

Father is perfect'. That is, perfection is stated in terms of a relation to the Father. As I see the matter, our prayer and effort should be to remove all perceived hindrances in our life and character by sustained generosity, and then let God do with us in every way what he thinks fit. The surrendered soul does not worry about perfection but responds in love to the will of God in all humility. Then there is no anxiety, but a great peace.

*Kiln Green*

ARTHUR W. VALENTIN

*To The Editor, THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*

YOUR correspondent 'Our Lady's Catechist' asks for the infallible guidance of the Church respecting international war, but this is one of those moral problems in relation to which the only guidance offered must be 'follow your own conscience'.

It is obvious that personal pacifism, even if in itself ideal, is not an essential element of Christianity, and the moral right of self-defence must be reasonably conceded. Scholastics have accepted the idea that a nation is a 'self'; it is also evident that patriotic education ensures that wars shall be seen as direct or indirect defence of the nation (or, if aggressive, then in defence of Justice, Freedom, etc.) and given these two premises, it is difficult to see how an official prohibition of war can ever be expected from the Church. It is however open to anyone to challenge and indeed repudiate the notion of national unity, in which case the argument based upon alleged 'self-defence' collapses; the way is then clear for the young man who is threatened with 'National Service' to refuse on moral and logical grounds not only to release an atom bomb but to drive a bayonet or bullet into a fellow conscript who has been entrapped—by military, economic or social conscription—into the forces of an 'enemy' nation.

JOHN NIBB