it may be assumed that they were not great original thinkers. We may therefore infer that there was a considerable trend of thought which tended in the general direction of Legalist theories. It may thus be concluded to have affinity with some other existing school of thought. The logical tendencies of Mohism might not be without connection with some aspects of Legalist thought, but this latter certainly did not tend in the direction of "Universal Reciprocal Love".

But indeed there is no mystery. Many if not all the writers now classed as Legalists were often defined as Taoists by older critics and historians. In view of the realism, often cynical and even sordid, of some of the Legalist writings this may seem surprising to those who have imagined the Taoists to have been mystics of a visionary and dreamy description. But as a matter of fact Taoism was not merely mysticism; it had in it in its greatest philosophers

an element of scientific realism as opposed to what they regarded as the Utopian idealism of the Confucianists.

The earliest extant Taoist work is the "Tao Teh Ching". The tendency of modern criticism is definitely to deny the authorship of Lao Tse, yet it is generally admitted to contain some quite early elements. It has often been regarded as a particularly mystical work. It must be admitted that parts of it are scarcely intelligible, yet other sections are related to this world in a fairly obviously practical and sometimes not too idealistic way.

Let us look at these extracts, mostly taken from the translations of Giles, Wieger and others:

"Empty the minds and fill the bellies; remove all initiative and strengthen the bones." (L. Wieger comments: "Pratiquement la tyrannie absolue est la consequence logique des principes de Lao-Tseu").

Heaven and Earth are not good to the beings they produce but treat them like straw dogs (Chap. 5)—"Following this example the Sage should not be good to the people he governs, but should treat them like straw dogs".

"Hold the people in ignorance, that makes for the safety of the country." (Chap. 65).

"If I were the king of a state I would put aside all the intelligent men and lead the people back to primitive ignorance; I would hinder all communications with neighbouring countries." (Chap. 18)

"A small state with a few people, so that each can hear the dogs and cocks of the rest. The people remain where they are without coming or going and die there of old age." ("Such," says Liang Ch'i Ch'ao, "was the Taoist ideal").

Abandon wisdom and discard knowledge and the people will be benefited a hundred fold."

"If the government is tolerant the people will be without guile. If the government is meddling there will be constant infraction of the law".

"The empire is a divine trust and may not be ruled. He who rules ruins. He who holds by force loses."

"Do nothing and all things will be done."

"I do nothing and my people will become good of their own accord."

“That which has no substance enters where there is no fissure, and so I know there is advantage in inaction.”

“Lao Tse said, ‘By government rule the country, in the employment of troops make use of the unexpected, by inaction seize the empire.’” (Yin Wen Tse)

In the next chapter quotations will be given from the Legalist writings showing how the idea of the Tao, of the spontaneous and natural way of the Universe, and the doctrine of “wu wei” or non-assertion, or absence of fussy or deliberate activity, entered into the theories of all the Fah Chia.

## NERO DE MORIBUS

BY M. J. GOLDBLOOM

PLACE: A room in the palace of Nero, Rome.

TIME: 60 A. D.

CHARACTERS: Nero Claudius Cæsar, a brilliant but rather erratic youth of 23, Emperor of Rome.

Seneca, teacher of Nero, a well-known Stoic,  
not too clever.

Paul, a Nazarene, formerly Saul, a Pharisee.

**S**ENECA—Nero, this is Paul, the Jew who's here on an appeal to your judgment in some religious quarrel or other in Jerusalem. I've been talking to him and found him quite interesting. He's really very well educated. I brought him to you because I thought you might enjoy conversing with him, and besides, it might be well for you to see what he's like before passing judgment on him.

NERO—According to Horace, Aristius Fuscus, that man "whole of life and free from crime," refrained from business on Saturday in order not to insult your people, Paul, so I suppose I can't very well do less than give you a few minutes of my time before having you executed, especially since Seneca assures me I'll enjoy the conversation.

PAUL—To a free-born Roman citizen, Cæsar, you could grant no less.

NERO—Seneca, what are the charges against this fellow?

SENECA—Inciting to riot, blasphemy, sedition, disorderly conduct, and holding a public meeting without a license.

