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## ARMING FOR PEACE

A BUSINESS man of large experience when about to sign an agreement defining the future relations between his firm and another party, remarked: "We must remember that an agreement is simply a memorandum of what both parties intended at the time of signature. It is impossible to draw up a form of agreement, out of which a way cannot be found, if either side lacks honesty or goodwill." The present war is largely due to the mistake of relying upon "pacts" without being assured of the necessary background of HONESTY and GOODWILL.

In considering the subject of "Arming for Peace" on which the Editor of *Current Science* has requested an article, it would seem necessary in the first place to examine the ultimate foundations on which these two essential factors of peace must be based.

We must realize then that honesty is something more than "the best policy". Hitler, indeed, has worked out a technique of lying, amongst other items of which is the subtle propagation of half-truths, designed to confuse issues, and to deceive even well-intentioned people. It is unfortunately often the case that lack of wisdom with good intent, may be as mischievous in its results as intellectual subtlety with evil intent. A mouse by causing a short circuit in the power house has put a whole city in darkness.

True honesty must get down to the bases of thought and resulting action. "Clear your mind of cant" said the rough spoken but essentially honest Doctor Johnson. This means the unwearied endeavour to reach the truth about any situation. To the old question—"What is Truth?" the reply may

be made that Truth is that which is capable of being "known", as apart from what is merely surmised or believed. The advance in physical science has consisted in the substitution for crude theories and superstitions, of demonstrable knowledge more closely in accord with truth. So in the field of religion, in which may be included all those interests which concern the spiritual rather than the material welfare of man, the same process may be noted. It is not so very long since the majority of religionists, Christian and other, believed in the "plain flat-footed hell" of the Fundamentalist and of Calvinistic theology, the nightmare arguments about which rocked the sanity of the gentle-minded Cowper. These beliefs may still be found "under cover". Even though we may no longer believe in the eternal burning of unbaptized infants, we have all read of, if we have not seen, the mangled bodies of the innocents, massacred by the modern Herod.

It is clear, then, that while the old meaning of being "saved" was to be freed from fear or punishment in a hell of fire and brimstone after death, our present need is to be rescued from the constant menace of the hell of war.

There is a gruesome picture in a small museum in Brussels devoted to the works of the half crazy artist Wiertz entitled: "Napoleon in Hell" where the dictator of that day is seen in an atmosphere of flame, filled with the cursing faces of the women who had lost husbands and sons in his wars. We shall not dispose of Hitler or Hitlerism by hating after this fashion.

To "know" the truth about any situation or individual it is necessary to be absolutely honest with ourselves. The attainment

of such honesty is not easy. It means the casting out of the mind of all suggestions which do not measure up to our highest sense of good. We must learn, *i.e.*, continually to reject these "suggestions" and to recognize the clarity of perception which accompanies the "knowing" of truth. In proportion as we are successful in this task we shall be less liable to be led astray by the half-truths of Hitler or any other propagandist.

This, which may be called the "way" of Truth has been known to enlightened thinkers through the ages. Apart from prophets and philosophers hints are to be found in the writings even of such pioneers in physical science as Paracelsus and Van Helmont, blurred though they may be with the mist of error.

A man may slowly arrive at the Truth through stress or misfortune, or he may awaken to it suddenly, just as some accidental incident may reveal to him that he is in love.

That one member of a scientific research staff who had spent happy student days and made many friends in Copenhagen became almost physically ill at the thought of the muddy vileness of the Nazi overflowing of Denmark, is evidence of real emotional reaction and honest indignation. Mr. Gandhi's tears, when first made aware of the possible destruction of ancient monuments in London, also indicate a flash of "clear perception". Sad that it should so soon be clouded over with religio-political subtleties, suggestive of a spiritual "smart Alec" rather than an inspired leader. The self-imposed and well advertised martyrdoms of the satyagrahis fail to impress those whose friends and relations are quietly going about their

avocations in England in daily peril of their lives.

What to the plain man seems a treacherous taking of political advantage is not likely to inspire confidence in the justice of the propagandists in their other relations to public life.

In a conference held by a religious body many years ago in Manchester, during a discussion on the value of creeds, it was finely said by one speaker—"In the last analysis it is character which counts."

It seems to be forgotten that "Votes for Women" were conceded not because of the hysteria of the suffragettes, but because when war came all these extravagances were forgotten and women were found in the munition factories, in the transport services and in other spheres of activity efficiently carrying on the work of their husbands, sons and brothers in the trenches, and so proving their fitness for the responsibilities of citizenship.

