II

FREEDOM AND THE WILL TO PERFECTION

POWER, AS WE HAVE SEEN, perfects at least its own will. If the amount be sufficient, power gets a man of prowess where he wants to go, but oftentimes only to reveal to him, alas, that what he wants is not enough to satisfy all that he is. Nor is this merely because wants are illimitable, growing great on what they feed. Intrinsically, freedom is badly distributed among the members of a man who rests his bid for satisfaction merely upon his wants, and it can only be precariously distributed between him and his fellows. Men who get what they want are better off of course than those who get nothing in the lottery of life; but those who learn in the event to want what they get are better off than those who merely get what they want.

Let not the paradox, however, give us more than a moment's pause. As healthy animals, we human beings are not, for good and aye, going to renounce the power enterprise, nor should we. "Neither sanctity nor intellect nor moral enthusiasm," writes John Jay Chapman of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "though they be intensified to the point of incandescence, can make up for a want of nature." It is only that we men are not, even by nature, creatures of a single thrust. We are bifurcated, indeed we are trifurcated, if we may put it so. We want power, we desire perfection, and we aspire to sustain the two together. What this latter demand for unity means in the distribution of freedom, we shall consider in the last chapter. Meantime, let us deal with the simpler complexity: the bifurcation of

man's will, looking at it now from the point of view of the pull which ideals exercise upon our hunger for fulfilment.

To pass from the life of prowess to the life of contemplation means, philosophically, to lessen the emphasis upon reason, which gives us the world as it is and as we can make it to be, and to augment the emphasis upon imagination, which finds the world good as it subsists, both as perceived and as conceived. Historically, there has been a preference for conceptions—the True, the Good, the Beautiful—but we moderns are not without our appreciation of what is perceived to be in all its concreteness. He who, with George Santayana, has "mastered the trick of arresting the immediate" does not need for his reward to inquire too closely whether what he "arrests" be sensa or eidola. It is the hunger itself which we would now obtrude: the will to wonder, to celebrate, and even to worship. This attitude the mere doer chronically deprecates as deficient in utility. But the worth of the imaginative, as every dreamer knows, more than compensates for whatever may prove its lack of use. There is in man not only a will to act but also a will to contemplate; and this world of wonder and worth has its access through the will which we now celebrate.

But let us keep a balance even in our enthusiasm. It becomes our duty, indeed, to show that aspiration is not the only worthy theme of man, as heretofore it has been our privilege to insist that prowess is one of the worthy themes. This historic imbalance corrected, we will turn affirmative at the close of this chapter; for our own standing commitment is to be impartial as between these two authentic wills of man. We wish only to do justice and to serve freedom; and to that double end we now affirm (1) that there are objects answering to our hunger for perfection, (2) that we have a will to appropriate them, and (3) that their exploitation facilitates the distribution of freedom in man and constitutes the major condition of freedom in society. They

also serve freedom who but withdraw and wonder, who only stand and stare. We cry out with Ralph Hodgson, one of the supreme modern exemplifications of man's will to perfection:

> I stared into the sky,
> As wondering men have always done
> Since beauty and the stars were one,
> Though none so hard as I.

The Greek Balance

Now this emphasis upon contemplation is not new, though it must be newly acquired each generation, by men who would be free. The Greek philosophers had a word for it, and a will toward it. Plato climaxed his account of reality with a world of "Forms," uplifted entities subsisting in their own right and persisting for their own sakes. There at the top of the ladder of aspiration stood for the great Greek the "Form of the Good," and closely allied with it, if not organic to it, was the "Form of the Beautiful." Nor was the True absent from the galaxy, nor Justice alien to it. To discover and to disclose and to celebrate these objects of perfection was the supreme end of man. Man's perfect good was to know perfection, though there followed from the knowledge of virtue some prompting to lead a virtuous life. The action that was indicated in the name of the ideal yields another story, with a moral not altogether reassuring. But postponing this for the moment, let us rejoice that at the very prime Western philosophy elaborated objects of contemplation worthy of all concern, as Wordsworth later expressed it,

> Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
> But with high objects, with enduring things.

Nor was Plato without allies in this magnificent enterprise. Aristotle swept the foreground of human experience

with melioristic grace, covering man's active life with the mantle of morality described as "the Golden Mean." But the high hinterlands of fancy were touched still with Platonic grandeur. Here and there ambitious peaks pierced the empyrean, and life fulfilled itself with a vision of God, or with contemplation of what alone was worthy of God's contemplation, the principles of being, or what we might call "the laws of nature." Aristotle had rationalization for the tensions of the will to power, but he had, beyond all this, appreciation for the intrinsic domain subsumed under the gentle sway of the will to perfection. Between the two domains he sought to maintain a fruitful integration, and achieved perhaps a better balance than Plato's; but there was never any doubt for either that if the vocation of man required invidious judgment as between human capacities, it was the realm of prowess which must defer to perfection. The relation between the two realms was in fact that of the human to the divine, though to the divine itself the human was not left wholly alien.

The Christian Imbalance

Just such alienation, however, was what Christianity was to impose as judgment upon all manifestations in the domain of prowess. Perfection alone was worthy of man: "be ye perfect!" But man, in order to be worthy of perfection, must be reborn in the image of the divine. This could not be effected save from on high. What had been lifted up by deitific grace could, and should, draw all men unto it. But the will to perfection was mightily hindered in its upward yearning by the "downward" solicitations of power. All of life became a struggle between the two wills with but one possible outcome, the crucifixion of the will to power and the subordination of all the demands of the flesh. Man's purpose was, in the language of the

creed, "to know God and to enjoy him forever." But woe to him who stressed the "enjoyment" too much! This emphasis left the end of perfection untarnished, but it so subdued the means as to condemn freedom to postponement beyond the grave, and to leave man's mortal life suborned.

It was the bleakness of such a prospect for life on earth that led Wordsworth—and he spoke at large for an awakening sensitivity—to cry out in protest against the "little we see in Nature that is ours":

> Great God! I'd rather be
> A pagan suckled in a creed outworn!
> So might I, standing on some pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn!

The romantic rebellion is, however, now sufficiently over to enable us to return, as Wordsworth lived to return, to a proper appreciation of the great ends to which so much was sacrificed as means. The trouble was not so much with the objects of perfection, as with the misreading of human motivation thereunto. A more charitable rendering of human nature would have found, as we do find, in man an indigenous prompting to perfection, not less toward the perceptual sheen which for the poet covers the sensuous than toward the conceptual magnificence which transforms the ends of endeavour into the very reasons therefor and into the very meaning thereof.

Not all Christian philosophy was equally austere. Nor was the alien soul left wholly helpless in its nostalgia for an eternal home. It was Milton, Puritan though he was, who sang the soul's song of strength.

> So dear to heaven is saintly chastity
> That when a soul is found sincerely so,
> A thousand liver'd angels lackey her.

Such angelic assistance, however, was but to quicken the pace of the journey, not to enhance the lovely scenery along the way. Motivation once supplied through rebirth, and aid afforded, the soul could attain; and, while attaining, could be, with Plato, "forever unharmed." The fruits of the will to perfection were not without celebration in Christian theology, but the roots of it were not on earth intertwined with the human will to power, as the achievement of freedom requires. Man who began life as a pilgrim, ended as a waif of the world.

Though one sense in Milton a certain joy in the sensuous, sinister in aspect remain man's simplest enjoyments. Even where the *Songs of Solomon* cry out for appreciation of the perceptual and racy joy in the sensual, like Rupert Brooke's glad abandon to the sheen of things in the *Great Lover*, the custodians of morals, in the King James' translation, transforms it all with an unparalleled *tour de force* into "Christ's Love for his Church."

Where Greek Philosophy Went Astray

The great service done to Christian civilization by Pagan Greece was to bequeath a standard of perfection to which the will of man could repair now and again, repair without penance and indeed with pride. So wearing upon human means is the exaction of perfect ends that man must ever and anon renew his confidence in the integrity of his own indigenous powers. This renewal is what Greek philosophy bequeathed the Renaissance, as it does anew for every individual who drinks deeply of its sparkling waters.

The supreme achievement of the Greek Way was to produce objects of fixation which were worthy of man's nisus toward perfection. The will to power, of which Christianity thought to purge man, returned after each purge with helpers more horrible than itself, to poison the springs

of Christian charity through highly effective indirection. Inverted lust becomes more menacing to spirit than extraverted lustiness. Morbidity added to desire does not provide catharsis for passion. Monks are hardly dependable guardians of virtue. Clouded contemplation of pure ends is better for the spiritual life than pure contemplation of impure ends. It is not secularism but sectarianism which the spiritual life has to fear. Christian contemplation began in reverence and ended in worship, but worship of a deity who, as set forth by some, seemed a devil to others. "The Being described in [Calvin's] five points," Thomas Jefferson wrote John Adams, ". . . is a daemon of malignant spirit. It would be more pardonable to believe in no God at all, than to blaspheme Him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin." It is charitable for your own clairvoyant poet, Edwin J. Pratt, to allow Calvin in the wisdom of retrospect to recant:

> If I had known that such mad brutes
> Had found, before the world began
> A place within the cosmic plan,
> They would have dished my Institutes.

The corruption of ends involved in a diabolical theology is worse than the pollution of means; for transcendental corruption is harder to get at and so to correct than is political pollution. Ends sufficiently projected as to furnish us cosmic perspective do get out of hand, and—like Frankenstein—do live lives of their own caprice. The gods unsubjected to men's own moral standards are not safe for men. The Dean of a certain American divinity school once described theology as "transcendentalized politics," and he did so with the intent to suggest that all politics requires sanctions and implies bounds.