NERO—Oh, I see. He got up on a street-corner and said something that someone in authority didn't like. Well, I'll tell you what, Paul. If I find your conversation sufficiently interesting and intelligent, I'll let you off, but if you turn out a bore, like some of Seneca's other friends, I'll crucify you, and you'll have cause to be thank-

ful that my naturally gentle disposition won't permit me to treat you in accordance with your deserts.

SENECA—I'm sure that you'll find Paul very interesting, Nero.

NERO—I hope so, for his sake. Now, Paul, what did you say to get yourself into trouble?

PAUL—I merely asserted the immortality of the soul.

NERO—Well, I don't see just what there is for anyone to be annoyed at in that, although it seems to me a rather vicious doctrine, tending to take men's minds off this world in favor of a problematical next.

PAUL—But, Cæsar, that is just the highest virtue of a belief in immortality. Man should turn away from this world, for it is wicked.

NERO—What! do you call this world wicked, in which there are so many fair prospects for the eye, so many pleasing sounds for the ear, and in which one may know the many and various joys of the body, the pleasures of eating, drinking, and especially love? What have you to say to such blasphemy, Seneca?

SENECA—I agree with you Nero, that Paul is wrong in saying we should turn from this world, but you seem to me to advance utterly improper reasons. We should think of this world, not, as you suggest, as the scene of our sensual gratifications, but rather as the sphere of our duties. Only a very few indeed, Nero, can be happy, like you, in the immediate satisfaction of their every desire. For most, the pleasures of this world are far outweighed by its pains, and hence for them the argument in favor of this world based on the joy of life possesses no force. But all alike, pauper or publican, slave or Cæsar, have their duties in this world, and hence all alike should feel impelled to devote themselves to their duties in it, and to it as the sphere of their duties rather than to any chimerical other world.

NERO—Your arguments, Seneca, have succeeded in convincing me that Paul is, in a way, right. For I see that, as you say, this world offers no worth-while attractions to the overwhelming majority of my subjects. Hence it is well, even perhaps essential, that they should keep their eyes fixed, not on this world, but on some other. For if they were to keep their attention centered on this world, they could not well help seeing it for what it is, and realizing their own misery and its contrast with the happiness of the few, which is obtained by their oppression and starvation. And then, as always oc-

curs when they see the real state of things, they would rise up and deprive us of our privileges, and perhaps also of our lives. This unfortunate state of affairs is happily averted by religion, which, turning men's hearts towards heavenly things, prevents them from pondering their earthly woes. What has your religion to say, Paul, as to the proper behaviour for the poor?

PAUL—He whom I preach said, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's." But I myself have said also, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

NERO—An admirable religion for the people, to be sure. An excellent slave-morality it is. Religion is in all truth the opiate of the masses and a most necessary and efficient opiate at that. It is a great comfort to a slave and his family, when, having toiled from dawn to dark of a scorching summer's day under the lash of an overseer in a Sicilian wheat-field, they gather around the altar to render thanks to Juno Lucina that the latest baby has been still-born and will not have to endure the same travesty of life as its parents. And think of the joy of the free-born Roman citizen who, though hungry and ragged, is enabled by the beneficent influence of religion to celebrate the Saturnalia and Floralia, or to honor Bacchus, Venus of the market-place, or even Hercules in the amphitheatre. Yes, it is fortunate for me and those who, like me, have plenty, that there is religion to turn the eyes of the masses away from this world and their sufferings in it to some problematical other, where they may find bliss, or at least to gods, by trusting in whom they may be comforted, and may not feel their burdens so heavily.

SENECA—You seem to think, Nero, that only by being made to turn their eyes away from this world to some other can the people be made to suffer peacefully and willingly the miserable lot which they must here endure. But this is not so at all, for the consideration that it is their duty to obey their masters, and to labour for them, is by itself quite sufficient to cause them patiently to bear their suffering, and gladly to serve in order that the chosen few may have plenty.



NERO—You, Seneca, keep talking about duty. Will you kindly oblige us by informing us what you conceive this duty to be?

