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"Spiritual Disarmament."

IF the Founder of Christian Religion were to reappear in Palestine or Central Europe, who can describe his feelings of shame and sorrow at the transformation of the "image of God" into a cross between Moloch and Puck. Human nature being the same all the world over, Eastern Asia is emulating the excesses of Europe. Even at the risk of provoking the laughter of the political Pharisees and the Aryan scribes, we reproduce below the canons of human relationship propounded by Him whose Church still nominally claims the allegiance of white civilization.

"You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

The spirit of the Lord must have been upon Herr Hitler, when he pronounced the beautiful phrase, "Spiritual Disarmament" which is an excellent summary of the above sermon. But we know that neither democrats nor dictators are the modern representatives of this immaculate spirit, and their eyes, instead of being turned to the heavens, are fixed on armaments as the only argument of peace. What is most disconcerting is that the religion of the Church and the culture of the philosopher alike never wore white gloves for moderating and assuaging the influence of the primitive passions of their followers. It might almost seem true that both religion and culture as understood or as misunderstood, have a banality and inward dryness which are irremediable sins in the eyes of grace. As an element making for proportion, harmony and taste, culture is individualistic; as a basis of sacrifice, service and love, religion is equally individualistic. Their universal character though taught and defended by the scholar and the saint through centuries, is entirely static and fugitive, to which history bears ample evidence. Under

the impact of the dynamic forces of material progress, religion and culture seem powerless, and lose their natural predilection for the reasonable processes of compromise and arbitration as against the more summary decisions by force of arms.

In the language of modern imperialism which resorts to violence and warfare for spreading the new gospel of civilization, the boisterous phrases "racial equality", "cultural freedom" and "international justice" are simply unmitigated cant. It will be remembered that the League of Nations, which was to act as the fountain and source of international peace and harmony, refused, under the threat of the withdrawal of some of its original members, to accept the principle of racial equality as an underlying factor in the preamble of the Covenant of the League. If the original powers could guarantee the administration of racial justice in an absolutely impartial spirit, where is the objection to the full and unconditional affirmation of racial equality. This mental reservation is undoubtedly the cause of all the fearful developments with which modern statesmen are confronted, and once we grant racial and cultural superiority on the part of certain groups of people, it is only natural to expect that this superiority must express itself in aggressiveness. People have implicit faith in the egregiously false doctrine that superiority of culture is synonymous with superiority of physical power, and the logical conclusion of such facile acquiescence is the robust philosophy that superiority must supplant inferiority throughout the habitable globe. But culture and religion never possessed the large-hearted peaceable quality which legend associates with them, but, on the other hand, becoming subordinate to the dominating influence of politics, they have been accessory to bloodshed. Theoretically man is prepared to be bound to his God, but he prefers in all his activities to be divided from his fellow beings. Universal brotherhood of man is an abstract philosophic conception, and as an article of faith in the practical affairs of the world, it was found unworkable. We know that religion and culture always range themselves readily and whole-heartedly on the side of political power, when engaged in international conflicts which they bless and justify, though they may have ceased to be their direct provocative cause.

Can religion and culture be made a potent

factor for peace? The answer to this question is "Yes, if we have a new religion and a new culture, not the bedraggled old ones". When Herr Hitler spoke of "spiritual disarmament", we thought that under the inspiration of a great apocalypse such as St. John witnessed in Patmos, he was on the threshold of propounding a new religion for his countrymen and through them to the world. But instead of wearing the Marriage Garment which according to the Presbyterian teacher, Solsgrove, typified inward purity, and instead of preventing the unhappy incidents from being perpetrated in Berlin and Munich, he has deliberately permitted these unworthy and unchristian acts to add a stroke to the fourth letter of his name. No body will regret more than his own ardent admirers that their great leader, with the indomitable soul of the elder Cato, should be immortalised in history by this outrageous supplement, while he had a fair chance of being classified with the blessed saints, if by his actions he had acquired the appellation of "Healer". What visions are opened out before our mind's eye by the phrase "Spiritual Disarmament"? Love, faith, hope, joy, peace and work. Hatred, greed, jealousy, passion and fear banished once and for all. Nations all the world over turning a new way of life. Brotherhood of man, service and sacrifice for fellow beings. Truth and non-resistance in the place of secret alliances and militarism. Fight against the evil of the spirit, not against the neighbour.

These and good many other things are contained in all the religious works of the world. What is it that has made them defunct, will they at any time become the active principles of the life of nations and of individuals? Is armament the necessary prelude for the reinstatement of peace? We are not appalled by the "race of armaments" for we are convinced that a point must be sooner than later reached, when the very deadliness of the weapons will make war eventually impossible. It is not improbable that science may still perfect such unthinkably terrible engines of war. Perhaps nations may then decide to bury them in the oceans, and evolve other solutions for mutual concord and world-wide peace. It is too premature to talk of "Spiritual Disarmament", when our hearts and hands are still unclean.