Something like what is suggested here happened to the high ideals of Greek philosophy: they got out of hand.

The Form of the Good, a noble essence "shining in brightness," is not, as Plato originally conceived it, an object which commits man to more than contemplation. Least of all does it commit its admirers to intervene by its authority in the lives of other men. True, human communication rests upon a subconscious desire to share with others the good which individual experience has disclosed. But there was for the classic Greek little or no *Ought* about it. It was an object, not an imperative. The Greeks had already arrived at the psychological insight that a compulsative motive balks even communication, much more balks communion.

The deepest distinction between Greek and Christian metaphysics would seem to be that for the Greeks the final object of contemplation is a Good, whereas for the Christians the final object becomes an Obligation. It is the difference between an aesthetically and an ethically motivated metaphysics. In Platonic philosophy the Gods were themselves amiable contemplators of the Forms; like men, only more so. In Christian theology, God tends to become an administrator or, even, an executor, of what the Idea of Good prescribes; and in his economy of goodness the duty is laid upon men to implement the resulting Ought. So contemplation is at length lost in the frenzy of conversion and lost more abjectly in the subsequent fury of maintaining the orthodoxy which will keep the saved saved. The will to perfection, that is, is subtly converted into the will to power, though prowess never appears the while in public save in the habits of piety.

That is an old story as touching the "corruption," as we apprehend it, of Christianity. From a contemplative way of life, with believers living in unaggressive enjoyment of a common vision of God, Christianity became a religion of power, with conversion as its form of imperialism and with the administration of prescriptions as the content of its

piety. The story, however, of the devolution of the will to perfection in Greece is not so well known, nor is it so clearly indited. A certain audacity of interpretation is required to essay it. But the need is great to see how, amid the universal demand that the will to perfection supplant or at least moralize the will to power, how, I say, the heroic will to power chronically makes captive of the gentler will to perfection.

Plato's Form of the Good can, and did at times for him, become the Idea of Justice. Now the Good is an individualized concept, whereas the Just is a Form individualized enough but with a social content. Justice, as Plato explains in the *Republic*, is "a harmonizing virtue." Where the content of a concept engages attention, contemplation of the Form subtly passes into action to implement among men the dynamics of the concept that before served only through enjoyment the function of perfecting the will. Already in the *Republic*, however, we see Plato become ambivalent as between the two wills.

On the one side, we hear that those who have been freed from the Cave through enlightenment as to the true objects of knowledge have a duty to return to the Cave to spread the enlightenment which they have received. The will to power is on the march. On the other side, however, we hear Glaucon hazard the notion to Socrates that the Republic "exists in ideal only, for I do not believe," he continues explicitly, "that there is such an one anywhere on earth." And we hear Socrates reply that "there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may take up his abode there." The will to perfection is gloriously visible and sonorously audible in that formulation. (The alternative dynamic rendering which Jowett gives the permissive clause—"may set his own house in order"—reflects a will to power, whether more of Jowett than of Plato is an open question.) But the

moral dynamics of a Form essentially aesthetic proves too much for even Plato, and so he mounts the Pegasus of power to fly from a gentle censorship of poets in the *Republic* to an impassioned effort in the *Laws* to convert atheists and on to a policy of persecuting those who remain impenitent, liquidating the obdurate at last in the name of social perfectionism!

The fatal affinity of these two wills we have already remarked in our discussion of the will to power, which seeks insistently for legitimization in successive forms of morality. This affinity we see again, approaching it now from the vantage of perfection. The ambivalence of the Greek mind is well illustrated in the self-indited epitaph of Aeschylus. He had served nobly and well the will to perfection as poet and dramatist, but his pride was not in that magnificent service sustained through many years; his pride was in his one engagement with the will to power. As Jefferson sought through his epitaph to be remembered as a thinker rather than as an actor, so Aeschylus desired to be remembered as a soldier rather than as a creator. "The grove of Marathon," wrote he for his tombstone, "could bear witness to his good soldierhood, and the long-haired Mede who felt it."

The moral now obtrudes itself: that in Greece both wills were honoured, though in Greek philosophy as in Christian theology there is a tendency to judge the will to power the stronger though the will to perfection remains the higher. In their brush with the Melians, the Athenians were content to register themselves as devotees of pure power: "Of men we know for a fact, and of the gods we believe by tradition, that the strong rule where they can and the weak suffer what they must." The growth of the Ought in the name of the Good constitutes a violation of our thought that the fairer distribution of freedom is conditioned on their equal legitimacy.

We must now, however, explicitly pay heed to an implicit notion of great persistence that objects of contemplation are somehow enhanced by being endowed with a social content and by achieving a place on the agenda of action. To put the long-standing prejudice in terms of a modern American philosopher, John Dewey, value is enhanced by being shared. In the vernacular of those who speak for a collective age, the larger the organization—or, worse still, the *more* organizations—the more the value. We do well to see this emphasis as an ineffectual attempt to escape the discipline of a contemplative life. This becomes for Northrop the sad story of the West's failure in its half-hearted attempts to meet the East.

In the Life of Value Extension and Intension Vary Inversely

The quest for value in and through organization is doomed to frustration, though not to inanity. There is of course some value to be found in collective effort, indeed in any and every organization. Moreover, the ideal values which require and reward contemplation are themselves distributed thinly throughout collective life. But the effort to realize them in action, and particularly in collective action, can fulfil only part of them, and that the smaller part.

Let us turn now to the world of organization with this specific question in mind as to what of ideal value resides in the several forms of human collectivity. We shall hazard alongside Hartmann's law—"The higher the ideal, the weaker; the lower the ideal, the stronger"—an hypothesis of our own: that the intension and the extension of ideal value vary inversely throughout all forms of human aggregation. We cannot get all ideal values together until we turn our back upon the life of action, which proliferates as organization, and concentrate upon the life of contempla-

tion, where alone reside in purity the higher values. Having followed the career-line of contemplative values through the wilderness of socialized existence, we shall then return at the end to re-emphasize the rewards of solitude for the life of perfection and for the distribution of human freedom.

"Ships" of the Civic Line

Since our purpose, however, is to illustrate rather than to exhaust the poverty of the social in the life of perfection, let us but characterize briefly certain standard forms of association with reference to this putative declivity of ideal value in the life of action. We have spoken earlier of *love* and of *liquidation* as marking the extremes of human motivation. If we might count them for the moment as the antipodal banks of the great ocean of organization, then on that ocean itself sails other "schafts" of value: "Friendship," "Fellowship," "Comradeship," and "Citizenship." Let us assess these vessels of the human line.

Friendship is the form of amity most nearly akin to Love, itself the highest form which value achieves socially. The ideal, most romantically conceived, is a state where minds have but a single thought, where hearts beat as but one. But this is a form of association so little extended as to involve only two persons at a time: as for such ideality three is a triangle and four is out of bounds. Now life of such idyllic quality is hardly more than an aspiration, even for two. It seldom exists in its purity, and then not for long; it only subsists, as norm of all that may exist. Its distribution, that is, is as narrow as its excellence is high. That for undiluted love.

Friendship, however, does exist, exists as of high order, though not of the highest order of value and not as touching many people. "Friendship," says Byron, "is Love without its wings!" Between the Davids and the Jonathans of life,

nevertheless, there does flourish a thing of rare beauty. But no man has more than a few friends; and the back-slapper who claims many has few if any real friends. There is not energy enough to sustain such intimacy far and wide, as Addison's couplet indicates:

> Great souls by instinct to each other turn,
> Demand alliance, and in friendship burn.

Friendship is to be highly estimated in terms both of its rarity and its preciosity. It not only doubles our joys and cuts our griefs in two, as Bacon says, but it looses our tongue for difficult communication and stretches our hearts to poignant sympathy. As the Shakespearean dramatist is made to sing, looking round him at the utmost extensity of such friendship—

> Well, if God saved me alone of the seven
> Telling me you must be damned, or you,
> "This," I would say: "This is hell, not heaven!
> Give me the fire and a friend or two!"
> —Alfred Noyes, *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern.*

Yes, friendship is a fair substitute for heaven and a mighty assuagement of hell. But—and this is our point at present—it is severely limited as a bond of amity and narrowly available in the work-a-day world. "It requires more time," as Emerson observed, "than poor, busy men can usually command." At the worst a few friends; at the best, not many. There is deep diagnostic wisdom, too, in Emerson's other remark that "the condition which high friendship demands is ability to do without it." Only appetites whetted to company by solitude can adequately exploit any social bond, and this for a reason which we shall presently reinforce.

Fellowship, over which always hangs the unctuous air of its christening, betokens a much larger extension of amity

but a correspondingly narrowed intension. As a religious term it stands for some formal creed on which at least everybody has agreed to agree. It gestures toward, without reaching, the intimacy and preciosity of friendship. "Forsooth," cries William Morris, in the *Dream of John Ball*, "Fellowship is heaven and lack of fellowship is hell; fellowship is life and lack of fellowship is death; and the deeds that ye do on earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them." But the hope raised by such high diction is more romantic than realistic; for inside any and every creedal agreement to agree lives violent disagreement, characterized by jealousy, envy, pride of opinion and place, and even by hate. If one revolts from the documentation of this by historic example—the Calvins, the Cottons, the Aquinases, and the Cromwells—then he need turn no further than to the nearest poem of Browning, e.g., "The Confessional":

> You think Priests just and holy men!
> Before they put me in this den
> I was a human creature too,
> With flesh and blood like one of you.

