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### INSTRUMENTS AND ENDS IN SPIRITUAL WORLD CONQUEST\*

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## INSTRUMENTS AND ENDS IN SPIRITUAL WORLD CONQUEST\*

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

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A distinguished advocate of military preparedness was some time ago urging his favorite theme before a large audience. In response to requests by the speaker for questions, a hearer arose and asked just what nation the United States should prepare to fight in accordance with sound world policy. The militarist is reported to have replied, "I will answer that question if you will tell me just what hurricane a steamship captain prepares to meet as he puts out from port."

This reply has been pronounced by militarist commentators to be absolutely crushing, and yet there is good reason for suspecting that the question of the auditor was worthy of less summary treatment than it received. As a matter of fact the steamship captain does not prepare for hurricanes in hit-or-miss fashion. He prepares for the kind of hurricane he is likely to meet in a particular quarter of the globe. North Atlantic cyclones are different from South Atlantic storms, and both are different from the hurricanes of the Chinese and Indian seas. A good captain knows something of world geography. If a nation is to arm itself for war the first step is to frame some sort of world policy toward which it is to work. Preparedness for war against England would mean one course; against Germany another; against Latin American nations still another course; and against oriental nations still another. Before any preparedness movement is taken seriously, first study should be given to the world policy of which the movement is a part.

The Religious Education Association has set for itself as a theme this year the task before religious education in helping shape a new world order. That the world cannot emerge from its present stress unchanged is obvious enough to the most rudimentary intelligence. Religion was caught unawares by the outbreak of the terrific world tempest; but there is no reason why it should be surprised by the problems which are to follow the war. Already these are beginning to take form. It is clear that the present conflict came out of certain inadequacies of the view of the world and of values. Religious education can at least attempt something to provide against such inadequacies in the future.

\*The President's annual address, delivered at the Fourteenth General Convention of the Religious Education Association; Boston, Feb. 27-March 1, 1917.

As we approach the new world order we must insist upon the need of some sort of back-lying world-view as a part of the training of the youth of our day; some survey of spiritual world-geography before the youth puts to sea. The education of the past thirty years has of course run largely to the scientific method. There has been recently no direct academic attack on world-philosophies as such, but there has been all along the assumption that a student trained in scientific method could form a world-philosophy for himself. This has overlooked the fact that there is really no such thing as scientific method. There are rather scientific methods. Every particular realm of scientific research is governed by its own principles. Only in most general terms can we trace the operation of any one law in the various fields. Scientific method in astronomy is different from scientific method in biology. A poor mathematician would not be likely to succeed in astronomy: he might possess qualities which would make him marvelously effective in biology. So that scientific method is apt to run to specialism: and specialism makes against the comprehensiveness of these world-views of whose importance we are now speaking. Let the scientifically trained specialist be cross-examined for his views of philosophy; it will very likely be found that he has carried into his philosophy the naive fancies which date from pre-reflective days, or he seeks to apply the formulas governing matter and force in realms where they are manifestly not applicable. The result in any case is confusion. A worthy philosophic world-view can come only from those who are trained to critical study of such views.

What difference, however, does it make whether one has a philosophy or not? Of what use are world-views? We have to live from day to day and from one deed to the next. Is it not enough to have a practical system which will hold through what Mill called, "a reasonable degree of extension to adjacent cases?" For the work-a-day purposes of ordinary existence a few philosophical insights and a handful of common-sense maxims may indeed suffice; but when we look out over masses of men we see that their relations to one another are very apt to be influenced not indeed by formal and abstract reasonings, but nevertheless by differing attitudes toward the problem of life as a whole. Oriental peoples, for example, are at least in part the outcome of oriental ways of looking at the universe. Of course it is open to anyone to object that the views themselves are outcomes of circumstances over which the peoples have no control. The peoples of India, for example, seem helpless in the presence of vast facts of physical nature. But even

if we concede that world-views are thus the outcomes of vast forces working upon helpless minds, still we must insist that the view when once formed enters into the life of the people and adds to the hopelessness.

There are certainly differences in the world-views held by the contending nations in the present European conflict. While both sets of contestants may read the same Bible and pray to the same God, there is nevertheless a great gulf fixed between the interpretation of the Bible and God on one side and that on the other. The struggle here may be at bottom economic, but above the warring economic forces there arise sooner or later differing world-conceptions which add to the deadliness of the struggle. Or to seek illustration in quieter spheres: a materialist, a pantheist, and a theist may get on very well together as business partners or as members of the same club; this for the reason that the world-views may not come up for discussion, or if they do, they arise merely as themes for pleasant interchange of opinion. Let these different systems however, be taken seriously by masses of the people, and the outcome in life reveals the deep difference in the backlying conceptions.