SENECA—A man's duty is that which he must do if he would be righteous.

NERO—And by what method, will you be so kind as to tell us, do you plan to discover what course of conduct a man who would be righteous will pursue?

SENECA—That, Nero, is a question very simply answered. Every man has within himself a conscience, implanted by nature, and which tells him to act in accordance with the law of nature. All that is necessary for a man to do in order to be righteous is, that he follow the dictates of his conscience in all things. What could be simpler than that?

NERO—Your solution, Seneca, is indeed simple, so simple as a matter of fact, that when carefully examined, it proves, like almost all simple solutions, to involve a number of irresolvable difficulties. First and foremost, permit me to ask what we are going to do about men who are so inconsiderate as to have consciences which neglect to dictate that they follow the law of nature? It seems to me quite conceivable, even highly probable, that such persons may exist, especially in view of the rather distressing fact, that you Stoics, while perfectly agreed that your consciences direct you to follow the law of nature, have nevertheless managed to disagree, as to just what the terms of that law of nature are, which your consciences direct you to follow. And not only that, but do not all Stoics differ radically from all Epicureans in their views as to what is right?

SENECA—What, Nero, would you assign any value to the opinions of the Epicureans on any subject whatsoever! Has all my teaching been in vain! Have all my patient labors been in sufficient to preserve you from the pernicious doctrines of that abominable sect! O, Nero!

NERO—I was not advocating the beliefs of the Epicureans; I was merely pointing out that they differ from yours, a fact which you seem hardly inclined to dispute. And while the Epicureans may be most detestable persons, they are nevertheless existing human beings, and since their consciences do not dictate the same course of action as yours, why then it is obvious that conscience is not sufficient by itself to determine what is right and what is wrong.

SENECA—But the Epicureans, knowing what is right, merely re-

frain, for the sake of their personal comfort, from doing or even declaring it, and hence are wicked.

NERO—In that case I need only point to the Cynics, against whom it is obvious that you could not possibly level any such accusation, and who, indeed, might well denounce you in just such terms. For they, in truth, agree with you that men should live according to the dictates of their consciences, but they appear to have consciences which demand of them far stricter and more uncomfortable modes of behaviour than those to which yours lead you. So you see, Seneca, that if you declare that every man's conscience should be his guide, you will find very little justification for any code of morals, inasmuch as the disagreement of one individual will destroy the universal validity of your whole system, and each man will be a law unto himself. Is this, Seneca, what you desire? If so, then where does your concept of duty come in? How can you possibly justify it?

SENECA—Well then, though it would appear to lead to no solution if we accept the validity of the judgments of every man's conscience, I think it is quite possible for us to escape the difficulties which you have raised by assuming that only a few men are sufficiently highly developed to see what their duty is.

NERO—But Seneca, waiving the consideration that this latest suggestion of yours fails to provide for a sense of duty in the great mass of the people, and these are therefore left with nothing to hold them in check and prevent them from rising up and ridding themselves of us—waiving this consideration, I say, it is still necessary for me to determine which of several different standards of righteousness is the true one. For as I have already pointed out, great differences of opinion exist between one school and another, and even within any given school itself, as to what constitutes the good life. I am afraid, Seneca, that if you hope to convince me of the tenability of your position it will be necessary for you to supply me with some criterion by which it shall be possible for me to judge between one ethical system and another, and decide wherein lies the true way to achieve the good life. Can you supply such a criterion, Seneca?

SENECA—Nothing could be easier. That concept of duty is the true one which is the most useful. The value of every action is to be

judged by its utility. If a deed produces more pleasure than pain, then duty directs the performance of that deed, and vice versa.

NERO—Yes, nothing could be easier than to set up utility as the final standard to which all codes of duty shall be referred, the final arbiter of the righteousness of any act. It is, however, unfortunately also true that nothing could be more futile. For firstly, Seneca, you will require a table of equivalents for pleasure and pain. Will you not be so kind as to permit me to see this table, which you have, of course, already prepared? For without it you would certainly be unable to decide as to what were the correct ethical standards to adopt, while you have, on the contrary, come to so definite a decision on the subject, that you are quite ready to condemn immediately as a fool, a knave, or both, anyone who may chance to disagree with you concerning it.