Nor have all atrocities of fanaticism been yet imagined, least of all yet written, which can be perpetrated in the name of high conscience when the proselyting mood is on and holy movements for fellowship are afoot. Nowhere, indeed, is the power-complexion of conscience more clearly indicated than in the empire-building of orthodoxy extended in the name of divine fellowship.

Historic and dramatic meanness in the name of brotherhood prepares us to board the last of our intimate-seeming "schafts," and on its decks to bewail the fate which has befallen even *Comradeship* in the modern world. It is a beautiful streamlined ship, the "Schaft" of the comrade. "The dear love of man for his comrade," as Whitman glorifies it—

. . . The attraction of friend to friend,
Of the well-married husband and wife—of children and parents,
Of city for city, and land for land.

In this category of the social we do find indeed an enlarged extension and still a beautifully felt intension. Comradeship is not as broad as the human race nor as wide as even citizenship; but within the outer fringes of unlike-mindedness there is large leeway for amity under the smile of manly indulgence.

Yet the use to which the ideal of comradeship has been put in our day is an object lesson to any romantic hope of extending the bounds of amity without limit. The communists have made this lovely term so mean that in its name liquidation as an expression of love becomes a chronic thing. There is no room for unlikemindedness in the straitened creed of dialectical materialism. Comradeship, for all its glorious advertisement of freedom, becomes a "must," and suspicion and enmity are normally forthcoming in the name of the far-flung imperative, "Be Comrades—or else!"

That, then, is the way the land lies—yes, and the sea! For the only "ship" left on which to take the voyage of life is "*Citizenship.*" It is a roomy boat, but has no intimacy and coziness whatsoever. Everybody's on it, to be sure, of a given time and place; but there is nothing precious for anybody, simply because it houses everybody. Here we have reached the maximum of extension, but the penalty is to reap for our pains the utter minimum of value-intension.

Citizenship is that diluted form of amity which makes room for the *unlikeminded.* All the other "schafts" have sought to provide quarters for the like-minded. To try to make this roomy boat also intimate is but to ruin its roominess without effecting any coziness. If we are to have a form of association that includes everybody, then we must not exclude anybody. We cannot have it both ways; for the extension and the intension of value vary inversely.

The tragedy of the social life is that men are seeking through it what it does not afford. They seek in or through organization what only individuality affords, and it only in solitude. In desperation they wreak upon one another their frustrations. The glory of Citizenship is its all-inclusiveness. To demand that citizens be like us is to authorize them to demand that we be like them. We see how the shoe pinches when it is put on our own foot. So we must treasure citizenship for what it is, a form of association which catches us up when all other forms fail. But we must not expect out of it the precious values which belong only to forms of exclusive association. This is the trouble with the philosophy of "loyalty oaths": that confused men are demanding politically what the form of association does not afford. To demand more than is possible is often to get less than is available.

The moral is not, I may repeat, that there are not values to be found in association. My message is not one of denial but one of affirmation. And what I am most concerned here to affirm is that one may find values in association, but that he must not demand from any one form of association both depth and scope. If he seeks both, as the will to perfection requires, then he must seek in solitude rather than in society and through contemplation rather than in action. I would not go so far, then, as to opine with Steinbeck that there is *no* good collaboration; but I would say with Emerson that men *do* descend to meet, and I would add with Justice Holmes that "only when you have worked alone . . . will you have achieved," achieved, that is, in the idiom of perfection. "It is easy in the world," says Ralph Waldo Emerson, "to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."

Skill is the Word for It

The nearest approach through action to this *summum bonum*, final object as it is for the will to perfection, is found in the career of skill. It is the marriage of mind and muscle into a seamless whole of frictionless functioning which opens the finest doorway on ideal value that action affords. Skill is a term whose meaning, moreover, easily proliferates: there is a skill of body, there is a skill of mind, there is, if we may say so, a skill of spirit. Some men are awkward even in the effort to be generous.

Let us begin with the simpler and the outer, skill of body. To learn to do something, almost anything, so well that the doing of it becomes its own reward, this is the beginning of individual freedom. This is the concrete meaning of the abstract saying that one cannot effectively live *for* ideals until he has ideals within to live *on*. But for this reliance one is left without recourse when the ideals which he lives for meet their nemesis in the opposition to these very ideals from other admittedly good men. One must be prepared to find, what Justice Holmes predicts for every pilgrim of perfection: "that what seems to him to be first principles are believed by half his fellows to be wrong."

A mighty bulwark against such disillusion is the concrete fact that one houses in himself that beautiful replica of formal perfection. To learn to operate the typewriter—to make humble example of present preoccupation—to use a machine in such masterful manner as to constitute the activity an immediate, a kinaesthetic good, that is to have within oneself catharsis for grief as well as means of producing print. Only that man is free who can harness his energies and turn them to a productive focus. Skill is near propaedeutic to perfection. The fine arts are the usual out-spelling of this deep inner thing; but what we need to know, and should never allow ourselves to forget, is that

simple artisanship is high artistry-on-the-make. "He who works with his hands," said a fine automobile mechanic to me in New Orleans, "is a labourer; he who works with his hands and his head is an artisan; he who works with his hands, his head and his heart—he is an artist."

I have said that the object of skill is not important; the process is what counts. Hear C. Day Lewis in a matchless assimilation to common value of honorific and menial skills, with the moral properly located and felicitously drawn:

> I remember, as if it were yesterday,
> Watching that girl from the Village lay
> The fire in a room where sunlight poured,
> And seeing, in the annexe beyond, M. play
> A Prelude of Bach on his harpsichord.
>
> I can see his face now, heavy and numb
> With resignation to the powers that come
> At his touch meticulous, smooth as satin,
> Firm as hammers: I can hear the air thrum
> With notes like sun-motes in a twinkling pattern.
>
> Her task there fetched from the girl the innate
> Tingling response of glass to a note:
> She fitted the moment, too, like a glove,
> Who deft and submissive knelt by the grate
> Bowed as if in the labour of love.
>
> Their orbits touched not: but the pure submission
> Of each gave value and definition
> To a snapshot printed in that morning's sun.
> From any odd corner we may start a vision
> Proving that one and one make One.

Whether we spell the matter out in poetry or in prose, the formula which best aggregates mankind and best fits one at the same time to claim his share in the distribution of freedom is this God-like achievement of doing something

so well that one can say of it, like the deity in the divine throes of the first creation: "That's good!"

What goes for matters of utility, like typewriting, goes fuller still for music and poetry, and for all the fine products which flow from a disciplined disposition. Such a union of idea and fact is productive also of man's intrinsic good. Social forms that have highest value can be fruitfully subsumed under the broad notion of "Skill," the means that fuse indifference into amity frictionlessly.

Skill and Social Values Again

The actual degree of that fusion is never enough, however, as we have seen, to maximize man's will to perfection. Those who think that the value-base, the highest intrinsic good, adheres in the social are, therefore, always being driven to make the degree of amity in any relationship greater than it is. To recall the sad story of the "schafts," "citizenship" neither requires nor permits any maximum of amity. It is sad comment upon this, but in keeping with it, that patriotism waxes greatest under the impact of external foes. More of warmth is in fellowship than in citizenship, so much warmth indeed that the undertow of fellowship is fatally toward fanaticism. It waxes greatest under the impact of heresy. A roomier benevolence is potential in comradeship; but such is the littleness of man that the potential here, too, runs often into its very opposite, malevolence and liquidation. In friendship intimacy maximizes itself into the bright red blood of affection. Yet universal friendship does not exist, nor can exist.

The fact, however, that a man has one friend, even if only one friend, buries in his actual being the treasure of great price: it gives him a home-base from which to operate, from which indeed to seek through all the rungs of social organization the extrapolation of the dear good which he

has found and which indeed he possesses. It is the fact that some ideal good is enshrined in social experience, not merely postulated as something that "ought to be," which raises hope for the collective perfectibility of mankind, as distinct from the improvement of human individuals. But that hope is concrete only as we can budge man from reliance upon collectivities and win him back to bank upon himself. Human reason has its fulfilment in imagination, and this belongs in a peculiar sense to the individual, as distinct from the group. Indeed it invests organizations with whatever final good they have.

Imagination and Perfection

> And God saw everything that he had made [writes Russell Gordon Smith, in *Fugitive Papers*], and, behold, it was very bad. On the seventh day, therefore, God could not rest. In the morning and evening He busied Himself with terrible and beautiful concoctions and in the twilight of the seventh day He finished that which is of more import than the beasts of the earth and the fish of the sea and the lights of the firmament. And He called it Imagination . . . for no other reason was imagination given unto us than that we might refashion the Creator's wretched handiwork, that we might remake an ugly universe in the likeness of our dreams.

Imagination can make the absent to be the present and the ideal to be the actual. Imagination gives us the object itself now at hand. Amity we possess in small measure, the measure of like-minded groups; but we would possess it in measure greater, even greatest. We would have all men like-minded, in some regards at least. Imagination alone can, among human powers, extrapolate toward universalization the actual amity, say, of friendship. And this not without practice, without skill in sympathy. Whether the pathway toward perfection wind gradually through organizations that back our efforts up or rise precipitously

from the alone to the Alone, imagination is the window opening out upon the path.