Just as in warfare or in industry or in constructive statesmanship the fundamental question is as to the soundness of the view of the whole field, so it is in the relation of religion to the problems of the world. It is not always enough merely to perform good deeds; it is not enough to rest contented in fragmentary, piece-meal notions. There must be some deliberate attempt to come to terms with the question as to what powers are ruling this universe, and what those powers are working toward. We may admit with all candor that we cannot tell why particular events occur as they do; we may disavow all intention to seek for detailed meanings in the ongoings of the world. But this admission is entirely compatible with the hopefulness growing out of a world-view which looks toward a right outcome in the end. We may admit also that philosophy can never go far, but we can determine how far it can go and how far faith must come in to supplement our more formal reasoning. It may be that everything rests finally down upon the will to believe, but reflection ought to play its part in selection of objects worthy of belief. In a word, it is one duty of religion in gazing toward that new world which is to come, to seek to frame a world-conception which shall give spiritual values some opportunity for recognition.

This is not a plea for the compulsory in higher institutions of learning. It is, however, an earnest insistence upon the right of

college and university students to have a chance to see what are the competing world-views. An indication of what can be done is to be found in the response of some of the more important state universities to enlightened public demand for courses in philosophy which enable the student to see at least what the more important world-conceptions are, and the points of difference between them. The authorities of one great state university have taken the ground that the university should respond with instruction in any line for which there is reasonable demand. At first the authorities heeded the voices which called for better farming methods, better ways of building roads, better engineering instruction. Later, the demand of religious opinion for worthy instruction in fundamental views of the universe has met with like response at this university, with the result that whereas ten years ago the only important course in philosophy was a semester's instruction in Haeckel's "Riddles of the Universe," now the student who so desires can at least be introduced to all the greater philosophies.

Educators have come to see that practically everybody has some sort of philosophy. If we must be philosophers, if we are to think at all, it is worth while for us to try to learn something about good philosophy. We must all admit that any good philosophy makes adequate place for the play of spiritual forces in the world. As religious educators we bring these forces out into fuller recognition; though without pleading for any particular orthodoxy. We would seek to make man know the assumptions on which he proceeds in dealing with the universe. Assumption plays its part in all thinking. Its influence is inevitable. Since this is true, the need of the right kind of assumptions becomes imperative. At least the need of recognizing that assumptions are at work becomes a first intellectual duty.

A second obligation upon those charged with making religious education count in shaping the new world-order is that of increased emphasis on the human values. It is to be expected that at the close of the present war the public opinion of virtually the entire civilized world will turn with renewed scrutiny toward all social institutions. We can be reasonably certain also that the test by which social institutions will be judged will be as never before the human test. It is a commonplace, of course, that all manner of religious organizations must be judged by their efficiency in ministering to human needs. There is no rightful place in this world for a religious organization merely as such. Church constitutions and even church creeds and ceremonials are just so many channels for

benefits to men. The men, women, and children of this present world are the objects for which organized religion exists. The challenge which we must put to every form of religious institution is: What kind of men does it produce?

We repeat that so far as church organizations go we are fast learning this lesson, even though many of us are still in the primary classes. We must master the same lesson concerning educational systems. It is of course generally agreed upon that the rankest of educational heresies is to attempt to fit growing minds to the curriculum rather than the curriculum to the needs of growing minds. But when we descend from theory to practice we find that in many branches of study the distinctively human viewpoint is apt to be obscured.

For example, suppose we return for the moment to the scientific method. We very often hear it said that the scientific method strictly applied has nothing to do with the practical consequences involved in its own discoveries. The student learns for the sake of science itself. He is not even to raise the question as to the utility of what he discovers. He merely asks what is the truth without regard to the effects of the truth on human life. Now we know well enough what the scientist has in mind by utterances like this. He is protesting against the use of scientific methods merely for purposes of so-called practical usefulness. He does not care to see the realm of pure science invaded by too many inventors. He has the same repulsion against using his strictly scientific talent for devising an invention for the patent office that the artist feels toward lowering a high artistic ideal by employing artistic skill to paint signs and advertisements. We may say in passing that even here the scientist may become too much of a purist. It is not so degrading as is sometimes implied for a scientist to utilize bacteriological knowledge, for example, to fight typhoid or yellow fever. But admitting the validity of the scientific purist's scruples, we must avow our conviction that this doctrine of science for science's own sake sometimes overlooks the fact that even in devotion to pure science there is a human reference.

