

AN ANCIENT QUESTION

THERE are two reasons for turning to Albert Einstein from time to time, and musing over his thoughts. First, he was the greatest scientist of our time. Second, he had an acutely alert moral sense and the part he played in providing the theoretical basis for the atom bomb weighed heavily upon him. A third reason would be that he thought deeply about the origin of the moral sense and examined the justifications for the judgments in which it results. Actually, this third reason for consulting him may be the most important of all, since thoughtful humans of our time are nearly all now concerned with the means of confirming the reality of ethical principles or the existence of what we call moral law. As Wendell Berry pointed out in a recent essay, we all know enough not to step off a roof—we would fall and break a leg or worse—but many people find it natural to "regard their neighbors as enemies or competitors or economic victims." This, he remarked, is because if there is a penalty for such attitudes and actions, it does not come at once, like falling off a roof, but is deferred, and "deferred justice is no justice; we will rape the land and oppress the poor, and leave starvation and bloody vengeance (we hope) to be 'surprises' or 'acts of God' to a later generation."

How, then, can we assure ourselves that there is a moral law—or that there is not? In 1950 Einstein wrote a brief statement, "The Laws of Science and the Laws of Ethics" (reprinted in *Out of My Later Years*), which gave his understanding of the difference between the two. He said:

Science searches for relations which are thought to exist independently of the searching individual. This includes the case where man himself is the subject. Or the subject of scientific statements may be concepts created by ourselves, as in mathematics. Such concepts are not necessarily supposed to correspond to any objects in the outside world. However all scientific statements and laws have one characteristic in common: they are "true or false" (adequate or inadequate). Roughly speaking, our reaction to them is "yes" or "no."

The scientific way of thinking has a further characteristic. The concepts which it uses to build up its coherent systems are not expressing emotions. For the scientist, there is only "being," but no wishing, no valuing, no good, no evil; no goal. As long as we remain within the realm of science proper, we can never meet with a sentence of the type: "Thou shalt not lie." There is something like a Puritan's restraint in the scientist who seeks truth: he keeps away from everything voluntaristic or emotional. Incidentally, this trait is the result of a slow development, peculiar to modern Western thought.

From this it might seem as if logical thinking were irrelevant for ethics. Scientific statements of facts and relations indeed, cannot produce ethical directives. However, ethical directives can be made rational and coherent by logical thinking and empirical knowledge. If we can agree on some fundamental ethical propositions, then other ethical propositions can be derived from them, provided that the original premises are stated with sufficient precision. Such ethical premises play a similar role in ethics, to that played by axioms in mathematics.

This is why we do not feel at all that it is meaningless to ask such questions as: "Why should we not lie?" We feel that such questions are meaningful because in all discussions of this kind some ethical premises are tacitly taken for granted. We then feel satisfied when we succeed in tracing back the ethical directive in question to these basic premises. In the case of lying this might perhaps be done in some way such as this: Lying destroys confidence in the statements of other people. Without such confidence, social cooperation is made impossible or at least difficult. Such cooperation, however, is essential to make human life possible and tolerable. This means that the rule "Thou shalt not lie" has been traced back to the demands: "Human life shall be preserved" and "Pain and sorrow shall be lessened as much as possible."

But where do these primary ethical rules come from? They are, Einstein says, "by no means arbitrary from a psychological and genetic point of view." They come, he says, from our inborn tendencies to avoid pain and from the emotional

reaction of people to the behavior of their neighbors. He concludes:

It is the privilege of man's moral genius impersonated by inspired individuals, to advance ethical axioms which are so comprehensive and so well founded that men will accept them as grounded in the vast mass of their individual emotional experiences. Ethical axioms are found and tested not very differently from the axioms of science. Truth is what stands the test of experience.

This does not seem a very strong statement, although Dr. Einstein's ethical sense was very powerful indeed, having a decisive influence on his life. He often spoke of intuition as being the source of great scientific discoveries, and why, one wonders, did he not use this term to describe the emergence of strong ethical conviction such as he possessed?

Consider another of his statements which was published in *Living Philosophies* (1931) under the title "The World as I see It":

How strange is the lot of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he sometimes thinks he senses it. But without deeper reflection one knows from daily life that one exists for other people—first of all for those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness is wholly dependent, and then for the many, unknown to us, to whose destinies we are bound by the ties of sympathy. A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving. I am strongly drawn to a frugal life and am often oppressively aware that I am engrossing an undue amount of the labor of my fellow-men.