Where is it, in soberest truth, that you come most nearly face to face with what passes with you as perfection? Is it not when you sit with your chin in your hand and that far-away look in your eyes, communing in reverie with the very tip-top of being? Here, if anywhere, are the materials of perfection; now, if anywhen, is the "hour of truth." Seldom, and never yet fully, has the ultimate implication of this emphasis upon fantasy been drawn. Fawcett in England and Montague in America are conspicuous among the few who have attempted to draw it: the implication seeming to them to be that imagination is the very stuff of being.

Upon that final extrapolation and celebration of meaning it would be pleasant to dwell; but, since we do not have to insist upon it to make our point, we need not divert ourselves with the maximum claim as touching the primacy of the imaginative. The minimum is here enough: the notion that whatever reality be in its own right, it shows its fairest face in utter privacy, where imagination does its magic work. To make perfection even dual would be to dilute it; to make it plural is to poison it; and to make it social is to compromise it. One is autonomy, two is company, three is a crowd, four is an organization—and aridity. Politics, the darling of prudence, is the nemesis of perfection. The final "worth" of politics is as small as its intermediate "use" is great.

Imagination put to the Test

Let us consider now as climax of the will to perfection whether what we have been suggesting is not so: whether, that is, it is not in deep privacy of reverie that we glimpse what we admit to be the uttermost of perfection; and,

whether, furthermore, any perfection in society is not in the image of this privacy and through its virtue.

Take Beauty. Consider, gentlemen, whether it is not alone, you alone with yourself, where you have met face to face, say, your perfect woman—or, ladies, your most perfect man! There alone, gentlemen, is the nose never askew, the eyes never lustreless, the lips never pouty or perfectly pouty, as the mood requires! And most of all and best of all, it is here, here in this intimacy with only yourself for company, that no feature fails to articulate perfectly with all the other features in the full melodiousness of contemplative rapture. In solitude alone materializes the face that can sink a thousand ships and can burn down all the topless towers of Ilium! You, too, know this to be the only final fulfilment of pulchritude.

But consider the abstract no less than the concrete.

Take Truth, gentlemen. Is not the story the same as with Beauty? You swear easily enough, and not insincerely, to tell the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth—so help you God! But where under heaven and when on earth did you fill to the full this easily taken oath? Not, believe me, on any witness stand which you have physically graced. I've been there before you, and after you; and my report is negative. It was on the podium of perfect justice, erected by imagination and graced by the solitary you, the hidden self, in the presence of God, the perfect judge. It has not happened to you on earth, in time. You know that this is so, sadly but truly you will now admit it.

But consider the heavenly no less than the earthly.

The same lesson is written on high. Take God, since the oath has brought us to Him. Where do you find Him of the creed: a being fully trinitarian without any loss of individual integrity? Not in any corporate materialization.

There are in truth as many deities as there are devotees to swear in the holy name. Anselm had it radically wrong: the thought that the definition of pure ideality included actuality—than whom no greater can be conceived! And yet Anselm was not wholly blind; for, upon a deeper view, did he not make conception the norm (though not the measure) of all that is perceptually realizable?

The God of the creed calls for fulfilment in one perfect being of both illimitable power and ultimate perfection. But where has man met omnipotence united in full harmony with unsullied goodness? Does not power tend to cancel power out, and thus end its perfecting tendency in negation? In the classic dilemma of theodicy God either could have prevented evil and wouldn't, or would have but couldn't. Forgive the apparent irreverence. It is intended to lead to a reverence more real than the conventional piety.

We would have a God of all power and a God of all goodness. Such a deity we indeed do have, but only in holy reverie. In actuality, leeway must be allowed for such divergence of interpretation as believers actually obtrude. And on this great issue men deeply serious—J. S. Mill and William James, for a double instance—have been driven to make a choice between a God of goodness and a God of power. The two are actually not the same but so radically different as to make Heaven ring with din and earth run red with holy blood. Only in idea can two such warring deities co-exist. Imagination, unlike Reason, is roomy enough to house contradictories, and that comfortably.

The Conclusion Re-affirmed

Commonsense illustrations lead us back, ever back, toward agreement with the poets in a conclusion less common than it deserves to be: to the conclusion, already suggested, that value wanes with objectivity and waxes with

subjectivity; that value falls with socialization and rises with individualization. Perfection is of imagination alone. Nor is such intuition beyond the ken of scientists, any more than of poets. "Whether a man lives or dies in vain," says President Conant, "can never be measured by the collective activity of his fellows, never by the fruits of war or peace. It can be measured only by the way he faces his own problems, by the success or failure of the inner conflict within his own soul. And of this no one may know save God."

All of which is to say that the will to perfection finds its climax in the farthest remove from the external world of the powers. Perfection is most full when most ideal. Reason is the road to actuality; but imagination marks the high pathway to ideality. It is "the Choir Invisible" that sings the most moving melodies, and the loveliest strain of all will be found in "the Lost Chord."

> Keep one still, secret spot
> Where dreams may go,
> And sheltered so,
> May thrive and grow.
>
> —Louise Driscoll.

A Biographical Illustration

Concretely at the end, let a thumb-nail biography of a modern man illustrate and conclude this crucial matter. The Hon. [now Sir] Winston Churchill has written the biography of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill. Through two large volumes the filial historian follows the declivity of a life which, externally viewed, started politically at the zenith and sank rapidly to the nadir of failure. Tracing the logic of events pitilessly, as a historian must, this noble son bethinks at the end to go within and see what the noble Lord had seen himself to be. And what a mighty transformation is here, for only the price of introspection!

The story of Lord Randolph Churchill's life is complete in itself and needs no comment [writes the son at the end] . . . That he was broken irrecoverably at the moment of maturity, should be evident from these pages. . . .

For all its sense of incompleteness, of tragic interruption, his life presents a harmony and unity of purpose and view. . . .

He contained in his nature and in his policy all the elements necessary to ruin and success. If the principles he championed . . . were the cause of his rise, they were also the cause of his fall. All his pledges he fulfilled. The Government changed. . . . He thought and said the same sort of things . . . while he was a Minister as he had done before. He continued to repeat them after he had left office forever. The hopes he had raised among the people, the promises he had made, the great support and honour he had received from them, seemed to require of him strenuous exertions, and when all exertions had failed, he paid cheerfully the fullest and the only forfeit in his power.

There is an England which stretches far beyond the well-drilled masses who are assembled by party machinery to salute with appropriate acclamation the utterances of their recognized fuglemen; an England of wise men who gaze without self-deception at the failings and follies of both political parties; of brave and earnest men who find in neither faction fair scope for the effort that is in them; of "poor men" who increasingly doubt the sincerity of party philanthropy. It was to that England that Lord Randolph Churchill appealed; it was that England that he so nearly won; it is by that England he will be justly judged.

There is our story written biographically, the moral that the will to perfection is ever extant, but never fulfilled save in imagination, in imagination alone. Not in society, but only in solitude, and in the ideal society which solitude produces, does the soul find perfection. But the soul that has found it, and it alone, can sustain freedom.

III

FREEDOM AND THE WILL TO PIETY

WITH THE PUSH TOWARD POWER and the pull toward perfection, there is also in man, as it were, a lateral nisus toward fulfilment. Not only up and down, but from all around, calls to us our destiny. In distance, no less than in depth, does freedom reside. Perspective, moreover, is both temporal and spacial. He who sees before and after is, as touching freedom, advantageously placed in the distributive process. He who sees all around himself will seldom suffer the diminution of surprise, and will never be completely astounded. With Spinoza, that philosophy is highest in liberty-potential which prepares one for the maximum number of surprises, and that life is best which keeps them to the minimum. As Spinoza further teaches, to get the jump on contingency is to achieve a favoured location for the cosmic lottery of freedom. Ready for what is, the free man is readied for what comes. And he who stands prepared has bettered thereby his access to freedom: he has minimized passion, has clarified action, and has purified contemplation.

Piety without Unction Spells Progress

To see life whole is to live it more steadily; and the purpose and drive to neutralize "the falsehood of extremes" is what we intend by our third topic, the *Will to Piety*. This is nomenclature touched with a certain unction, I admit. Such connotation of the term, "piety," we do not

mean, however, to exploit or even to appropriate, for reasons that will appear. We assume that life is a continuum, however long or short its reach; and so we shall not ground our hope for man in any cosmic amnesia, whereby a man goes to sleep in "time" and wakes up in "eternity." The poet has given the philosophers a word for it, and that word we shall appropriate. The term is "*natural piety.*" If this philosophic connotation clash with the theological denotation, we may well take it as our Socratic sign from heaven that the *spiritual* life of mankind has indeed more to fear from sectarianism than from secularism. Sectarianism has always the under-tow of provincialism, whereas secularism follows the issue where it leads, toward wider and wider perspectives. If this widening reach to the supernatural, our assumption is that even what is "above the natural" will be "natural," as it becomes operative among men. Meantime, the illimitable is most adequately dealt with not as the unctuous and esoteric, but as all that is imaginable.

Such outlook gives us the proper dimension for unanointed piety, and does so without "hang-overs" from shady "deals" between deity and the devil, with man forever the heroic but pathetic pawn. We would, with Alfred North Whitehead, raise religion above the level of barter, and would leave it majestically defined as "what a man does with his solitariness." What a man does with his solitude transforms religion into what George Santayana has beautifully called it, "the fairy tale of morality."

Piety of the saints has, in our parlance, sought unification of man's diverse wills through penance enforced upon his will to power in the name of perfection. Its principle has been dominance. Piety of the roomy-minded seeks unification of man's wills with equal pride in all human powers. Perfection is the perfecting of *powers.* Its principle is not of dominance but of accommodation. Its goal is not aggrega-

tion but contemplation. Co-operation is the word, but competition becomes the self-supporting type of co-operation. To crucify even the flesh is not to render its hungers and thirsts inoperative; it is to make them morbid. Only the man who is freed from self-assault is capable of serving social freedom greatly.