Not all scientific discoveries are on the same plane. There must be some sense of perspective in estimating the worth of scientific achievement. A scientist might give himself to elaborate statistical computations of the number of bricks in all the sidewalks of a city. He might conceivably encounter some problems that would involve resort to complicated mathematical apparatus, but we could get no large hearing for his results. We do reject some scien-

tific findings as not worth while. The results must fit into an intellectual system, or must gratify our craving for symmetry and unity, or must be inherently interesting. In short the standard here is a human standard. We value the most abstruse calculations in astronomy for the effect they have on human minds as those minds give themselves to profound contemplation. Conceding that the scientific method must not be used solely for a bread and butter purpose, we must insist that its value lies nevertheless in the degree to which it ministers to human needs, the needs being so construed as to include the demands of the higher rational and æsthetic faculties.

This may seem like rather a fine point, but clear recognition of our contention will have its value. Man does not indeed live by bread alone: but he does not live at all on things that have no sort of relation to a really human interest. If we can force this human reference out into large recognition in all our educational work, we shall do something to make the educational systems of our time more worth-while among the forces of the world.

What I have thus far said has to do more especially with such general educational training as we look for in a soundly conceived college course. When we come to the university branches in which the more practical problems of men and things are studied, we need further emphasis on the human values. Glance at the political and social sciences. If it is true that Germany of the present day has over-emphasized the ideal of the state as superior to concrete human life as such, it must be recognized that the German educational system must take its share of the blame. The doctrine of the dominance of the state as over and above inherent human values as such has been a favorite theme in the departments of political science in Germany for forty years. Or take any social arrangement which makes possible the division of men into classes and groups. One danger before educational institutions is that they are apt to justify an established order, especially in the realm of economics where all sorts of unreal abstractions have held sway. The whole system of political economy needs re-writing from the point of view of the human values affected by commerce and industry. The "economic man" has about disappeared, to be sure, but we still have various "iron laws" of wages, of supply and demand, of enlightened self-interest as the determining factor in industrial processes. One of the most hopeful signs of the times is the breaking up of various economic orthodoxies.

The colleges and universities of the land are not to be used as

agents of propaganda; but on the other hand, they are not to be turned away from vast human movements because these movements lend themselves easily to the propagandists. The present speaker is not himself a socialist, but he believes there can hardly be any more harmful educational policy than to allow a youth to pass through a higher educational institution without at least the opportunity for introduction to sympathetic understanding of socialism. In spite of theories of economic determinism and of surplus value and of class conflict, there is more recognition of the forces that touch ordinary human existence in well-informed discussions of socialism than in the discussions of almost any other social theme. The institution which allows this immense human movement to sweep past its doors unobserved simply knows not the day of its visitation. So also with trade-unionism. We profess—all of us—to believe in the advance of democracy. In spite of the tyranny of labor leaders here and there, in spite of ill-considered resorts to violence or threat, there is more real democracy in actual labor-union procedure than in the procedure of any legislative assembly in the United States. That is to say, the thought and desire of the main mass come nearer getting into expression in the debates and decisions of labor-unions than in the legislatures. The real reasons for which things are done, unworthy as they sometimes seem, come out into fuller and more honest statement. Now does it not sometimes occur that the university graduate who professes greatest interest in democratic movements knows nothing about the movements which are most significant for democracy?

If colleges and universities are to stand for the human values they must set their own houses in order. An educational system must be on its guard against shibboleths like the "traditions of the school," "the school spirit," "the school point of view." Any organization is in danger when it runs too smoothly. When political and ecclesiastical organizations become conspicuously effective there is usually ground for suspicion that their effectiveness is merely organizational. Even the slogan "Efficiency," which has done so much for the economical utilization of energy in our time, needs to be subjected to the severest cross-examination. It may be recalled that a noted efficiency expert some years ago made the discovery that many day-laborers waste energy in "extra" movements in performing their tasks. This expert claimed that if these movements could be utilized properly they would mean the laying of so many more bricks or the driving of so many more nails. As a matter of fact, most of these extra movements, though they



looked like flourishes, are really balancing motions, or "easing-off" motions, which help the physical organism at its work. The difference is between the technical and the human point of view. A celebrated preparatory school in the United States once boasted of the number of students it had dismissed as failures. The boasting was presumably over the large efficiency of the school. Another school picked up many of these same failures, fitted them for colleges in which they took even better rank than the students from the school which had dismissed them to maintain its own efficiency. Here was an instance of devotion to a system which made for inefficiency when viewed from the human angle. If a youth fails in school, of course the reason may be the stupidity of the youth. There is just a bare chance on the other hand, that the reason may be the stupidity of the school. Especially is this true when the school becomes so institutionalized as to forget the human values.