. . . everybody has certain ideals which determine the direction of his endeavors and his judgments. In this sense I have never looked upon ease and happiness as ends in themselves—this ethical basis I call the ideal of the pigsty. The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty, and Truth. . . . The trite objects of human efforts—possessions, outward success, luxury—have always seemed to me contemptible.

At the end of a tribute to H.A. Lorentz, the famous Dutch physicist, delivered on the hundredth anniversary of his birth, in 1953, Einstein quoted some of Lorentz's sayings:

"I am happy to belong to a nation that is too small to commit big follies."

To a man who in a conversation during the first World War tried to convince him that in the human sphere fate is determined by might and force he gave this reply:

"It is conceivable that you are right. But I would not want to live in such a world."

This choice among Lorentz's sayings seems at least evidence that Einstein's deepest convictions were founded on something more fundamental than the desire to "preserve life." The ethical sense no doubt has its pragmatic justification, but mere survival is far from being the ground of the highest ideals. Yet there is certainly a difference between scientific certainty—the certainty that gravity will operate on all bodies which lose their physical support—as when you step off the roof—and the moral certainty possessed by some, but not others, that death is better than a dishonorable or compromised life. The immediacy of physical law is often lacking or imperceptible in the result of a moral violation, and there are cases, as in various forms of self-indulgence, where the ill-effects are deferred for years. The onset of diabetes is an example.

Nations, too, may be deceived by the deferment of the effects of their policy, if the moral law is left out of account. Yet the accumulating results of the misuse of power eventually come to the surface of history, although they may not be recognized as such but blamed on malignant forces which national leaders declare must be erased from the earth. As Wendell Berry puts it:

If some Christians make it an article of faith that it is good to kill heathens or Communists, they will sooner or later have corpses to show for it. If some Christians believe, as alleged, that God gave them the world to do with as they please, they will sooner or later have deserts and ruins in measurable proof. . . .

That it is thus possible for an article of faith to be right or wrong according to worldly result suggests that we may be up against limits and necessities in our earthly experience as absolute as "the will of

God" was ever taken to be, and that "the will of God" as expressed in moral law may therefore have the same standing as the laws of gravity and thermodynamics. In Dryden's day, perhaps, it was still possible to think of "love one another" as a rule contingent on faith. By our own day such evidence has accumulated as to suggest that it may be an absolute law: Love one another or die, individually and as a species.

The question arises: If we must wait until all the evidence is in before we make our decision as to the reality of moral law, will it then be far too late? How many will still be alive to learn the lesson at last? But what is the alternative? Berry considers this question:

Because moral justice tends not to be direct or immediate, obedience to moral law, whether or not we think it divine becomes a matter of propriety: of asking who and where we think we are, and on whose behalf (if anyone's) we think we are acting. And it may be that these questions cannot be asked, much less answered, until the question of authority has been settled, there being, that is, no need to ask such questions if we think the only authority resides in ourselves or, as must follow, in each one of ourselves.

Well, ultimately, the authority does lie in ourselves, since we are the ones who have to make decision. Yet there is some help in the religious scriptures, philosophies, and certain of the psychologies of the world. But in a decision of this sort, we are unable to rely on borrowed truth. This is the stern contribution of our scientific age at its best: we must think for ourselves. But again, we may have help in learning how to think. There is need, in the case of the moral law, to transfer the rigor of scientific inquiry to the investigation of metaphysical possibilities. Freud, it was said by one of his students, named the Buddha as the greatest psychologist of all time. The Buddha declared the moral law, yet insisted that each one must make his own decisions about its reality and operations. Perhaps the clearest statement of that law is in the opening "twin verses" of the *Dhammapada*:

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: all that we are is founded on our thoughts and formed of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain pursues him, as the wheel of the wagon follows the hoof of the ox that draws it.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought; all that we are is founded on our thoughts and formed of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness pursues him like his own shadow that never leaves him.

It is difficult to disregard or regard casually this verity. It rings with truth, with its own authority. Yet it must be admitted that the Age of Faith is over and done with. We have worn out nearly all our beliefs. We refer all the great questions to ourselves. But now we are overburdened with them and look back nostalgically to the days of easy and firm belief. But at the same time, we cannot really go back. And now, in the closing years of the twentieth century, we very much fear to go forward, because the way we have made in our proud independence is indeed frightening. It has no invitation in it, but only horror—a horror which learned men find quite incalculable. We want, we say, certainty above all. Yet reflection shows that premature certainty is both fraudulent and dehumanizing. While the teachers of a sure thing philosophy can always attract large crowds, the crowds are made up of people in whom the authentic human spirit has not yet come to life. The best and wisest humans of the modern world are the uncertain ones. Is that because, as Cervantes said, the road is better than the inn?