Stoicism in an Age of Science

Natural piety, now in words more positive, is the grace to accept the world and ourselves as we are and the sequences thereof as they come; to make the world better if possible through the means at hand; and at last to learn how to want what we ourselves get, having first done our best to get what we want through the exercise of our total energies. It is clear that an age of science has transformed the older permissibility of acquiescence in the unwanted into a duty of bettering things through the ever swelling efficacy of remedial effort. Plain and simple resignation is no longer an adequate meaning of piety, certainly not resignation before the remediable.

Stoicism, the West's greatest teacher of natural piety, can, as tribute to a dynamic age, now present itself as pragmatism without forfeiting its autonomy or jeopardizing its integrity. Man's location in the cosmos is marked by what is "within his powers." At the best man occupies the Acropolis, never Olympus. And as for the goddess Freedom, whose residence is on Olympus, at proper times . . .

> . . . stept she down thro' town and field
> To mingle with the human race,
> And part by part to men reveal'd
> The fulness of her face—

Man himself must stay his appetite before the golden apple of presumption, in order that he may eat of every other

tree of the garden of life. Only pity for man's final plight, or reverence for his never fully defined possibilities—the double aspect of piety—befits the human estate. Science is today available, is necessary, and is marvellous; but science is not the final formula for the greatest freedom for the greatest number, nobody being omitted in the count. But let us now approach more systematically to this maximization of freedom.

The attitude of *dynamic* acceptance, with which we have now identified natural piety, begins with nature, passes to man, and reaches eventually to all the processes of interaction between the two. Particularly fruitful for freedom—as contrary to historic analyses—do we find the more adverse relations of man to man. Citizenship is not for the like but for the unlike. Brotherhood must not become a sentimentalism and sink to a cesspool of sameness. Our metaphysics of society must find a role for malevolence also; co-operation must for its own health include competition. We would extrapolate the wry moral of Mandeville into domains well beyond the flight of bees. "The doctrine of hatred must be preached," says even the gentle Emerson, "as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pules and whines."

To Solve, to Resolve, to Absolve

The will to piety is inclusive of the other two wills which we have considered, but it is never identical with either of them. As touching the domain of power, the will to piety resides at the fringe rather than in the focus of action. It is a poverty-stricken piety that merely gazes worshipfully at the problematic in nature. The man of piety may also be up and doing, but it must be with "a heart for any fate": he must remember, that is, that the solution of one problem produces another problem and that the whole causal order,

the domain of exact science, is prolific of paradoxes which cannot be solved on the level whence they arise.

Progress, therefore, is not just more of the same—the effect of one cause being in turn the cause of another effect—it is, also, more and more of the different. Progress in depth is multi-dimensional; and a just distribution of freedom must, therefore, outreach the domain of causation. The scientist in seeking to solve problems does not, as the poet is likely to think, "peep and botanize upon his mother's grave"; he sees nature synoptically while dealing with it analytically. To be always solving problems is man's fate as dynamic centre of intersecting powers; but to do this with empathy for all elements and with sympathy for all persons is to convert fate into freedom through the piety of a deepened perspective.

Beyond the problematic in nature, with which the scientist as such is concerned, lie predicaments of men, with which the humanist is preoccupied. A predicament is a problem without a solution, a problem grown chronic. Problems become chronic and baulk intervention when they are interpersonal in location and moral in nature. Two men see the same thing differently or see differences as the same; and each sets tenacious stead on what he sees. Men disagree as to honour, or even as to honesty. They dispute over beauty, and fanatically persecute one another in the common name of holiness. Reason itself sets up a din—

> . . . wild with beauty men mishear
> From choirs of song as near and dear
> To Paradise as they.

When reason thus becomes the cause of strife, men have passed beyond the simple causation intended by science and are already in the political field, where persuasion alone suffices and yet where it proves insufficient. There is in man, moreover, sometimes sleeping but never dead, a will

to see both sides of even hopeless deadlocks, and to spread the mantle of pity over even the impasse to which one himself contributes. The patriot in you may, indeed—

> Honour, while you strike [him] down,
> The foe that comes with fearless eyes.

Politics is the natural habitat of this piety-of-process: the domain in which equally honest and equally intelligent men (so far as mortal man is in a position to judge) are so at odds that neither will ever be able in finite time to convince, persuade, or, in a free society, intimidate the other. The romanticist will not really believe that somebody cannot always convert somebody "to reason" until, in a moment of rare grace, he catches himself as cause of that failure, i.e., sees himself as others see him.

At such an impasse between them, John Bowring reports that Jeremy Bentham saw himself both subject and object of such a failure of reason—and what he did about it. "I shall not change your mind, I see," said the Master; "you will not change my mind, you know. If we go on, I shall give you pain, or you will give me pain, and in either case pain to both will be the consequence. We will never talk on this matter again."

"Nor did we," adds Bowring.

It was this Jeremy Bentham who so combined the "*principles*" *of Morals and Legislation* as to make disentanglement of the two possible only for genius. The moralist's extremity becomes, as we have already indicated, the politician's opportunity; for where there are no agreements, and where no agreement to disagree is possible, it becomes necessary to create compromise from chronic dissent. The test of finite reason is whether in such a pinch men who cannot agree to disagree, may nevertheless meet on some *tertium quid*.

Thereupon and therefrom ensues a process humble

enough in its description, but fecund in its consequences, a process which calls for the most resolute exercise of the will to piety. I refer again to the political accommodation which has been called "creative bargaining." Honest men in a free society can *resolve* predicaments which, considered as problems, it were impossible to *solve*. Resolution takes the form of consent through mutual concessions, in which neither side gets what it thought, or thinks, right or just, but in which violence is avoided, movement is renewed, and preciosities belonging to the will to perfection are returned with honour to private conscience for another sojourn—awaiting recurring chances at implementation. The will to piety bears witness to itself in these premises by exclaiming: "What a pity that intelligent men cannot do better collectively than to effect some miserable hodge-podge of compromise!" And of ideals what a double pity, as Wordsworth says, when

> They stir us up against our kind;
> And worse, against ourselves.

But the will to make the best, rather than the worst, of the shambles left by wills competing for power while masquerading honestly each and all under the mantle of perfection, this is magnificent in itself and is far from negligible in promoting a more tolerable distribution of freedom among men. There is certainly little freedom for the lethal victims of liquidation, by way of alternative, and only a queasy freedom for the perpetrators of violence. The persisting temptation, nevertheless, to make the worst of man's political predicaments is well described in the history-impregnated lines of Edwin Pratt:

> For all were pledged, with teeth and claws
> To racial brood and comradeship,
> Devoted to the national cause
> And loyal to the boundary strip.

There is, in spite of periodic recessions to impetuosity, further function for this will which begins in pity. The best that the scientist can do to solve his problems is often not enough, as for instance the problem of cancer, when the hopeless stand at his door, and the hopeful peer in at the windows, of his laboratory. The best, too, that the politicians can do to resolve the predicaments of men is not enough, particularly in an atomic age when every breakdown or even slowdown of diplomacy threatens the breakup of civilization.

The fact that the best one can achieve as man or as citizen is not enough, itself produces the third and most crucial field for the will to piety. For such failures produce, and the more sensitive men are the more they produce, a sense of guilt. It is a monstrous challenge to human understanding to behold an order of nature that is criss-crossed with contradictory currents and more monstrous still to see pock-marked with guilt the consciences of the most responsive men and women because they are driven by their own natures to attempt more than they are empowered by nature or grace to accomplish. To make a situation worse because you cannot make it perfect, that chronic predicament calls for the most complete out-pouring of pity.

> When I have ceased to break my wings
> Against the faultiness of things,
> And learned that compromises wait
> Behind each hardly opened gate,
> When I can look Life in the eyes,
> Grown calm and very coldly wise,
> Life will have given me the Truth,
> And taken in exchange—my youth.

Nor is the pathos in this, Sara Teasdale's, case made much more poignant, but only more piteous, by the climax of her subsequent suicide in final deference to "the faultiness

of things." Compare for Canada the predicament of Niels Linstedt in Grove's masterful novel, *Settlers of the Marsh.*

One out of each twenty-two citizens in the United States may expect, statistically speaking, to spend in this generation some time in a mental institution. That is loud testimony to the wreakage of this sense of guilt, though not as raucous as the further testimony of one divorce out of three-to-four-marriages. It is veritably an "Age of Anxiety" in which we live. The fact of guilt is no new thing; it is as old as man: it troubled our fathers as conviction of sin. But the will to sorrow over it. the effort to understand it, and the determination to ameliorate rather than to exacerbate it, this is a new and hopeful sign. They also serve human freedom who only soften the hardness of the inner estate of man.

There is quick limit reached, however, by an ameliorative thrust based upon intervention by man in man's affairs. Said one psychoanalyst to another by way of salutation: "You're all right; how am I?" Religious conversion, too, operates upon an assumption tinged with presumption. Intervention has its justification, particularly in the case of the young; but it has limits more quickly reached than any "do-gooder" will ever recognize. Even God presumably cannot forgive a sinner who is not man enough to take the initiative in the processes of grace. The final thrust toward freedom is for a man to *absolve* himself from the incidence of useless guilt. Absolution does not come by denial of guilt, nor through cynical renunciation of the ideals whose presence precipitate the guilt. It cannot be imposed, though it can measurably be achieved—and with its achievement comes a mighty augmentation of liberty.