SENECA—I am sorry, Nero, but I have never given the question of such a table any thought. Consequently, I am quite unable to present you with it. However, I do not believe it necessary, for we are all able to weigh pleasure against pain with sufficient accuracy for all normal purposes.

NERO—I have no such faith as you appear to possess in the innate ability of the human mind to reduce all the diverse pleasures and pains which exist to one common denominator. However, I might as well waive the point, since any such table is obviously impossible to construct, and your theory has several other equally vulnerable points. Seneca, even leaving out the purely physical effects of every act, is there anything done by anyone at any time, all of whose consequences, with their attendant pleasure and pain, you would be capable of enumerating? Before you reply, consider that every act of one of us may well have influenced every subsequent act of that person, and every act which has immediately affected any other person is likely to have played a part in every subsequent event of his career, and so on indefinitely.

SENECA—No; I can't possibly, I must admit, know all the remote consequences of any act, and I am therefore unable to arrive at any more than a rough approximation in any judgments as to the pleasure and pain produced by any act. But I still maintain that such a rough approximation is ample for any practical purpose. We are justified in neglecting the remote and untraceable effects of any act on the theory that the result of any act in the determination

of other events grows less as we go farther away from the original situation, and furthermore, that in the remote effects of an act, good and evil will probably occur in about equal quantities and counterbalance each other.

NERO—Well, Seneca, although it would be extremely easy for me to point out to you that, in the first place, if you hold an act to be right or wrong according to its consequences, you must assume a universal reign of causality, so that every act may have consequences by which it can be judged, and under such conditions, every act continues of uniform importance in the causal mesh through all eternity; while secondly, if we are justified in assuming that the pleasure and pain attendant on the remote consequences of any act will balance one another, we are equally justified in assuming the same of the immediate effects; although, as I said, these things would be so easy to point out, I shall refrain from doing so. Instead, I shall ask you if you are possessed of perfect and infallible knowledge of the future.

SENECA—Of course not! Such knowledge only a god could possibly possess, never a mortal man.

NERO—Since you admit that you are not equipped with foreknowledge absolute, it is obvious that you can not infallibly predict even the immediate consequences of anything you may do. Hence, if one accept this ethical theory of yours, one must, in order to be logical, concede that, while a deed may be declared good or bad, such judgment may only be given after the fact, and that it is the veriest lunacy to claim that these epithets may be transferred from the deed to the doer.

SENECA—But if we do not accept these criteria, our whole moral system breaks down. Ethical judgments become impossible, and we are left with chaos.

PAUL—Not at all. All your difficulties arise from the fact that you seek for truth in man's reason, rather than in God's will. What is right, is right because God has commanded man to do it, and what is wrong is wrong because He has forbidden it.

NERO—But why should man obey God?

PAUL—Man should do God's will because God created man, who therefore owes Him obedience.

NERO—But if God created man, why did he not create him perfect

and incapable of doing other than God's will? Or is your God limited in His power?

PAUL—God created man free to choose between good and evil, for what would be the point of God creating automatic beings without the power of choice? Where would there be any moral element in such a system? It would be quite as senseless, purposeless, and unintelligent as the most thorough-going mechanistic and materialistic system which man could conceive—such a system, for instance, as Stoicism.

SENECA—You're doing a grave injustice to Stoicism, Paul. Why, the good life is central to Stoicism, and—

NERO—Paul's sideswipes at Stoicism will have to remain unrefuted for the present, Seneca; I have no particular interest in debating the desirability of Stoicism as a cosmological system. But tell me, Paul, does your God give men any incentive to lead them to prefer the good to the bad? For admitting this rather paradoxical idea of free will, I still think that this will ought to have something on a basis of which it may act. If it were to act merely from the motive of obedience, it would, I think, be just such an automatic device as you have already pointed out and can have no ethical value. On the other hand, a will acting purely irrationally would hardly be free in any worth-while sense of the term.