Each level of existence has its level of comparative certainties and its corresponding and appropriate uncertainties. There are somehow these grades or degrees of human development, identified by the quality of the questions asked at each one. In *The Human Situation*, W. Macneile Dixon muses along these lines:

. . . where in the absence of religion to look for the authority to enforce upon human beings the binding moral principles?—how, indeed, to show that such principles exist, or are in any way binding at all?—there you have the unanswered riddle. There you have "the philosopher's stone," the gem of price which has been sought with diligence, with anxiety, even with desperation, yet alas, also in vain.

Probably upon no subject ever discussed through the length and breadth of the globe has there been expended a fiercer hubbub of words than upon this—the foundations of morality. "Why should I ask God to make me good when I want to be naughty?" asked the little girl. All the wise men of the world are put

to silence by this childish query. A parliament of philosophers will not resolve it. When we set out in search of an answer we are, like the rebel angels in Milton's *Pandemonium*, "in wand'ring mazes lost." "Pleasure is empty," say the Puritans; "it passes away." Ah, yes, but the ascetic as well as the reveller goes, and who has the best of the bargain?

During an illness towards the close of his life Voltaire was visited by a priest, who summoned him to confession. "From whom do you come?" inquired the sick man. "From God" was the reply. When Voltaire desired to see his visitor's credentials, the priest could go no further and withdrew. Is the moralist in better case? Unhappily no; he is in worse. He cannot speak in the name of any church, any accredited body of opinion, but only in his own. How many moral systems are there? It will take you some time to count them.

Throughout his book, Dixon is seeking to understand the framework of human decision—the circumstances in which we make up our minds and how they may affect us. He has his own convictions, strong ones, although in this book he rather examines them than seeks to convert. To the question, What are we? he replies, Leibnizian monads, centers of immortal consciousness which go on and on. He is convinced of palingenesis or rebirth, finding in this idea the only rational account of human longing for immortality and the endless contradictions of the events of our lives. He is then, more than anything else, a Platonic thinker, but he is also a healthy-minded Englishman who believes that there is much more to life than deft syllogisms can reveal. He says in one place:

To me it sometimes seems that our moralists would do well to cease their upbraidings and apply themselves to the interesting problem—"How is goodness to be made the object of passionate desire, as attractive as fame, success, or even adventure?" If they could excite in men an enthusiasm for virtue, as the poets, musicians and artists excite in them enthusiasm for beauty, and the men of science for truth; if they could devise a morality that had the power to charm, they would win all hearts. "To be virtuous," said Aristotle, "is to take pleasure in noble actions." A poet does not tell you how happiness is to be secured, he gives you happiness. And our reformers might do a great service to humanity if they could explain to us why a diet of milk and water does not appear to suit the human race, why the

biographies of the peace-makers lack readers, why the lives of dare-devils, of buccaneers and smugglers and all manner of wild men captivate the youthful souls, the young folk so recently—if we are to believe Plato and Wordsworth—arrived from heaven trailing clouds of glory from their celestial home. There is a mystery for them, upon which to exercise their wits. Why should courage and reckless daring, even the adroitness and cunning of Ulysses, not conspicuously moral qualities, so entertain and delight us? Why, as Luther enquired, should the devil have all the good tunes? If the moralists made these obscure matters clear to us, they would earn our thanks. . . . If you desire to serve rather than desert the world, you must avoid the attempt to quench the flame of life, to destroy the energies nature has implanted in the race. You take the wrong path. You should make use of them, divert or deflect them to nobler ends, harness them to the chariot of your ideal. And not till we have rid ourselves of the monstrous notion that the sole human motive is self-interest need we hope to lay the foundations of a sane moral philosophy.

Well, there have been and are human beings who have done with themselves in their own lives all that Dixon recommends, and their example is surely the best teacher that we have of morality. They are also the most persuasive answer that we have to the questions Dixon raises. MANAS writers try to tell about them and what they accomplish in these pages.

In view of these individuals, the conclusion that we come to is that human life is essentially a process of the evolution of two capacities—moral and intellectual perception. We are learning to understand both what is right and how the world works. One process or capacity is learning the meaning of human selfhood, the other is the development of technique. Together, they illuminate and strengthen each other; apart, they lead to sentimentality and skillful but irresponsible selfishness. Depending upon how our evolution goes, we produce good or evil results.