Absolution can come, and does come, only through the fullest exercise upon one's self of the will to piety. It comes in successive increments. To see oneself in the purview of nature is to lessen the readiness of spirit to blame animal

urgency for being what it is. To see oneself in the perspective of society, where nobody will stick up for him who will not stick up for himself, this is to transcend the easy habit of blaming ourselves for consequences of a natural and not unfruitful self-love. To see the nature of political problems clearly is no longer to expect perfection from a process whose substance is not in its preciosity but in its commonalty. To see why politics is as it is—that good men insist on being good, each in his own way—this is to be on the way to self-forgiveness as a citizen. The world is old and most of its woes antedate our birth and will post-date our death. Why should we act as though we were God—or the devil!—when we are only men and women with severely limited powers, though—thank God!—with enlarging powers to understand and with expanding powers to improve.

To understand all, so runs the proverb, is to forgive all: perchance it is even to forgive oneself. With such absolution comes easier adjustment to both God and man. It is not impossible to sympathize with a worm, in his proper wormhood—"No God," says Emerson, "dare wrong a worm" and there is a Hindu incantation which begins "On things that crawl my love is shed . . ."—but it is difficult and not highly praiseworthy, either, to sympathize with a man who grovels and crawls, wallowing in a slough of guilt. "Absolve you to yourself," says Emerson, "and you shall have the suffrage of the world." The first fruit will be that your resolution of your own predicaments will measurably improve and your solution of your problems will become better than it was before. The last fruit will be the respect of others for one who now commands his own self-respect.

The will to piety is, then, first, the will to pity the pitiable which cannot be helped; it is, second, the will to see all things in perspective and to understand their relationships; and it is, third, the will to make more potent

through the power at hand whatever cries out for amelioration. Last of all, and above all, piety is the will to extend to oneself the same courtesy which one's *noblesse oblige* has long extended to certain others.

Moral Rules in Anti-Climax

This coming to terms of man with himself prefigures, as it certainly seems to condition, an enhanced appreciation of adverse relations, already broached, that habitually arise between man and man in the intersection of their several wills to power. We have historically deepened our guilt and worsened our ameliorative thrust by insisting, for instance, upon "The Golden Rule" as defining all relations between all men, Monday as well as Sunday. Such is not economical use of indigenous ideality. "Blue Mondays" are natural but ineffective penance for purple Sundays. The Golden Rule is "golden" enough, let there be no mistake; but it applies really only between golden-hearted people. One wrongs the rule and wrongs himself when he holds himself responsible for observing it in relation to stony-hearted men, for it is not even the way to incline them toward golden-heartedness. There are those, as we say, who in their violence, understand only, at the beginning, the language of gruffness.

The "Silver Rule" is gradation to them. It is more effective for more people, contenting us, as it would, with a mild negativity rather than insisting upon a positivity too vibrant to sustain in "the thick of thin things." *Not to do to others what you would not have them do to you,* is not electric with romanticism; but it constitutes idealism, nevertheless, in a practical mood and tense. But even beyond this level of moral declivity an "Iron Rule" is required for those of iron hearts and mailed fists. Idealism must not be trigger-happy if it is to have the last shot with the communists.

When men take systematic advantage of our tolerance, boasting in advance of their "seizure of power" that they will not allow us the freedoms which they enjoy from us, then it is time for us to face reality—though that we can also do with pity—it is indeed time to transform our counsel into a rule tough enough to support itself and to save ourselves from liquidation. The "Iron Rule" reads: "*Don't let others do to you what you would not do to them.*" They also serve idealism who resolutely withstand aggression.

Anodynes to Idealism

Given toughness to meet diabolism befittingly, day-to-day accommodation to idealistic romanticism can then be made in various ways. The historic manner has been that of "rationalization." We ought not to kill, say we to ourselves like true idealists; but since our own life seems to depend upon the death of other animals, vegetarians rationalize by saving all animals; but, at the very same time, turn deaf ears to the inarticulate moans of vegetables as the cruel knife slithers through their dispersed hearts. Even Gandhi turned a deaf ear to the cry of vegetables, though his sympathy for animals led him to risk his wife's death rather than authorize her to drink beef-broth, despite the order of her physician.

With men we start our universal dictum against killing. But when we discover that sometimes even in the human world it is either they *or* us, we then easily enough distinguish killing from murder, and justify the killing of the bad by the good, the dominance of the intolerant by the tolerant. We excuse the killing of killers by the thought that thus there will be less killing altogether. These accommodations are all well enough, though they do not function without leaving some increment of guilt and so without inflicting certain scars upon the sensitive soul.

Levels in the Art of Accommodation

Sufficient unto such justification is the human ingenuity therefor. I would not if I could deprive any man of any rationalization which protects his sanity and augments his inner freedom in this medley of a world. It is the business of the philosopher in each man to become a good custodian of his own thoughts. But truth is not without its protective value; and it is arguable that it would be better for man to face the facts, substituting as rapidly as may be rationality for rationalizations. It is well and good, when dealing with fellow-citizens, for us politically to practice the art of "strategic obfuscation"; but, as James Russell Lowell, diplomat as well as poet, says:

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.

On the easy impetus of poetry let us now return to politics to illustrate these sterner moments of decision, for each man and nation his "hour of truth." Beginning in superstition, we pass through rationalization to freedom from illusion. We shall see, concretely, how real freedom begins in the banishment of self-deception and how it flourishes in the capacity and stamina to face the facts of life, self-forgivingly.

1. One Stephen Van Rensselaer, in 1825, cast the deciding vote for President [of the United States] in the delegation of the crucial state of New York. He was pledged, as it was understood, to one candidate, Crawford, but he cast his vote, on the first ballot for another candidate, John Quincy Adams. But this Stephen Van Rensselaer was a pious man. And he explained thus: "Upon taking his seat, being still in doubt how to vote, he had bowed his head in prayer and upon opening his eyes had seen at his feet a ballot bearing Adams' name." *That* he took as a sign from heaven, jumped instructions, and cast his ballot for the other man.

That is an example, to be sure, of political perfidy; but it represents the piety of superstition, even before the level of rationalization is reached.

2. "I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you gentlemen that I went on my knees and prayed to Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night." [Thus President McKinley to a group of Christian ministers, in regard to America's first venture into what was then called "imperialism."] "And one night," the President continued dramatically, "it came to me in this way—that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellowmen for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed and went to sleep and slept soundly."

That is clearly a case of accommodation by means of what the sophisticated world has come to smile at as "rationalization." Contrast with these a case of facing the facts.

3. Abraham Lincoln was what Lord Charnwood designated as "a citizen of that far country where there is neither aristocrat nor democrat." At a perilous time in the War between the States, an hour when counsel was darkened by defeat, a group of Christian ministers, as in McKinley's case, came to the White House to tell the distraught president what his duty was as touching the burning issue of slavery. Lincoln began his reply with the expressed hope that what he was going to say would not strike them as irreverent. He observed, however, that he was subject to the most contradictory advice as to his duty, all advice purporting to come from the will of the same deity. Then he hazarded the guess that if God had an unambiguous message for him, God would deliver it to him in person, not to somebody else. But then, he added in a tone properly filled with pathos, that:

"These are not, however, the days of miracles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a direct revelation." That is the pathos, but here is the resolution, added without applause, so far as the record goes:

"*I must study the plain physical facts of the case, ascertain what is possible, and learn what appears to be wise and right.*" [Italics mine.]

This is a case of natural piety, operating through the means and at the level of rationality. Admittedly it is often so hard to "face the facts" that anodynes must be allowed and indirections countenanced. But it is the duty of men at last to face the facts. Therein alone lies inner freedom from guilt and therefrom alone does freedom get externally distributed among men.

The Fact of Facts to be Faced

Now among the "facts," of the Lincoln illustration, which are hardest to face, is the fact which keeps recurring and which sets the full stage for natural piety, the moral fact-of-facts: *that never have all good men been agreed upon goodness, nor all just men on justice, nor even all holy men on holiness.* This is, now to generalize, the "adverse relation" of which we have been in several places speaking.

Men have used every sort of deviousness with themselves to escape admitting and facing this simplest observable fact, that equally honest and intelligent men do at times find themselves in irremediable conflict with one another, a conflict worse, it appears, when it is over "spiritual" than when over "material" things. Historically men have not known how to handle this situation save by thickening their skins, readying their guillotines, and in the sequel deepening their guilt. The strife for spiritual sameness has pock-marked the world with impiety. The slow growth in favoured places of tolerance, however, is testimony to the persistence through history of a will to piety, even as touching processes seen as malevolent.

Thomas Jefferson rightly describes the historical facts and correctly charts the path of aspiration, in putting forcefully a question which he proceeds clearly to answer, adapted here to catechismic form:

"The care of every man's soul belongs to himself. . . . Why subject it to coercion?"

"In order to produce uniformity," comes the answer.

"But is uniformity of opinion desirable?"

"No more so than that of face and stature."

"Is uniformity attainable? Millions," answers Jefferson, "of innocent men, women, and children, since the introduction of Christianity have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch toward uniformity."

If one then ask, as one is prompted to ask, "What is the effect of insisting upon what is both impossible to achieve and undesirable to have?" Jefferson answers sadly that the only apparent effect has been, apart from reddening the earth with brother's blood, "to make one-half the world fools, and the other half hypocrites."