PAUL—God has offered man the most cogent possible reason for choosing to do right rather than wrong—he will suffer eternally in Hell if he doesn't.

NERO—Waiving the question of the moral nature of a God capable of creating beings to suffer eternally, I must still ask you how it is, that, with so good a reason for righteousness as the fear of an eternity of pain, men should nevertheless do wrong so large a portion of the time?

PAUL—In reply to the question which you have been so kind as not to require me to answer, I will say that God had a very good reason for condemning the greater portion of mankind to Hell. For in view of the fact that population tends to increase in geometrical progression while the means of subsistence increase only in arithmetical progression in equal periods, it would have occurred that, if all men had gone to Heaven, the population would very soon have outstripped the food supply, and either all the blessed would have been grossly undernourished, or many, perhaps most, of them would

have had to starve altogether, a state of affairs which would have made a veritable Hell of Heaven. Therefore God created Hell to take care of the surplus population, and sent the greater portion by far to Hell, admitting only a very few indeed to Heaven. As a consequence of this, the per capita food supply of Heaven is constantly increasing, while the means of subsistence in Hell fall ever further behind the needs of the population. Thus the blessed are getting blessed and the damned are getting damner every day. As to your other question, men sin in spite of Hell because they are all descendants of the first man, Adam, and fell in his sin, and are in consequence born in sin and incapable of avoiding it no matter how hard they may try. Adam was created before Hell, and was threatened only with death as the punishment of sin. Moreover, he thought he would be able to keep his disobedience hidden from God—an idea of which he was speedily undeceived.

NERO—Your explanations interest me greatly, Paul, but there are still certain points which I wish you to clear up for me. In the first place, if all men are equally incapable of doing right, how have we the right to make moral judgments concerning them? Are they not all alike sinful, no matter what they may do or refrain from doing? And where, may I ask, will this Heaven which you mention get its inhabitants.

PAUL—You are quite right, Cæsar, in saying that we may not properly make moral judgments concerning men, because they are all equally sinful. For Jesus Christ Himself, Who was God incarnate, said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." And as to the inhabitants of Heaven, while it is impossible for any human being to achieve unaided the goal of righteousness, he may nevertheless do so through the grace of God. For God sacrificed Himself on the cross to atone for the sin of Adam, and man may therefore, by mystically participating in His death and rebirth through the rite of baptism, become pure and incapable of sin.

NERO—Then are all your Christians incapable of sin?

PAUL—That is the case.

NERO—But do not many of them do things which are normally considered sinful?

PAUL—Whatever they may do, no matter how it would normally be considered, cannot be sinful, for they are incapable of sin.

NERO—Thus, Paul, you hold that a man is good or bad irrespective

of the nature of his actions, and solely on a basis of whether or not he has received the divine grace. Am I correct?

PAUL—Quite, Cæsar.

NERO—In that case we have arrived at the conclusion that we are not justified in making moral judgments concerning persons on a basis of their acts. Paul, I must congratulate you on holding so eminently intelligent a view of the subject, and I will gladly acquit you of all charges against you. But don't get into trouble again, because I'm afraid that if you do, the power of public opinion will force me to have you executed.

SENECA—But Nero, these ideas are positively immoral!

NERO—You cannot reject my ethical theory, Seneca, on a basis of ethical considerations derived from your own system, which has already been shown to be untenable. But I have not time for further discussion at present, as I have an appointment with Anicetus, admiral of my fleet, to arrange with him about a little family matter, namely, the assassination of my mother.

## THE PLEASANT PAINS OF WAR

BY LEO MARKUN

“**M**ODERN man inherits all the innate pugnacity and all the love of glory of his ancestors. Showing war's irrationality and horror is of no effect upon him. The horrors make the fascination.” The words are William James's, and they are to be found in a tract issued by the American Association for International Conciliation. Recognizing that war is supposed to render a moral service by bringing about an altogether unselfish devotion to a cause larger than the private interests of any individual, James set himself the task of finding an equivalent for war inculcating the same lesson of unselfishness.

