

human race already predetermined long before the discovery of metals."

If the assumption of a fundamental unity of the structure and of the terms of thought native to the civilizations of East and West were founded only on the findings of historical anthropology, which provide the proximate authority for the passages quoted, it would still provide the basis of a collaboration of thought in which neither tradition need stifle its own depths in order to speak its mind. But in effect the perennial philosophy of mankind owes neither its truth nor its universality to the findings of historians. That it exists and is fruitful in the understanding of whatever is universally human Dr. Coomaraswamy is perhaps the principal of all contemporary witnesses.

And it is understanding which is at issue, not the collection and arrangement of facts and specimens for which the modern world has so ardent a passion. "Understanding," Dr. Coomaraswamy points out elsewhere, "requires a recognition of common values. For so long as men cannot think *with* other peoples they have not understood, but only known them; and in this situation it is largely an ignorance of their own intellectual heritage that stands in the way of understanding." (4)

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## MATERIAL FORESIGHT & WASTEFULNESS

BY

MADAME ISABELLE RIVIERE (1)

(Translated by M. St. T.)

"How can prudent foresight be wastefulness? It doesn't do to talk absurdities!"

It all becomes clear and easy if we once understand that God knows what he is saying! With what simplification should we not be enriched if we would be persuaded that not one of his words is useless, not one of his commandments thrown at hazard and without a profound reason, that their end, since he loves us, is none other than our greatest good, our surest happiness. And then, that he is *always* right.

It is not sufficient, in order to put him in the wrong, that we should understand the necessity of what he ordains. It may be we lack some of the elements that would enable us to judge. God sees continually, and in the light of eternity, the totality of creation. As for ourselves, have we taken into consideration that our hand held before our eyes suffices to hide from them the nar-

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(4) "Spiritual Paternity" and the "Puppet-Complex" a study in anthropological methodology reprinted from *Psychiatry: Journal of the Biology and Pathology of Interpersonal Relations*. August, 1945.

(1) Translated from the French of Madame Isabelle Rivière. Extract from the 3rd chapter of the 1st part of *Sur le Devoir d'Imprévoyance*. With the kind permission of the Author and Publisher (Editions du Cerf, 29, Boulevard de la Tour-Maubourg, Paris)

row section that they embrace of our limited, terrestrial and changing horizon? How then should it not be that the greater part of God's motives escape us? . . . Before judging God, let us first follow his teaching a little while to discover where it leads.

Let us see what trouble God takes to prove to us, by daily, un-failing experience, that foresight such as we understand it, is a bad speculation, whatever we may think of it.

The Hebrews would not listen to him, and believed themselves well advised to make a provision of manna for the following day, *but it began to be full of worms, and it putrified.*

God had formally promised that the miracle should be renewed each day; but they were such as do not so easily place confidence in him—prudently they had wished to be on their guard against his possible failure to keep his word. And behold the provisions were lost, and that double task they had set themselves on the eve, was likewise lost. Wastefulness, folly . . .

It was not that the manna was of itself perishable. On the eve of the Sabbath the Hebrews, having gathered a double ration, according as God had commanded them by Moses to do for that day, placed their store in measures until the morning, and *it did not putrify, neither was there worm found in it.*

Furthermore, the golden pot full of manna that Aaron placed in the Ark of the Covenant, always according to the command of Jahwe, was kept their intact to serve as a testimony to succeeding generations. Irrefutable proof that God does not corrupt nor preserve the manna with our recipes and precautions, that it is he who gives or takes away our bread of to-morrow, according as he judges fit—therefore that we waste time in occupying ourselves with what is his sole affair. When he says: *Be not solicitous for to-morrow*, it is because he has something better for us to do. We have only to be at peace during the present day, doing the work placed in our hands; *the morrow shall be solicitous for itself.* So all our preoccupation of to-day is an act of disobedience which bears its own punishment.

When the right time comes, God will say to the Children of Israel: "*Lay it up till the morning*", as he had said to Noe, entering into the ark with his sons and every species of animal: *Thou shalt take unto thee of all food that may be eaten, and thou shalt lay it up with thee; and it shall be food for thee and them;* as he had made Joseph understand by Pharaoh's dream that he must store up the abundance of the seven years of plenty for the seven lean years of famine to come. As Jesus was to say in the hour of danger to his disciples whom he had previously sent out into the world carrying nothing: "*Now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip*". On that day only let us take our scrips and obediently gather up the manna for to-morrow, not doubting the divine word as the Hebrews doubted once more when they went out to seek the manna the day on which God had

said there would be none—so yet once again, their trouble was lost, for they *found none*.

Though God's command be contrary to that of yesterday, it is wise. Let even his contradiction be to us a proof—since we always want proofs!—that he knows how to foresee, to change his tactics according to circumstances, to respond to the event.

Let us then, without vain questioning, take each one of his orders as it comes; let us lay up when he so wills—he does not often will it!—and scatter when he so commands. In this obedience is security, gain, wealth, apart from it is danger, loss, ruin—that ruin which we fear much more than his wrath, short-sighted mortals that we are!

Besides, we are free. We can always disobey, even were it only to see whether this mental reservation that obsesses us might perhaps once be justified, whether by chance we were not, despite all experience, in the right and God in the wrong.

Let us lay up, yes, let us lay up provisions! We shall see later what becomes of them.

I recall, during the Great War, that dread of suffering want, that fever to store up that beset honest folk, those who were on other points neither light-headed nor crazy. They piled up pounds of sugar, sacks of flour, eggs, whole cases of potatoes, rice which they could not bear, condensed milk which made them sick. But that was of no matter, what was important was to hoard, to accumulate so as not to risk having to go short!