Summarily taken, this Jeffersonian doctrine may now be exploited as what we may agree to consider the very threshold of freedom, yea the secret key to a maximum distribution of this precious spiritual commodity, "Liberty." It is the simple notion that men do not have to agree upon fundamental beliefs in order to have unity and to beget progress. Indeed, they do not need to deepen their guilt by trying to clear their consciences of what they need not concern themselves with in the first place: what others believe. In the field of faith, freedom is illimitable; its distribution there may safely be made equal and its enjoyment may become for each man absolute.

The Great Discovery: Its Incidence as Touching both Power and Perfection

It was really a crucial day in human history—a magnificent deed—when piety was stretched to cover all

deviations in faith, and when pity became the proper response toward "error" (as but the other fellow's fumbling way of getting at the "truth"). I speak of the day as having dawned, of the deed as being already accomplished; it is so only in norm. There are still actual states, alas, where heresy is made identical with conspiracy; and there are still functioning churches—alas, alack!—where deviations, if thought "mortal," are adjudged damnable. But the standard of absolute freedom is now erected for all men to see and to which all generous men may repair, adjudging adversely those who do not so repair. It is something to know the truth at last, even though it be lifted high above much prevailing practice. However high, it is luminous with guidance: it shows men which way to go.

This discovery that unity can be had more dynamically without uniformity, has enabled man on the inner side to lessen his sense of guilt by not blaming upon himself what is, and ever was, beyond his powers, i.e., the innermost faith of other men. And it has enabled him on the outer side to exploit for purposes of progress human differentials, which would otherwise mark the gravestones of hope:

When a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad earth's aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from East to West . . .

Consider now, in summary, the fecundity of this attitude as the "regulative ideal" prescribed for, when not prevailing in, free societies:

1. Howling human mobs, frenzied with fanaticism, are reduced to meetings by means of parliamentary procedure whereby each gets heard in turn.

2. Through the *noblesse oblige* of majority rule, decisions are made after all have been heard, and minorities sustain their privilege to criticize after losing their right to govern.

3. And, best of all, through recognition of the infinitude of truth and the finitude of human understanding, differences can be turned to inestimable account in the expansion of spirit and in the growth of justice.

Under the operation of this norm of inner and outer freedom, civilized men no longer merely tolerate differences of opinion: we now welcome them lest otherwise something precious be lost. We no longer grudgingly permit minorities to criticize majority rule; we encourage such criticism as the only insurance against grievous error postmaturely impossible to correct. Freedom of speech is now accorded others hardly more as *their* right than as *our* need. "Self-criticism" does indeed become, as with Governor Stevenson, "the secret weapon of democracy." Certainly free society has gathered strength and increased its momentum on the long journey from reluctant tolerance of "error" to glad acceptance of "deviations" as treasured varieties in the economy of truth. Tolerance rests upon the presumption that those who practice it know the truth but that others do not. We now arrive at something like the opposite conclusion, i.e. that nobody knows the final truth, or that everybody knows it. This acknowledgment budges us beyond tolerance and prompts an attitude of creation rather than one of persecution.

Suspected Ideals Made Safe by the Discovery

Consider, further, how such a discovery—of the absolute norm of freedom—functions to clarify ideals that have long been suspect in their ambivalence. We have always known that liberty without a norm turns easily and naturally into license. We have always known that fraternity without a norm turns easily and almost inevitably into fanaticism. We have long suspected that the equality ideal, in our democratic galaxy, is somehow the norm which saves liberty and

fraternity from their fearful opposites—*and* makes them to dwell amicably together in the democratic trinity of ideals. *Equal* liberty does not turn into license and a fraternity of men *equally* free to believe, and having equal access to action, does not harbour fanaticism. Equality, we have vaguely seen, is the keystone of the archway of democratic ideals.

But what we have not seen with equal clarity is how this saviour of other ideals can save itself. In plain words, how is equality to be saved from mediocrity: how preserve in a society dedicated to this symbol of levelling, the colour of contrast, the incentive of differential ownership, the prod of superior talents fully recognized? Not only have we not seen how to do all this; but friends of democracy, wiser than we—like John Stuart Mill—and friendly observers—like Alexis de Tocqueville—have mortally feared the undertow of mediocrity upon democratic virtue. "It becomes difficult," says Professor Butterfield in a previous lecture of this series, "to make [men] see that a leader who offers us egalitarianism in the place of freedom is making too good a bargain at our expense; for when we have lost our freedom we shall have no weapon left with which to defend equality."

These cumulative *caveats* lead us to remark that equality is a directional ideal, not a descriptive one. Even its most firm exponents, like Thomas Jefferson, have never supposed that the ideal describes what is, or what can be, or what should become. It prescribes almost the opposite of what it seems to describe for literal minded men. Jefferson himself proclaimed an aristocracy of virtue and talents, among whose rights was rulership. But notice his carefully chosen terms to describe it, "of virtue and talents." That men are different he never doubted; and that some are superior to others he took for granted. What he needed to know was how to spell out the difference with justice: what were the genuine inequalities that prevail among men? Fictitious inequalities of race or colour or creed breed

resentment as the response from talents unrecognized and breed arrogance on the part of those raised to prominence adventitiously. The ideal of equality, as an operative norm, means only this: Until we know who's who, we must treat men—especially treat children—as if they were equal, not because they are so and not because we shall try to make them so, but in order to find out who is who: how unequal they really are. This latter item we do not know, but precisely this we need desperately to know.

This item known—the genuine inequalities of men—we shall then know two important further facts: one negative, one positive. Negatively, we shall know how to lessen aggression as the motive of conduct on the part of those who are actually inferior in this or that regard, and so how to lessen guilt. Men accept inferior rank and privilege if they have had a chance at deference and found that they could not sustain the chance. The treating them from youth as if equal, discloses to all alike what the true comparative status is, and tends mightily to reconcile humbler men to humbler lots in life. Ambition which on trial men cannot sustain, they can often contain as their ordeal of character. By treating men as equal, we shall come to know, positively, where lies strength and beauty and cleverness and steadiness, and in what degree. Knowing where and to what degree, we shall find how to tap and to turn to common account the varieties and the excellencies of given men and women. To minimize aggressions as motives and to maximize opportunities as rewards, this is the double increment of the equality ideal thus understood.

There is no other way known to man of disclosing true capacities and of turning them to full account, save by operating upon the maxim of equal opportunities, beginning as early as possible and continuing as long as equal chance can be sustained in open competition. This, then, is the

maxim of equality, taken not descriptively but prescriptively. In summary, equality is a methodological device for ascertaining and appropriating its opposite, inequality.

Democracy as Process with Great Men to Operate It

As the discovery thus purifies egalitarianism, so also it facilitates our political practice, whether as in the American Bill of Rights, written down in words, or in the British Common Law, written in the hearts of men and broadening down, as it does, "from precedent to precedent." We first, and we alike, celebrate the triumph of our great discovery—of unity without uniformity and of justice with variety—by maintaining a two-party system of politics in which each side is encouraged to turn inevitable competition between men who are different and unequal into a self-supporting and mutually beneficial co-operation. The will to power gets emancipated for a career of perfection through piety to such a process as democratic politics is.

Our type of politics furnishes a fair field in which can flourish a thousand associations of like-minded men, and through a climate of opinion created by such unfrustrated citizens it realizes in its precious citizenship co-operation also between the unlike-minded. It unites a progressive past with a promising future in a process which renews itself in continuous self-correction. A process so clairvoyant of immortality deserves further illustration; for it is the conception which not to get is to minimize, and which to get is to maximize, every prospect of freedom. Let me illustrate it, then, with Thomas Jefferson at the crucial level of freedom of thought and with Abraham Lincoln at the crucial level of national action. Following these illustrations, let me close by parading the methodology of James Madison in forming and of his fellow-citizens in furthering the Constitution of the United States.

1. *Jefferson and Absolute Freedom of Thought*

The dramatic affirmation of Jefferson's devotion to absolute freedom of thought is chiselled in marble around his heroic head in the temple of his fame at Washington: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." The more undramatic story is told in his suffering every indignity rather than make public a matter which he thought essentially private. Jefferson's religious beliefs were not orthodox, for his time or ours. How unorthodox they were was, during his political stewardship, a matter of rumour, and rumour, as usual, made the most of the doubtful. Jefferson suffered greatly in spirit from adverse judgment by lesser men.

Certain friends asked him to stop the mouths of calumny by an open declaration of the truth. He refused. Other friends asked privately for his credo; and, politically reassured by its mildness, they begged permission to publish in their name—since he would not do it in his name—what he believed. This he also refused. One pressed upon him reason for his adamacy in continuing to suffer unjustly and, it appeared to his friends, unnecessarily. Jefferson's reply is immortal. It goes to the very root of the matter. "It behoves," he writes to Dr. Benjamin Rush, his close friend, "every man who values liberty of conscience for himself . . . to give no example of concession betraying the common right of independent opinion by answering questions of faith, which the laws have left between God and himself." *He would not answer questions, that is, which others had no right to ask.* To do so would encourage, if not in some way legitimize, the impermissible. "I have considered religion as a matter between every man and his maker," he says simply in further explanation, "in which no other, and far

less the public, has a right to inter-meddle." Privacy is absolute, but it can remain so only by remaining private.