REVIEW

KEYS TO HEALTH

FREDERICK FRANCK is the artist in pen and ink who, years ago, did the unforgettable book, *My Eye Is in Love*, of drawings and brief essays that now honors the MANAS library, giving joy to those who look at the work of his sensitive, nervous pen with pleasure and read his words with delight. He is also the oral surgeon who established the dental clinic in Albert Schweitzer's hospital in Lambaréné, taught the lepers in a nearby colony to draw—strapping a brush or pencil to the wrists of those whose fingers were gone or useless—and drawing himself for two or three days a week, as part of his agreement with Schweitzer. He also did books about Africa and Schweitzer, filled with sketches. He has done a number of other books, usually about Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy.

Now he has done one more—*Echoes from the Bottomless Well*, 8 1/2" x 11" with 144 pages (Vintage, 1985, \$8.95)—which has an interesting origin. A while back he received a letter from an old friend in England with whom he had corresponded since 1939, a lady of limited means who was now quite ill—she died, it turned out, after mailing her letter to him. What she said of her inner striving affected him deeply. Sitting at his desk he reached for a brush and began to sketch—one drawing after another—taking a few moments for each one, and writing down some old or ancient saying from memory, which had inspired the sketch. He worked all day and far into the night, drawing and writing (lettering) in a "calm frenzy," and then, after a little sleep, continued the next day, until, at the end, he had made 144 "instant" drawings, and all these, with their texts, make the book. What are they like? Well, they are indeed scribbles, but also much more, done in India ink. A few lines become a mountain, a climbing man, a cloud and two birds. The text: "Is there anything more miraculous than the wonders of nature?" the monk asked. The

Master answered: "Yes! Your awareness, your understanding of the wonders of nature."

One or two moderns appear in the book. Wittgenstein said: "The mystical is not the how of the world but that it exists," for which Franck made a circle, a cell, that seems to be the start of a spiral. On the facing page is a woman's torso with the words, "Illusion is the mantle of the real."

Then there is a meditating Buddha and this text: "When a monk complained about the world's evil, the Buddha stretched his hand towards the Earth: 'On this Earth I attained Liberation.'"

A sphere with a line through the middle has inscribed in it "The Tao cannot be divided, it can be shared."

A bent figure holding a candle lamp is cautioned by a sage of Japan: "The more you look for it, the less you'll find it. . . . you can only BECOME it. . . ." Another such sage named Ummon said: "If you walk, walk; if you sit, sit; just don't wobble whatever you do!"

Just copying out a fraction of the charm of the book is hardly effective, so we'll stop. But we should add a note by Dr. Franck on one reason why he did the book. His friend's letter precipitated in him the resolve of many years to put into a book "crucial sayings, short texts, aphorisms" as a little volume to take along to an uninhabited island or a prison cell, "as a companion on the Way." The letter brought to birth his Book of Hours.

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In one of his essays ("The Self and the Other"), Ortega observes that human beings have two distinctive qualities: each one has the power of "withdrawing himself from the world," and the power of "taking his stand within himself." These powers differentiate humans from animals. Animals do not have what we call an "inner life." They need make no moral decisions. Their whole existence lies in responding by instinct to whatever is presented by the environment. They

do not reflect and argue with themselves or try to make choices according to individual categories of right and wrong. Broadly speaking, the human has the same general environment as the animal, but, unlike the animal, he can move his attention away from external circumstances, free himself for a time from its influences, and make up his mind according to standards achieved reflectively. The animal trainer relies entirely on the structure of conditioned reflexes in the animal, while the teacher of human beings, while he may make use of the reflexes of those he teaches, since we are all in some sense animals, knows that his pupils or students have in them centers of independent decision by means of which they will either learn or not learn. Freedom of choice is a reality, it is simply there, it cannot be trained, although it can be frustrated, or we can expect too much of it at a given time.

A book that makes this aspect of the human situation very clear is *One Step Over the Line*, subtitled "A No-Nonsense Guide to Recognizing and Treating Cocaine Dependency," by Joanne Baum (Harper & Row, 1985, \$15.95). The author is a clinical social worker who treats chemical dependency. She is in private practice in San Francisco, and was formerly clinical director of the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic in that city. Dr. David E. Smith, who contributes the introduction to her book, was the founder of this clinic, which brought help and even salvation to so many and is known around the world.