The driving force behind the women's suffrage movement was, moreover, not mainly political, but was born of a passionate resolve to end if possible the exploitation of women by reason of the possessive and acquisitive inclinations of society. In the peace for which we are arming it may be hoped that exploitation in any form of the weak by the strong will be universally condemned.

Although a fierce civil war was fought for the intended "abolition of slavery", it is doubtful whether even yet it is fully realized that cash is not the equivalent of kindness, and that what is sometimes termed "wagery" may be even more soul destroying than "slavery".

A difficulty which may be encountered in our endeavour to "know" the Truth is that many of us are mental "flatlanders" unable to perceive anything outside our 2-dimensional consciousness. With perseverance and continued honesty of purpose and desire, we may attain to a 3- or even to an  $n$ -dimensional consciousness. IDEAS, after all, are not dimensional at all. Thus it happens that those of humble mind who are willing to listen and learn, may arrive soonest at clarity of perception. With this clarity comes real POWER. Hitler, with all his concentration camps and Gestapo officials, has not the power of a little dog to inspire affection, or to heal one heart-break.

Among the four most "powerful" men the world has known, Bertrand Russell includes Galileo, who was free from fear through his perception of the reign of law in physical phenomena. Others, seeing further even than Galileo, have realized the reign of law in the spiritual or undimensional world of ideas.

A main cause of war is *fear*. Why should we fear for our foothold in life if, like Galileo, we know that we are supported on the girders of the universe? Why should we fear poverty and lack when the resources of the world are available to all, if intelligent ideas are rightly applied?

Why fear sickness when the poisons of hate and envy, greed and jealousy, malice and resentment have been eliminated from the system by the cleansing of the mind?

And what of that "undiscovered country" which "troubled the will" of Hamlet? What does the chrysalis know of the butterfly or the acorn of the oak, or either of these of the never ending life which passes from form to form?

Apart from these fears born of forgivable limitations of consciousness, another alleged cause of war and unrest is *boredom* arising from ignorance, apathy and inertia. Even war may be preferred to dullness and lack of interesting occupation. Hence the success of the appeal of the Nazi and Fascist to the unemployed or mentally unoccupied youth of Germany and Italy. In arming for peace as for war, it is wise to be willing to learn from the enemy, since many of his ideas may be, in themselves, good, though inverted by him in order to serve the purposes of evil.

The writer in his younger days was privileged to be on terms of friendship with a learned lexicographer and master printer, from whom he often caught words of wisdom. On one occasion the dear man remarked—"You know the apparent dullness of a subject is often simply a measure of our ignorance of it" and proceeded to prove his point by discoursing charmingly on Chinese ideographs!

When we become conscious of the world of *Ideas*, our vision will be immensely enlarged and we shall come into our inheritance of joy, already glimpsed by the artist, the poet and the scientific worker, by all those indeed whose activities are creative and not simply self-regarding. When all men see these things there will be peace, for the roots of discord will be cut away.

To know these things does not require learning or wealth. The Madras fisherman in his catamaran brings expert ability to bear on his job, equally as effectively as the zoologist in his laboratory. The artistic arrangement of flowers in a vase may be the gift of an Indian "room-boy", as well as the taught accomplishment of the Japanese

"geisha". Nevertheless it would be well if it were more generally realized that "simplicity" of life does not mean squalor or lack of "fineness".

HONESTY and GOODWILL—two simple words, best understood by simple folk. It may well be that only such will be present at the final Peace Table, since they alone represent the common people who always bear the chief burden of the calamity of war. They are the people who will stand for tolerance and fair-play. Even in a slum street fight they are those who shout "Go it little 'un!" While these simple folk may not all belong to the poor or "underprivileged" classes, they will many of them know what it is to be out of employment and to wonder where the next week's wages, or the next month's or year's salary, is to come from. Many will have seen their homes crashing in the air-raid, will have shared these dangers with their wealthier neighbours and will have been welded into a common brotherhood with them. A social revolution, truly, but with no hint of tumbrils.

At the peace table or in the peoples parliament to follow, we may hope to see the sons and brothers of the "simple folk", who will bring to their duties as representatives of the people courage, quickness of apprehension and power of prompt decision, learnt in the skies, on the tumbling seas, or during the patient vigil of the watching post.