To put it more positively, Jefferson saw clearly that if thought is to be absolutely free, it must be kept separated from action, which can never be absolutely free. So he erected a wall of separation as absolute as possible between church and state, which is to say between feeling and thinking, on the one side, and action, on the other side. Religion is too precious to be compromised, and so are all things which touch us to the quick; but the precious can be kept pure only by keeping to itself. Once one obtrudes his faith as public policy, concerning which other men have other beliefs, somebody's freedom of thought is limited. This as the price for absolute freedom of conscience is not everywhere well understood. Private conscience is sacred and absolute only so long as it is private. If one insists upon *doing* what his private conscience tells him he ought to do, then his right to act is determined not by conscience, but by compromise, which is the price of getting any widespread (majority) agreement. It is hard to have it so; but it cannot be otherwise. Like many hard sayings, its acceptance is highly fruitful.

To have a domain where the norm of freedom applies absolutely is requisite, lest devotion to freedom dissipate itself in successive accommodations without anybody's being clear as to what is compromised. The absolute standard at Greenwich, whether "used" or not, is full of "worth": it enables all other standards to be judged and corrected. Once we know where home-base is in the game of freedom, we can estimate our distance from it as we go necessarily from private thought and feeling through the gentle action of speech and into collective action as agreed-upon public policy.

Jefferson saw no way to define the right of action, which is always relative, save by holding absolute the right of

belief. Absoluteness plays out with the advent of power, for to each power there is a countervailing power. Once the will to power becomes operative, the will to perfection has course again only through the compromise of all the power-claims. Such agreement can never be absolute, but it can be final against any individual claim, including the claim of a conscience, which is absolute as long as it remains autonomous. There is no heresy in the life of the spirit, and the only way to discover "error," and to diminish it, is the free play of ideas in the competition of communication. And so there prevailed in Jefferson the faith that mankind has nothing to fear from error, as long as truth is left free to combat it—indeed the desperate faith that unless this is so, and that men can therefore progressively govern themselves the better, he would conclude, as he says, "either that there is no God, or that He is Malevolent."

2. *Lincoln and the Limited Freedom of Action*

The absolute freedom which Jefferson allowed all men in thought, neither Lincoln nor Jefferson could claim for himself in action, and especially not in collective action. Freedom shrinks as the field of action expands. Almost the same absolute freedom that applies to thought, applies to speech; almost, but not quite. One has no absolute right to cry "fire" in a crowded theatre, though he has an absolute right to think fire and to "burn up" others with the thought. What a man thinks is his business; what he does is, or may without further ado become, everybody's business. As the domain of action enlarges, the extent of freedom shrinks until as national policy you have, even if you be premier or president, no freedom to act save as you can persuade the majority to your wisdom. What a private man thinks is important to him, may indeed be of final importance; but it is neither here nor there in affairs of

state. He may *think* something is right; he may "really think" it; he may "really and sincerely" think it; he may *honestly and deeply*, as well as "really and sincerely" think it. It does not boot, save as it can be made to count in creating a majority who agree with him.

It takes profound piety to admit that it is wrong to inflict a policy which one within himself "knows" to be right. It takes even more robust piety to execute a majority decision as public policy which one deeply thinks to be wrong. Piety has as its supreme object a process that bridges this gulf from private absoluteness to public relativity, and in doing so unites the past and future through a continuing creation. This piety of process Lincoln had, reinforced by a most lucid distinction between what is private, and so is completely free, and what is public, and so is subject to circumspection.

This is a matter of such delicacy that I may interrupt the Lincoln illustration to introduce a poignant passage to the same effect from a private letter of Lord Cromer as to his predicament between the public and the private self.

> Surely it is a cruel fate [writes he in 1884] that drives me with all my strong opinions against an extension of territory and the assumption of fresh responsibilities and with strong anti-Jingo convictions which deepen every year I live, to be constantly making proposals [in regard to Egypt] which, at all events at first sight, have a strong Jingo flavour. . . . In this uncongenial political atmosphere, I am always having to act and speak in exactly the opposite way to what I should wish.

Returning now to Lincoln, with a certain relief from corroboration, the Illinoian knew that slavery was wrong, if he "knew that anything was wrong"; he had, he said, always known it. But this did not morally commission him to abolish slavery. To the contrary, said he, "I have never understood that the Presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and

feeling. . . . My oath even forbade me to practically indulge my primary abstract judgment on the moral question of slavery. . . . And I aver that, to this day, I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery." Indeed, says he now affirmatively, "Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due *the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation.*" [Italics mine.]

That is piety toward the past, piety that matches, as it resembles, that of the ancient Stoics. Lincoln had piety toward the future, too; but it did not speak with the same accent. The past is out of hand; the future is in hand. So piety toward the future prescribed the remedying of the remediable, which meant keeping the territories free of slavery. Man is responsible for the future, so far as his power reaches; but God alone is custodian of the past. Lincoln's piety tied the future and the past together by common devotion to a political process which makes the "public" and the "private" a function each of the other. The compromise process got Lincoln's final deference, as it got Jefferson's, because it was, as Lincoln put it, "the spirit of concession and compromise which first gave us the Constitution, and which has thrice saved the Union. . . . That spirit," he added, "which has never failed us in past perils, . . . may be trusted for all the future." It was piety which enabled Lincoln to call right in perspective what out of perspective was wrong, and *vice versa*. Lincoln kept his sanity, and increased his efficacy, by an honest and necessary distinction between what is public and what is private. The term "right" may be assigned to either. But the assignment requires a flexibility of meaning. Justice Holmes later gave phrase to what Lincoln and Jefferson had known and practised before him, sad reassurance that "Certitude is not the test of certainty."

James Madison and the Process that United Free Thought and Limited Action

It was this same circumspection at the prime which made James Madison, as he has since been called, "the Father of the Constitution." Madison essays both the proof of the principle, and the implementation, of what we have dubbed our greatest single social discovery. He undertakes to show that, while variety is natural and dissension is inevitable, both are conducive to progress under the continental conditions prevailing in America. His thought applies as well to Canada as to the United States of America.

In *Federalist Paper* No. 10 Madison enunciates the thesis of Hobbes as touching human nature, without drawing Hobbes' conclusion as touching government. Hear how confidently he states the case for political pluralism. "So strong," says he, "is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and to excite their most violent conflicts." Those are strong words, and they apply, says he, as much to "speculation" as to "practice." Madison saw, what lesser men had not seen, that to distinguish the two realms was to make them both safe for mankind.

Given the inevitability of human differences, and differences which cannot always be adjusted argumentatively, what is to prevent, that which George Washington greatly feared, the breakup of republicanism upon the shoals of human divisiveness? It is precisely these premises which Hobbes used to derive and to legitimize totalitarianism. This is really the question Madison poses in order to show that while factions must be, they need not be lethal. How not? They may indeed be creative. How so?

Is Madison's reliance a faith in science, confidence that men can learn the cause of partisan strife and by treating the cause, prevent the effect? No, it is a venture, the rather, in morality, with piety standing guard at the gate. Madison's is a faith, which we need to renew, that men can become civilized enough *to contain* their ideals of perfection so that the poison of power can be publicly dissipated through opportune compromises. The cause of our partisan predicament we know; and we cannot cauterize it, because it is liberty. The baby is not to be thrown out with the bath water. We have here not a problem to be solved, not even when it becomes the familiar and age-old dissension over property, between the "haves" and the "have nots." Not a problem, this is a predicament to be lived through and, Madison thinks, to be lived down. Permitting the persistence of the cause, we must treat the effects, and that homeopathically: the disease of partisanship can be cured only by being indulged. Let it run its course, and it is natural piety to believe that its course will not prove a curse.

What is the ground for Madison's hope that the national centre can hold permanently against the pull of the periphery? It is that the principle of partisanship itself will break the partisans up before they can break the nation down. Natural divisiveness will be weakened by distance and mitigated by number. Given continental distances and a booming population, not enough partisans in different places can get together in the same place, or party, to create and to sustain a majority. Divisiveness thus cancels itself out, and leaves commonalty to obtain. Meantime prudence comes to prevail, where patriotism fails, as the bond of national unity. We're all afraid of the big, bad wolf, and our fear makes differences among the sheep seem mild. Not high but lowly motives enable stubborn men to

compromise their differences, accepting meanwhile a minimum of common action and enjoying all the while a maximum of freedom with all its luscious fruits of variety.

. . .

Who is to venture an easy nay to this faith that has already prevailed for nearly two centuries in the United States of America and for nearly a century in the Dominion of Canada, buttressed in both nations by a sturdy background of seven hundred shared British years since Magna Charta?

Postlude

The one theme which has been bound to recur, chapter by chapter, in this seasoning of man's wills to maximum freedom, is the theme of "Compromise"—and the reason for its persistence is this: the freedom which power constitutes can have no wide distribution save as men accommodate their drives to one another. It is a political order, then, one of accommodation, which conditions freedom through power.

The internal freedom which derives from the will to perfection is absolute, but can remain so only if there prevails a way of settling external disputes between trigger-happy lovers of the ideal, each fixated firmly upon his own finality. So what is inner and ideal, hardly less than outer freedom, is conditioned on a politics which synthesizes inner ideals as it externally harmonizes men.

The will to piety brings maximum freedom, but brings it only through the operation of a process that ties the past and the future together in a self-renewing devotion. Our political process is the one self-sustaining thing we have: it bequeaths us, through language, laws, and traditions, the best that has been; and it prompts us, through critical creation, to a piety that finds its ultimate object in a self purged

of guilt and quit of illusions, even as perfection rests at last in the privacy of free reverie.

We have, then, in the democratic process a method of maintaining privacy and yet achieving public policy, by separating powers when otherwise they must clash. Mutual maintenance with individual containment, this is the secret of the process which is custodian of freedom. Wills that have been wedded thus into character produce a personality entitled to be free and able to sustain freedom.