Cocaine is an addictive drug made from the leaves of the coca plant. It has a long history, since these leaves were once used ritually by the Incas, and the Spanish conquerors of Peru encouraged the Indians who were made to work for them to chew the leaves because the juice "had anti-fatigue qualities, reduced the appetite, and made people less sensitive to temperature changes." The Spanish ignored the fact that the accumulating physiological deficits had to be made up in the bodies of the native workers, so

that those who chewed the leaves to keep going usually died at about thirty years of age.

At the end of her book, Dr. Baum says:

Cocaine is indeed the most insidious drug we know—insidious because it is so seductive, so alluring, so mystical, and ultimately so addictive and destructive.

At this moment, even as you read this, millions of American people are using cocaine. They may be snorting a few lines right now in their corporate office bathrooms. They may be at a party freebasing, or in a room shooting some into their veins. Many will check for telltale signs: cleaning white powder from their nostrils, rolling down their sleeves to hide their tracks, hiding the freebase pipe so they won't be found out. Others will not even care; they are either too cocky or too oblivious. All these cocaine users have one thing in common: they believe they are having fun. Incredibly millions of otherwise intelligent people are happily entering a trap door labeled "cocaine" that will alter their lives forever.

National statistics claim that two out of every ten people who use cocaine recreationally will become addicted. All cocaine users assume they are part of that safe eight. None see themselves as potential addicts. Yet, because cocaine is an illegal drug (which precludes accurate figures) and denial of addiction is so strong, one even wonders if the two in ten approximation is correct. After working with cocaine addicts for the last few years, I think the ratio is higher. Perhaps my sample is biased by the nature of my clients and the fact that I live and work in San Francisco.

If I do not have a biased sample and my clients and my social experiences during the last few years are representative of a nationwide trend (which it seems to be), then I think this country is in trouble—in trouble because a lot of people are walking around addicted and not knowing or admitting they have a problem, and therefore not getting any help. Hence a lot of other people at home and at work are being affected by distorted perceptions, thoughts, and emotions. The problem of cocaine addiction is widespread—by national statistics (and, if you add in cocaine abuse, the reality can be staggering); the consequences on the functioning of this country could be far-reaching.

What is the work of the therapist? Joanne Baum gives scores of illustrations of how she

works—at all stages of the long road to total abstinence. No other goal is worth trying for. Once an addict, always an addict, is the rule. This applies to all narcotic substances. The work of the therapist is always and continually to place responsibility where it belongs—on the person trying to recover his psychological health. Nothing out of a bottle or a pill box will do any good. The only remedy lies in the human power to reflect and decide, and the only thing the therapist can do is to draw the attention of the addict to this reality. The good therapist learns how to do this in dozens of ways, differing with each individual and at each step of the process of recovery. No one is smarter and cleverer than an addict at self-deception and rationalization. The therapist learns to recognize all these devices and to expose them firmly to a person who is at some kind of war with himself.

Addiction, then, is a peculiarly human ill and recovery a peculiarly human capacity. The author says:

Cocaine can make you feel better, it can make you feel good, it can make you feel powerful and in control of your world—until it gets control of you; then cocaine acts like a sadistic seducer. As one man said, "But it hurts so good . . . and I keep waiting for her (cocaine) to be sweet again, to lift my spirits, to treat me good, but she's turned on me." It is the initial cocaine high that novices are after; and that attraction is alluring long after it fades from reality as even a remote possibility.

It seems clear that most people who come for help have been bouncing on the bottom long enough to become desperate and to really want to quit using, and then find they *can't*. Then the therapist can indeed help, by being supportive but uncompromising, showing the client that there are no halfway measures or "intelligent" use of a drug. They must get and stay clean. For the non-user who wants to understand the vulnerabilities of human nature, and also its hidden strengths, *One Step Over the Line* is a vastly instructive book. It also makes you wonder why some people choose helping others in this way as a calling in life. They seem to have a natural and impersonal way of

loving people who are in need. Loving without any sentimentality is an extraordinary capacity. The book is a study of its qualities, and very good to read.

COMMENTARY

A RAFT OF QUESTIONS

THE profound puzzles in the theme of this week's lead article might well be given more emphasis, since at present we are so far from solving them. MacNeile Dixon says (see page 7) that no subject has been more fiercely discussed, over the centuries, than "the foundations of morality," with little agreement attained from all these words. Why is it, in short, when a question is raised, that some thoughtful souls look for the moral issue involved, regarding this as primary, while others, quite as intelligent, give that aspect of the matter no attention?