He tells us that young people should be drafted into such labors as mining, fishing, and the building of bridges, as well as more prosaic tasks like washing clothes and dishes. He hints that dangerous employments should be assigned, but his list contains some occupations in which the hazards are not extreme. If, as he tells us, horror and glory constitute the chief attraction in war, keeping dishes clean is hardly likely to prove a satisfactory substitute for battles and sieges. There are, indeed, some occupations of peacetime which offer a constant picture of horrible death: perhaps aviation is still one of these.

When Johnny shoulders a rifle and marches with his company *en route* to the avenue of war, he receives the enthusiastic applause of Mary Anne, or of many Mary Annes, on the sidewalk. Mary Anne would certainly be less enthusiastic if Johnny were shouldering a broom and going, though in a beautiful white uniform and preceded by a brass band, to perform public duties as a scavenger.

Thorstein Veblen remarks somewhat bitterly that it is the girls of nubile age for whose sake young men go to war. This is not the whole story if, as I suppose, algohedonia, the deriving of pleasure



from one's own and others' pain, is in large part independent of sexual associations. It is very likely true nevertheless that love rivalry among young men would make them fight to please young women even if they were not cruel and self-cruel on their own account.

Just now we hear sanguine voices proclaiming that peace is assured forever because some artistic representations of war emphasize the horror rather than the glory, or because of solemn pacific utterances on the part of nations that have officially abhorred warfare for centuries during which they have protected themselves against aggression every few decades. In all probability, property worth billions of dollars as well as millions of human beings are yet to be sacrificed for the sake of the battle thrill.

As civilization advances in complexity, algohedonia assumes more diversified and subtler forms. Perhaps bloodshed will some day play a very small part in it, but in the near future any true substitute for war will necessarily embody elements of danger as well as of contest. Certain forms of athletics may be able to provide a psychological equivalent for the spectacular, competitive, and dangerous elements in warfare.

War in the abstract has among us comparatively few defenders. One argument in its favor has it that the history of the world is the judicial verdict of the world, which is to say that the nation endowed with efficient industrial organization, economic vitality, courage and physical vigor, destroys or enslaves those that are weaker. It may be objected that preparedness for war is by no means an accurate test of fitness for the arts of peace. The strength of armies and navies, although now largely dependent upon a well-organized industrial system, is a poor criterion of cultural development. In truth, the desire for martial preparedness leads to wasteful efforts for the diversification of industry within national frontiers. Diplomatic skill, upon which, from time immemorial, military success has in most cases largely depended, may or may not be an index to civilization.

War provides no fair test of some things that many of us value, and under modern conditions it practically never enriches the victorious nation. A few individuals make huge profits while hostilities are going on, and there may be colonial concessions af-

terward for the benefit of speculators; but the net communal gain must be sought in aliohedonia and glory.

Historians are not accustomed to attribute wars to the restlessness caused by a comparative peace lasting thirty or forty years. They learnedly discuss diplomatic documents and problems of national honor. Commercial rivalries and other economic causes are now usually considered, and their importance is often exaggerated, but the psychological roots of the readiness to fight are seldom touched upon. There are times when hostile propaganda touches sympathetic chords throughout a whole nation, when people are anxious to believe evil things about their alien neighbors.

In favor of tariff walls and other nationalistic acts of economic discrimination, the best that economists can say is that, after all, we are still at the stage of development by individual countries. There is a notion of American unity, for instance, to which the hobo subscribes when his national pride rises as he reads in yesterday's newspaper how wealthy his native land is. Sectional clashes may lead to bloodshed, and civil wars are not always opera bouffe, but differences in language and tradition make it easier to conceive of a foreign enemy as unfair and even inhuman.

We have seen strange dogs attack each other as if instinctively, even though no immediate rivalry with regard to bone or bitch can be involved. Much in the same way, primitive men feel that they should annihilate strange tribes. They are not actuated by aliohedonia alone: in striking without any preliminary negotiations at all unfamiliar men and beasts, they are chiefly concerned with defending themselves. Besides, many simple peoples are not warlike. The martial spirit seems to be most strongly developed in the lower civilized communities.