These "simple folk" will take no joy in revenge, but will gladly welcome decent people of all nationalities and races into a commonwealth of mutual service. The moral "sickness" of "others" they will hope to see healed in course of time in the atmosphere of compassion arising from "understanding".

Should there remain individuals too dangerous and criminal to be allowed at liberty, they may be dealt with in a spirit of justice and equity, with a view equally to their own good and to that of society.

The "simple folk" will welcome the special qualities and aptitudes of all nations and peoples in so far as these contribute to the general welfare of humanity.

The "simple folk" will have come to realize clearly through the hard facts of their economic life that *money* is not *wealth*, and they will seek to free the world from the age-old illusory worship of gold with all its attendant miseries.

They will strive to bring about the substitution of true business founded on fair exchange of goods and services for the scramble of the market place, and competition in excellence for the crude competition of the profit motive, which is only a form of continuous war.

At the peace table there must be wide tolerance for differences in culture and religion. The "simple folk" will not despise any who may not have climbed the hill of understanding so far as to be able to see the view which they see, nor will they envy those who are higher on the mountain side than they. All, they are well aware, will reach the summit at last.

The people of honesty and goodwill are not likely to find difficulty in replying to the common arguments of the defeatist. How, it may be questioned, can men and nations of different language, religion and culture live and work together? The answer may be that there are things on which all men of honesty and goodwill are agreed which are amply sufficient to give

plenty of work for any form of Federal Government. For the rest let those things on which there cannot be agreement be left to the care of each body concerned. Let Hindus attend to the special interests of Hinduism, Muslims to the affairs of Islam. So with Catholic and Protestant, Teuton and Latin, Celt and Saxon. Successful examples of such collaboration are not hard to find, given honesty and goodwill, notably Switzerland, Canada, or as a nearer instance even the State of Mysore.

It is evident that a successful peace must depend on the number of "simple folk" available of the type indicated. It is for each one of us to seek to qualify for a seat at the table by daily and continued effort to increase our understanding of the inner meaning of HONESTY and GOODWILL. It will involve striving, not spasmodically, but minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day to attain a clearer vision of the essential truth of things, by the process of mental cleansing already described. This may mean some sacrifice of ease and occasional weariness of spirit. "Thinking is the hardest work there is" says Henry Ford. One of the members of the Indian Defence Force in the last War has not forgotten the words of the officer instructing the newly joined recruits: "You may think", he said, "that all these drills and tiresomely detailed instructions are rather useless; but remember that when it comes to the 'real thing' if you do not instinctively know your drill, you will be 'all over the place', whereas with training, it may be hoped that you will retain some sort of order".

In such manner, therefore, let us arm for Peace.

GILBERT J. FOWLER,

**GENESIS OF EARTH**

In dim, impenetrable, mystic dawn of time  
The Grand Designer set the worlds in space  
To revolve restless and fly in starry speeds  
Unclashing;—each in its assigned airy path—  
All held in bonds unseen and knit in space  
To fit His lofty plan of Firmament  
Of endless, star-strewn, growing universe.

In times unknown—some tens of trillion years ago—  
When the wearied Watcher drooped His wary eye,  
Two vagrant stars from depths of space onrushed  
And crashed to myriad bits;—their smithers afire  
Did blaze in space to mass incandescent.  
Hurtled loops of these shattered stars—tied down,  
Like fleeting souls to mortal trails awhile—  
Flew round and round; their cruel fate cursing  
Which sped their promising life to tragic end.  
Some wailing waifs outswerved their orbit course  
And clashed again; but venomless, firm and true  
That they, like clasping drops of silver live  
Cohered anew and grew as glowing worlds.  
From the roving wrecks thus fused afresh arose  
Our Earth and Mars and rest planets diverse,  
Which speed around the re-built nuclear sun,  
As specks of sands in endless ocean space.

Or perchance, the cooling star-crashed nebular globe  
Gave birth at first to our luminant central sun  
Who, turning topwise in terrific speed, thrust out  
His glowing gaseous sward to swollen knots  
Which, cut and hurled aloft, went swirling out  
To whirl round him in pointed paths; such ejected knots  
Of gaseous globes cooled, in stages diverse,  
To deck the sky as planets of varied size  
And that which chilled to air-filled stony crust  
Evolved as Earth, to hold our souls in trust.

R. R. B.

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