And why is it, again, that some moralists seem intoxicated by what they regard as their own moral righteousness, to the disadvantage of nearly everyone else? Yet others, while making no show of personal virtue, seem to gravitate naturally to wise decision, having an unpretentious certainty which is wholly without conceit.

Why is it that there are some men (and women) who feel constrained to seek the authority of the State to enforce the beliefs (and sometimes even the customs) of a particular sect, in the name of true religion and morality; while others, as in the case of eighteenth-century freethinkers, seek the abolition of all religion in the name of freedom of conscience, going so far as to become complete materialists as a way of entirely eliminating religious controversy and "religious" soldiers.

But raising these questions only sets the problem, doing little to throw light on why, for one thing, a man like Einstein felt as he did about the pursuit of "ease and happiness," the prizing of "possessions, outward success, luxury," making these goals displace "Kindness, Beauty, Truth."

The preference for high and noble ways, manifested in the few, admired by some, but dismissed and even ridiculed by others as "unrealistic," remains an essential mystery. It leaves us with the question: Is there actually some

kind of moral evolution going on on earth, and are there stages of moral development which might be described by those who have a metaphysical theory to account for such inner growth—a growth that we are only beginning to recognize as a reality of human life? The question leads to some others, such as: What sort of environment would contribute assistance in this development? Do parents have obligations in this respect? What sort of learning contributes to the process, and what stands in its way? Or, more candidly, what is the mode of teaching which does not interfere with the absolute requirement of human freedom in all genuine development? How does one teach without getting preachy? Does, in fact, anyone at all know enough to do that? What, indeed, is the way to acquire the virtue spoken of by Aristotle—"to take pleasure in noble actions"? What kind of practical knowledge must one have in order to divert the spirited element in humans—"the energies nature has implanted in the human race"—and harness them to "the chariot of your ideal"?

We know little or nothing about such pedagogy, although its arts seem the possession of a very few.

CHILDREN

. . . and Ourselves

RELIGION VERSUS CREEDS

IN recent years there has been a gradual change among peoples in the West—and probably in the East as well—in attitudes toward religion. As a result of the wars of the twentieth century, there has been extensive contact for Westerners among peoples of the East, with increasing respect for Oriental religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism (more of a social philosophy than a religion), and Taoism, and Eastern conceptions have become increasingly popular in the United States. The contradictions between the behavior of the Western nations and the teachings of Jesus have become so extreme that a natural skepticism toward religious institutions has resulted, with people feeling free to work out their own "philosophies of life." In harmony with this development, religious groups in both India and Japan have sent representatives of both Hinduism and Buddhism to teach their religions in America, finding adherents among the young at various levels of belief and sophistication. At the same time hundreds of books have come out about the religions of the East, with less and less of a tendency to compare them with Christianity to the advantage of the latter.

What, then, should be the policy of the schools, both public and private, in relation to this tendency? A good introduction to discussing this question would be a letter which appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* (Nov. 21, 1985) by Helen R. Lambert, who lives in Carmel, California. We reproduce the letter in its entirety:

While I was in the East a few months ago some quotes by our Founding Fathers on the subject of religion and our government were brought to my attention. I think they are worth attention because there seem to be a number of people now who think the United States is a "Christian" country.

When George Washington signed the Treaty of Tripoli he wrote, "As the government of the United States is not in any sense, founded on the Christian

religion, as it has itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, and tranquility of Mussulmans, it is declared that no pretext arising from religious opinion shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries." Our second President, John Adams, said, "The government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship."

Thomas Jefferson also supported Washington regarding equitable esteem for the conscience of all man. He spoke of a "wall of separation between church and state," and persuaded the Virginia Assembly to pass the statute of Religious Liberty and directed that it be commemorated on his tombstone along with the Declaration of Independence.

James Madison refused to appoint chaplains to the Army or to Congress, saying, "Religion flourishes in greater purity without than with the aid of the government."

There are, unfortunately, those in this country—more vocal than numerous—who do not agree with Madison's view and would like the strong arm of government to support and in some ways enforce belief in a somewhat vague formulation of Christian belief by means of required teaching in the public schools. This subjects the propagation of the creedal claims of organized religion to the political process, which is notably amoral and opportunistic in its methods, apart from other considerations. While history is filled with evidence of the cultural degradation which grows out of the use of these methods in behalf of sectarian dominance and power, the protagonists of religious politics ignore this worldwide experience and continue to try to enlist the coercive power of government in their behalf. Fortunately, there are also religious groups in the United States who recognize the wisdom of the Founding Fathers in establishing a "wall of separation between church and state," rejecting the proposition that the morality of the people is dependent upon the compulsions of law. Law, they say, is for the regulation of behavior in behalf of the general welfare, not for the establishment, control, and enforcement of particular religious beliefs.

