

The third essay, from which the above passage is taken, 'Why War?' is a letter addressed to Professor Einstein in 1933. All of them deal with a similar theme. It may seem that the views expressed are unduly pessimistic, and indeed, as Dr. Freud himself says, he has no consolations to offer. That which might for some be derived from religion he is inclined to discredit as an illusion, but an illusion we need in order to satisfy some other instinctive urges. But here in justice to the author one needs to understand that he is speaking in psychological terms, descriptive of processes going on in the mind, and is not trying to refute religion on objective grounds. Many personal religious beliefs and practices may psychologically be regarded as illusory; there is nothing startling or new in this, and it is mainly with such beliefs that Freud is dealing.

Though many indeed will doubtless disagree with the author's conclusions—and he himself does not anticipate agreement—nevertheless they command attention and show some of the fundamental causes which lead to disruption in the community and on a larger scale eventually to war. The hopes formed that culture, including religion, would so alter human nature and the character of men as to make war unthinkable appear not to be justified by the facts. Where is the way out of the impasse? Is war, therefore, at some time or another, speaking generally and not with reference to the present situation, inevitable?

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THE GOOD PAGAN'S FAILURE. By Rosalind Murray. (Longmans; 7s. 6d.)

Eirenicism, the method adopted by the œcumenical movement towards reunion between the churches, has been defined as the effort on both sides to achieve, by greater mutual understanding, the elimination of merely apparent oppositions (doctrines which are apparently opposed are often really complementary), and the clarification of really irreducible oppositions. Eirenicism is thus at the opposite pole from compromise. And it is a method which should be applied not only between the separated brethren of Christendom, but between the Christian and the non-Christian. The first essential is the removal of misunderstanding in the use of terms. A deal of confusion is caused, for example, by Christians who persist in speaking of the preservation of Christendom or of our Christian civilization, when in fact they mean the preservation of a social and cultural *status quo* against innovations which may or may not in fact

be nearer Christianity than itself. The social and cultural principles which shape our lives to-day are, to a great extent, Christian in origin; but in fact, between them and the Christian principles from which historically they derive there is often a merely material identity: the *formale*, the essential constitutive, which characterizes and defines that material has changed. The Christian's first duty, then, in any effort at *rapprochement* with the pagan, is to explain the essence of Christianity, to remove indeed the many oppositions which are merely apparent, but to stress also the irreducible opposition which formal difference involves despite material identity of view. It is more particularly this latter work which Miss Rosalind Murray has undertaken. As the daughter of Professor Gilbert Murray, received some years ago into the Church, she speaks with real knowledge of both sides, and with a graceful sympathy which gives her discussion all the value that is lacking to polemics. Her contention is that the break-up of our world is due to the failure of the 'good pagan': an ill-assimilated Christianity is now giving way to the pagan forces which have continued to underlie it, and which consist ultimately in a false response to evil, a denial of the 'totalitarianism' of Christianity (which formally differentiates its morality from the Christian morals which materially it much resembles), and which, having failed in regard to the 'outcast,' the proletarian, are now faced with the revenge of the outcast in the 'barbarization' of the world. The irreducible opposition between Christianity and pagan humanism clearly stated, the author goes on to attempt a re-statement of the Christian view in pragmatic terms, in the well-founded hope that where the method of diluting Christian doctrine has failed in its object and betrayed Christianity as well, such an indirect approach may lead to a better understanding of the issue, and so to the possibility of a fruitful discussion.

There are points, incidental to the main argument, at which the author seems rather to simplify: psychology and morals, the effect of environment on behaviour, democracy and oligarchy, machinery and proletarianization; and in particular, the difference between agnosticism and belief in transcendent Deity, between *Do What You Will* and *Ends and Means*. These are, at most, minor defects in a book which should do much to eliminate misunderstandings on both sides, and so to do service to the truth.

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