This over-sight of the human is the one pestilent heresy against which any Christian who understands himself must forever protest. It is not our function to discuss doctrinal themes; but the most radical critic of organized Christianity will admit that Christianity has for its power the doctrine of the incarnation of the Divine in the human. Anything, therefore, which minimizes the value of the human will, in the end blocks a channel against a revelation of the Divine. The Founder of Christianity did not come that men might have institutions and might have them more abundantly; He came rather that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. In every sphere of the new world-order must be preached the gospel that the human has right-of-way over everything else whatsoever. The acceptance of this gospel for churches and for schools gives us the right to call for this acceptance in industry and in national policies and in international relationships.

A third duty of religious educators as they look toward forming the new world-order is that of laying stress upon righteousness in method in all activities for the betterment of the world. We in America, confronted by swarms of new problems, have come to somewhat careless acceptance of the doctrine that only results count. No matter about the method, is the dictum of the practical man; produce the results. This practical man's point of view has come to large sway in all spheres of effort. Even in philosophy a most popular doctrine is that truth is to be tested by the way it works.

The fundamental aims in most of our American efforts for advancement have been sound. In the days just ahead of us, how-

ever, we may expect to see increasing attention to the imperativeness of right method in reaching the right outcome. This means that we shall scrutinize very closely and radically change some of the means for social advance which have hitherto seemed to many of us to be altogether valid.

Just at present the country is stirred by a so-called preparedness movement. A study of this movement will reveal not only signs of healthy awakening of the public mind, but also tendencies to evil if the awakening of that mind does not quicken good sense and self-control at the same time that it arouses the more eager patriotism. For the whole preparedness propaganda has to do with the proper place of physical force in social advance. We can all agree, of course, that the control of physical force is one of the chief duties of man in his relation to the world in which he lives. In the conquest of nature men have gone far enough to show that final victory is possible, that is to say, that the race is in sight of effective enough mastery of physical forces to insure against starvation and the more deadly contagious diseases. But while this victory seems assured, the triumph over society itself has not yet been won. There has not yet been devised any scheme of social constitution manifestly adequate to the strains upon it; so that clamor arises for the use of force for social and national progress. Put the plan through by sheer might, is often the popular cry. The most that can be said of force thus used is that it is safe only as it is called in for what might be characterized as police purposes. The abnormal and the wicked will must be kept in subjection to the interests of the larger liberty of the vast majority of men.

In addition also, we all concede the inevitability of dependence upon force in self-defense. But iteration and re-iteration of the doctrine that the best defense is aggressive and that the defender is wisest if he attacks first, opens the door to a horde of frightful abuses. The havoc wrought by this aggressiveness is not so much in its physical devastation as in its sins against the ideals of humanity. Moreover there is grave question as to whether conquest by force is ever in the long run effective. Men are not convinced of the justice of the conqueror's cause because the conqueror is a conqueror. All talk about the good that has come out of war must be balanced by the sober reflection as to whether the same or even greater good might not have been achieved by other than warlike instruments. Moreover it is the function of the religious leader to-day to protest against glorification of war itself by glorifying its motive. War itself is the devil's own business.

The men who actually do the fighting feel thus about the war. Only avowed militarists and preachers and college professors are able to behold the splendor of war. One of the subtlest dangers of the academic mind lies in its power to find a plausible justification for something inherently evil; or to shift the perspective so as to give a false focus. "As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free," is better poetry than "As He died to make men holy, let us kill to make men free," but this latter statement is closer to the truth. If we must fight let us fight, but let us keep our minds open to the awfulness of what we are doing.

Again there must be most exacting scrutiny of the use of money for advance of social ideals. We have come to feel that in the relations between nations, especially in the contacts between the so-called "more-favored" and the so-called "less-favored" nations, commercial and industrial methods must be held strictly under moral control. If the commercial interests of this country had their way, the very life would be quickly choked out of Mexico as an independent nation: and this with the avowed intention of doing good to the people of Mexico themselves. As public opinion comes more and more to rule financial and industrial activities here at home, the more these same activities resent suggestions of control in foreign lands, or they insist upon government by dictatorship in those lands for the good of the people themselves. Too often well-meaning but unenlightened missionaries fall in with this call. When a missionary pleads for strong mastery of non-Christian people by an outside government that he may have a chance to preach his gospel, he knows not what spirit he is of.