Actually, it is difficult if not impossible to make reasonably good suggestions for the teaching of religion in the schools, except as history and sociology, from an objective point of view. The home is the best place for religious teachings, the parents the best judge of what should be taught. Good material, however, is amply available. There is for example the following from the preface to the revised edition of A. H. Maslow's *Religions, Values and Peak Experiences*, reprinted in *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*:

I see in the history of many organized religions a tendency to develop two extreme wings: the "mystical" and the individual on the one hand, and the legalistic and organizational on the other. The profoundly and authentically religious person integrates these trends easily and automatically. The forms, rituals, ceremonials, and verbal formulae in which he was reared remain for him experientially rooted, symbolically meaningful, archetypal, unitive. Such a person may go through the same motions and behaviors as his more numerous coreligionists, but he is never *reduced* to the behavioral, as most of them are. Most people lose or forget the subjectively religious experience, and redefine Religion as a set of habits, behaviors, dogmas, forms, which at the extreme becomes entirely legalistic and bureaucratic, conventional, empty, and in the truest meaning of the word, anti-religious. The mystic experience, the illumination, the great awakening, along with the charismatic seer who started the whole thing, are forgotten, lost, or transformed into their opposites. Organized religion, the churches, finally may become the major enemies of the religious experience and the religious experienter.

Carl G. Jung wrote in *The Undiscovered Self* (1958):

The doctrine of the individual's dependence on God makes just as high a claim upon him as the world does. It may even happen that the absoluteness of this claim estranges him from the world in the same way he is estranged from himself when he succumbs to the collective mentality. He can forfeit his judgment and power of decision in the former case (for the sake of religious doctrine) quite as much as in the latter. This is the goal the religions openly aspire to unless they compromise with the State. When they do, I prefer to call them not "religions" but

"creeds." A creed gives expression to a definite collective belief, whereas the word *religion* expresses a subjective relationship to certain metaphysical, extramundane factors. . . . To be the adherent of a creed, therefore, is not always a religious matter but more often a social one and, as such, it does nothing to give the individual any foundation. . . . It is not ethical principles, however lofty, or creeds, however orthodox, that lay the foundations for the freedom and autonomy of the individual, but simply and solely the empirical awareness, the incontrovertible experience of an intensely personal, reciprocal relationship between man and extramundane authority, which acts as a counterpoise to the "world" and its "reason."

These selections were taken from a reader on *Psychology and Religion*, published last year by the Paulist Press, edited by Margaret Gorman, which has some good things on this subject, but becomes on the whole confusing because much of the material requires you to learn the writer's vocabulary, which often becomes highly structured and elaborate too much so for the ordinary reader.

Meanwhile some good books have been coming out on the effort of Christians to enter into and understand and appreciate the other great high religions of the world. One such book, *Reincarnation for Christians*, by Quincy Howe, Jr., was issued in 1974 by the Westminster Press in Philadelphia. Although likely to be out of print, it can be obtained from many libraries. This book draws direct attention to the pantheist implications of both Hinduism and Buddhism, indicating at least the possibility of an improvement to Christianity by the adoption of such ideas as the deity latent in every human being and the reincarnation of every soul. The author is a good scholar and well informed. Another book of some value is John Cobb's *Beyond Dialogue—Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Fortress Press, 1982). This book seems a significant sign of the times.

FRONTIERS A Few Pioneers

MORE or less by accident, we have accumulated a few bits of good news. For example, there is this portion of a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* (June 5, 1985):

As a power plant consultant I have had the opportunity to see the coming of age of alternate energy in America. This small unproven technology of the 1950s and '60s is quickly becoming the most attractive resource to fill the need for new power all over the country. . . . as the debate over the need for nuclear plants in the future rages on, Reagan and the large utilities avoid discussing the fact that private industry is prepared to build, at its own expense, cost-effective and efficient alternate energy plants, including small hydro, woodfired power plants, landfill gas generating plants, wind and geothermal plants. Pacific Gas & Electric, as an example, has received requests to intertie over 900 megawatts of small power plants in Northern California alone and now claims no additional interties can be made because their transmission lines are full.