The more complex human beings are, the more clearly may their propensity for fighting be considered aliohedonia. Southey tells us of Lord Nelson that "no sooner was he in battle, where his squadron was received with the fire of more than a thousand guns, than, as if that artillery, like music, had driven away all care and painful thoughts, his countenance brightened; and, as a bystander describes him, his conversation became joyous, elevated, and delightful." Young Major George Washington described his own battle joy somewhat similarly.

Your true warrior does not think of fighting as an evil. He

likes war, and he welcomes its opportunities for glory and promotion. There was a time when even the humblest private might hope to become suddenly rich through the seizure of valuable portable spoils or the capture of a nobleman for whom a rich ransom would be paid. In comparatively recent days, soldiers of fortune skilled in political intrigue have gained splendid rewards. But the Sforzas, the Napoleons, and even the Grants have few opportunities now. The outstanding dictators of our time, although it follows a great war, are not the generals who distinguished themselves in it.

The recent adventurers who joined foreign armies in order to throw bombs from the air upon Mexicans or Riffs did not expect to become rich, were not patriotically or piously self-effacing, but in general looked upon man-killing as a noble game for bored sportsmen. Some of our military and naval officers could find more profitable employment in civil life, but are kept in the service by thoughts of the glory and the thrills of battle. Besides, the strict discipline of the fighting forces affords many pleasurable opportunities, even in time of peace, to those officers who are pathologically cruel. How large this class is I will not attempt to decide, but its existence has been commented on by military authors.

To regular army and navy men of all ranks, war means the testing of their talents, the experiencing of the dangers, horrors, and glories for whose sake, consciously or not, most of them have entered the fighting profession. The enlisted man in some countries changes from a disreputable fellow into a hero as soon as war is declared.

War not only rises out of alghedonia but creates or releases cruelty and self-cruelty. Meek conscripts and even the civilian population, which may be thousands of miles away from the scene of action, develop a lust for blood. Crimes of violence become somewhat more common immediately following a war: newspapers, anxious to hold circulations which are ebbing away, manufacture crime waves; and judges and juries are more cruel than ever.

"War is Hell," thought an American general, even if he did not use the words attributed to him. It can bear no close resemblance to an extended tea dance. But the efficient conduct of hostilities perhaps does not require that noncombatants shall be tortured and killed, that the wounded shall be torn to bits, that the

wives and daughters of the enemy shall be raped and massacred. And yet there are few wars, even in our own enlightened age, from which such occurrences are altogether absent. (They are much exaggerated, it is true, for the benefit of bloody-minded noncombatants.) Indeed, the number of people who, directly or indirectly, assist in waging a war has risen greatly; and some recent military methods and policies seem to be based upon the assumption that all persons resident in a hostile country are fair objects of attack.

Menahem of Israel, who "ripped up" the pregnant women of Tiphseh, and the mighty Assyrian monarch who boasted that he had burnt alive all the children of a revolted town, saw no cause for shame in their cruelty. Oliver Cromwell, ordering the massacre of the garrison that had defended Drogheda, believed himself to be carrying out the will of God. We are (it goes without saying) more humane, but we are not in the habit of excluding cruel weapons when they happen also to be dependable.

Personal encounters on the battlefield are comparatively rare in twentieth-century warfare. No longer do generals on white chargers stir up great clouds of dust as they wave their swords, rally their retreating men, and turn defeat into victory. Even second lieutenants are carefully guarded, for the reason that not all the members of an army (with a mental age of twelve, you know) can be trained to fill their places. In spite of all the attempts to make warfare resemble the operations of a huge industrial plant, the horrors and some of the glories remain.

Perhaps the international courts and leagues established in our generation show that the end of warfare is rapidly approaching. It is nevertheless true that plans are being made for the conscription of men and property in time of war on a larger scale than ever previously. It may be that the rays and gases now being developed, because they are capable of killing millions in a day, will soon make warfare too deadly to be invoked under any provocation whatsoever. Or perhaps the next war will kill off the civilized sections of the human race for a few thousand years. It seems, though, that defensive methods are being developed about as fast as offensive ones.

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