“What, you don't lay in provisions? But that is folly. In two months the shops will be cleared out!”

In fact, merchandise failed everywhere. I quite believe it. In every home the sitting room was transformed into a provision shop; how could anything be left with the tradespeople? And prices went up higher and higher.

“You see! if only you had done as we did! Look at all those unfortunate people who queue at the door of the grocer's shop! There is no more milk left for little children.”

And I recall, a month later, those series of consternations! There were ants in the sugar, worms in the flour. One day, on the shelf built against the too hot kitchen wall, the castor sugar was found to have liquidified and to be running down the wall paper. The eggs smelt of rotten straw, they were only fit to be thrown away. The whole lot of potatoes had gone musty, entire cases of food had to go in the refuse.

What waste in those hard times when to waste was a crime! Of that abundance which had caused such scarcity for the poor, what remained of it to those prudent foreseers? From how many had they thus taken away their daily bread in order to make for themselves to-morrow's cake which they could not eat? . . .

O you economical women, put your new dress carefully away

in the wardrobe! Cover it up well! Be sparing of it! Next year, when you consider it old enough to dare to make it your "second best", if you have the good fortune to find it not cut in the folds, or to have got mites in it, you will see what a fine figure of an old-fashioned lady it will make of you. Wear it in all peace of conscience, whilst the new one grows quietly out of fashion under camphor and naphtha balls. When you arrive at your last frock, you will have economised, during the whole course of your life, exactly one, and you will always have been badly dressed. Whilst the little work-woman, who has none put by in her wardrobe, but only the one she wears on her back and replaces when worn out, will always have been fresh and smart. Use your poor leisure hours, rare as they are, in darning indefinitely your old linen, so that at your death there will be found in your cupboard piles of underwear with which your daughters, who wear only lawn (or silk!) will make towels.

Range your massive, durable old family plate, destined to last for centuries, carefully away in its various cases, and in order to "spare it" buy for yourself electroplate which will need to be re-silvered every two years.

Above all, you reasonable people, do not open your purse except for what is strictly useful—according to you, books, flowers, travelling is money thrown out of the window, what remains of it? Take care only to give when you are very sure of what you are doing. "Don't give to that poor man! He is probably richer than you. For ten years past I've seen him in all weathers at the corner of this road! And that woman, why doesn't she go into an almshouse?" Increase your little hoard perseveringly, you will be glad to find it later on!

And if to-morrow some financial crash sends your savings to the winds—*because riches shall make themselves wings like those of an eagle, and shall fly towards heaven*—if some world-wide catastrophe makes the value of this money, the result of so many lost efforts and of so many culpable refusals, fall to zero, you will not be discouraged for so little. Valiantly, obstinately, blindly, you will begin again to "lay aside". A few more years and you will confide to your friends, whilst vainly endeavouring to dissimulate your pride: "You see, I've re-made my little pile. It has not been without some trouble, but here I am once more secure from need!" *Thou fool! this night your soul shall be required of you, and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? For we brought nothing into this world; and certainly we can carry nothing out.*

Yes, that is to be taken for granted, retorts good common sense. I know as well as you do that I may die this very next moment. I know, too, all that is said about indifferent and prodigal heirs who demolish at one swoop what has taken the deceased all his life long to build up, who disperse in smoke what

he has so hardly gathered together. But my heirs may do as they like with the heritage I leave them; I don't care a rap. I understand, as you do, that there is a certain measure to be guarded. The old adage says too: *Grasp all, lose all*, but that is no reason to let all go. Economy wisely regulated, savings that do not encroach on our neighbour's necessities, they are not only inoffensive, they are indispensable. We know how those end who do not think of the morrow: in misery and the work-house! One does not die every day; in the meantime, a man must live. If he listened to you, he would fold his arms and wait for the quails, already roasted, to fall into his mouth! You know such a thing has never happened; and it is not God who feeds those who have done nothing to make sure of their bread.

But yes, it has happened, precisely and exactly, although the quails were not roasted in advance. And it is just God—and none other—who feeds those who have done nothing, in defiance of his promises, to make sure of their bread for the morrow.

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## A TREATISE ON THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF OUR REDEMPTION

By

LUIS OF GRANADA

(*Translated by a Nun of Stanbrook Abbey*).

CHAPTER VII (*cont.*).

### 4.

*The cause of Christ's ardent love and its effects.*

Now let us see the effects of this love. Among them first, as I said, that Christ took upon himself the debts incurred by our sins and made satisfaction for them. As a figure of this, Holy Scripture tells us that when the whole land of Egypt was destroyed by a plague of locusts, and Moses prayed for a remedy, God sent a burning wind that blew the locusts into the Red Sea where they were all drowned. What does this mean but what the Prophet said of our Lord, "He will put away all our iniquities: and he will cast away all our sins into the bottom of the sea" (*Mich. vii, 19*). This was the *Red Sea*, to show us they were drowned in the sea of Christ's precious Blood.

The second effect was that our Lord took for himself the sorrow and sufferings and gave us the fruit and merit gained by them. What follows must be told on our knees with eyes raised to heaven, for it was that the Lord did for men what a slave does for his Master. He works all day to earn money which he gives to his owner and is left unpaid for his labour. This is what our most pitiful Redeemer did for us. Could our Lord's charity have reached further than this? Who could have done this but God, whose goodness and charity surpass our understanding?

The third effect was that Christ died physically in order that