The Northwest Regional Power Council identified 2,000 MW of alternate energy potential in the Northwest states. A typical nuclear plant is about 1,000 MW in size. It is clear that alternate energy is available to pick up the slack if new power resources are needed.

Easing the regulatory process is not necessary to promote alternate energy. It is clean and environmentally safer than nuclear plants. All that is necessary is for Congress to continue to support alternate energy, and for Reagan to realize that he doesn't have to help the nuclear industry to help America.

There are a lot of large industrial interests behind alternate energy as well. This will become clear as the evolutionary process in the power industry continues. If we all (including Reagan and the Congress) support the development of alternative energy sources, they can do the job. We could then let the nuclear power go the way with the rest of the dinosaurs.

JOHN SNYDER
Long Beach

In a letter to *Science* (Sept. 6, 1985), Amory Lovins lists the extraordinary gains in greater efficiency in the use of electricity. He says:

Few utilities take electric efficiency seriously. All their forecasts of demand assume several-year-old technologies for wringing more work from each kilowatt-hour, and many are ten years behind. Yet most of the best such technologies have been on the market for less than a year. Collectively, they now cost a third as much as they did five years ago, yet can save twice as much electricity; fully used, they can quadruple U.S. electrical productivity. Measures that save 80+ per cent in commercial lighting on retrofit (90+ per cent in new building), 80+ per cent in fully equipped all-electric houses and about 50 per cent in industrial drivepower all pay back in a few years. Our own research center [Rocky Mountain Institute, Old Snowmass, Colorado 81654] uses no heat and 5 to 10 per cent the usual amount of electricity, repaying the capital cost of those savings in 10 months. . . .

Utilities can make future demand more uncertain—as they did by raising prices to finance huge new plants that, ironically, were meant to "insure" against uncertain demand. Or utilities can reduce uncertainty by encouraging and enabling customers to buy efficiency.

A story in the *East West Journal* for last August, by Ronald E. Kotzsch, describes the achievement of Masanobu Fukuoka, a Japanese sage who works on a small farm on the island of Shikoku, where he lives. Now seventy-five, he told his interviewer:

My rice fields are down there, not far from the road. The winter crop of barley is ripening now. Those fields have not been plowed, weeded, fertilized, or sprayed for over forty years. Yet this year each quarter-acre will yield about 1,300 pounds of barley and about the same amount of rice. That is as high as any so-called scientifically-farmed field in Japan.

I call my method "natural agriculture" or "do-nothing agriculture." Its principles are very simple. Yet upon it may rest the destiny of nature and of humanity. We are rapidly destroying the earth, which is our mother, the source of all life. Unless we return to nature, unless we change the way we think, the way we farm, and the way we live, we will make the earth a desert.

After being ignored for most of his life, the example of Fukuoka is at last having an impact on the world, largely because of publication in 1978 of his book, *The One-Straw Revolution*, by Rodale Press. As a young man he studied agricultural science and after his schooling he worked in a research laboratory in Yokohama. Then, one day, he had what Maslow would have described as a "peak experience," which led him to study nature. He told Kotzsch:

"I approached farming," Fukuoka recalls, "from a point of view totally opposite that of other farmers. While they were asking themselves, 'What is there to do,' I asked myself, 'What is there that I can avoid doing?' My first experiment was to stop pruning the citrus trees. Unfortunately, they all went to ruin and my father, who was the village elder, was quite embarrassed by his eccentric son's failure. I later learned that non-pruning works, but only with new trees that have never been pruned. Then I experimented with non-plowing, non-weeding, non-fertilizing, and so on."

It took him years to learn from nature and experiment the simple system that he now practices, and which has drawn as visitors interested agriculturalists from all over the world. His book tells the story of his methods and the reasons for them, and gives the astonishing results.

Another story in *East West Journal* (same issue) by Bill Thompson tells about Dick Harter's rice farm in the Sacramento Valley of California. After years of organic farming, Harter decided to try what Fukuoka suggested. In his second year of no-till, he got a 46-sack per acre yield. "The soil," he said in explanation, "becomes healthier." And Harter's farm is making money. His Cherokee Ranch of 900 acres was called by *New Farm* magazine in 1984 "one of the most profitable organic rice operations in California." And his two acres in organically grown kiwi fruit is also profitable. Bill Thompson says: "Clearly, the natural systems that his chemical farming once snuffed out and that he has worked so hard to revive are making the comeback he dreamed of." He has lots of wildlife, too, and enjoys it.

There are, it seems evident, new pioneers in America, showing the way of the future. Some day there will be more of them, and basic changes will occur.