But we do not have in mind only international relationships. We may think of matters nearer home. The increase of huge endowments for colleges and universities and other social agencies must go on; but such accumulations are permissible only on condition that presidents and trustees act under the heaviest bonds of social responsibility. The financial interests of an institution itself must never be allowed to weigh in the slightest in the discussions of social problems. We may well rejoice over the increasing sensitiveness on the part of society to the social effects of vested funds. Professor Scudder of Wellesley has suggested a "white list" of investments for those devoted to the welfare of society. Her scheme may not seem wholly practicable, but every educational institution's investments should be white.

The question, however, goes deeper than all this. Take the socialistic argument against payment of interest. Personally I am

not able to see that the socialist has made his whole case against interest. But suppose an institution should seek to stop such debate because its own income might be imperiled! Fundamentally any attempt to control social policies on financial considerations is but one step removed from controlling them by force. The possession of a huge fund to be used for social purposes is not after all so very much different from the possession of vast reservoirs of physical force. We may well rejoice at the growth of those huge endowments in this country which are devoted to social betterment. These endowment funds have for the most part been wisely used, but let us not blind our eyes to the fact that they are after all a form of force. Institutions changing their policies to get aid from these funds do not always make the change because they are convinced of the unwisdom of these policies, but because they are compelled to change if they are to be helped. When the force of such a fund is employed to bring an institution to better administrative methods only good can result. When the force is used, however, to shape social and educational ideals as such, peril is imminent; for the whole problem is soon lifted away from the realm of discussion and brought under the sway of practically physical forces. Starvation is really one of the most effective methods of physical warfare.

A method of social betterment which has seemed entirely permissible is the control of public opinion. It is our business, we say, to make social atmosphere in which some ideas can live and some others must die. Here again the method may be used in entirely legitimate fashion. There are ideas as to life and conduct which are so manifestly false that the only morally permissible attitude for public opinion is one of uncompromising attack. But the method has its dangers, especially in the hands of those in a position to influence community thinking not by direct argument but by "playing up" facts which they wish to stress. A financial or political leader can talk facts and tell lies. That is to say, he can so arrange the strokes of emphasis upon the facts of a situation as to misinform honest readers and hearers. This may not be done with deliberate intent. It can be done out of prejudice or bias as certainly as out of selfishness. The danger is very great. In a democracy like ours there is too much acquiescence in what James Bryce calls "the fatalism of the majority"; too much confidence that when the people have passed upon a question they have passed upon it aright. The method of influence upon man's opinion must be used, but it must be used with a sense of heavy moral obligation to society, an obligation that recognizes that the subtlest form of

falsehood is that which so selects and arranges facts that without a single word of comment from an interpreter, the selection and arrangement may produce a false impression.

A worthy world view, an emphasis upon human values, an insistence upon moral obligation in the use of social method,—these all seem essential in our attempts to mark for good the new world order which is to come out of present strife. Men cannot create situations outright. The most they can hope for is to control the forces which work around them. The hour is one for emphasis upon the imperative necessity of right control. We must deal with facts as they are; but we must deal with these facts as they should be dealt with. In the old story of creation we are told that the first step toward the formation of order out of chaos came as the brooding spirit spoke light into being. The most this organization can hope to do is to contribute some measure of light. If we can make our conceptions of ideals and of values and of methods glow with light, our time will not have been spent in vain. If we can realize anew the necessity of so standing for ideals and emphasizing values and moralizing methods as to open up springs of spiritual liberty, our work will have positive worth.

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### THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN

FRANCIS G. PEABODY, LL. D.

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I am to speak on "The Religious Education of an American Citizen," and I must begin by defining what these words, in my understanding of them, mean. By religious education I do not mean the acceptance of a theological system, or the concurrence in a traditional creed, or the learning by rote of a prescribed catechism, however important these may be. I mean the educating—or, as the word means, the drawing-out—of the religious nature, the clarifying and strengthening of religious ideals, the enriching and rationalizing of the sense of God. Religious education is therefore not to be imposed from without, but to be developed from within. It assumes the susceptibility and responsiveness of human life to the approaches of the Divine life, and by every influence of suggestion and environment clears the way by which the love of God seeks the soul of man. Education is thus, as Lessing affirmed, revelation,