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EDITORIAL

"MAN is born free, and everywhere he is in chains," said Rousseau. This, however, puts the cart before the horse. It is truer to say that man was born in chains, and everywhere he is struggling to be free. Notwithstanding his long history, man has not yet got rid of his chains. Indeed it would seem that sometimes nations, after having enjoyed for a period a large measure of freedom, return to their fetters when confronted with a crisis. Faith in a generous toleration and in the light of Reason is temporarily lost, and primitive forces once more rise to the surface and dominate the lives of men. Thus the tortures of Prometheus are renewed. But Reason, though exiled, cannot be slain. So long as there is life at a high conscious level, Reason cannot indefinitely be denied her proper function of guide and friend to the human soul, for without the wisdom which is her gift man cannot survive as a civilized being.

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Freedom of adventure in the realms of thought and practice would seem to be a necessity for civilized human life. There can be no lasting satisfaction with any static order of affairs, however excellent. Life's insistent demand is for scope to advance to novel forms of achievement and expression. Its denial engenders restlessness in the soul and a deep discontent. Moreover, since living consciousness is essentially creative it cannot be imprisoned in any permanent and unchanging form without ultimately falling sick of tedium and entering upon the path of decay. For vigorous health a vision of fresh ideals and far horizons is essential.

But alas, in our time the soul of humanity, whose essence is freedom, is sorely sick. And this impairment of health is for the most part due to the antagonisms of man with man, fed by fear, envy, and the unholy love of power. But the massive habits of physical nature

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also contribute their quota to the frustration of human purposes. Heat and cold, birth and death, disease and famine, earthquake and storm, constitute the background to the human drama which is being played throughout the ages.

The essence of human freedom is the power to accomplish practical purposes, to achieve ends which satisfy deep-rooted human needs. But it is just this freedom of action which is so often denied. Consequently frustration, loss, tragedy, are written across the pages of human history. Economic forces have played no insignificant part in this tragedy, and hence to-day the primary demand made in the name of freedom is the outlawing of the predatory instincts of man, and a reasonable degree of social and economic security, without which no advance in the realm of spirit can be made. But since man cannot live by bread alone, freedom also demands an environment in which certain ideal ends bearing intrinsic values can be pursued. It is this blending of ideals and economic policies which constitutes the web of human history.

Since in every modern state there are many types of individuals and groups, each having its own character and its own worth, freedom for all is impossible without mutual toleration. Intolerance is the besetting sin of every society, against which its members must always be vigilant. Times without number it has defeated the pursuit of freedom and brought disaster and ruin. In the modern world, there cannot be freedom without a generous toleration of diversity. What is to be aimed at is not the destruction of different groups with their specific character, in the interests of a false ideal of homogeneity, but rather a balanced co-ordination of diverse groups, each contributing its own excellence to the complex pattern of human life. This form of freedom should be the ideal of all great statesmen.

But beyond the ideal of social freedom, Plato teaches us that there is a deeper freedom which the individual soul needs for its peace. This freedom lies beyond all temporal circumstances good or bad, being based on an intuition of the eternal order of things, and upon the conviction that human life is grounded in a realm of values changeless in the midst of change. This deeper freedom can be enjoyed by all who, through understanding, come to learn that as individuals they are partners in the supreme adventure of the universe as a whole, an adventure which is concerned with the realiza-

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tion of all possible value. The possession of such an intuition is, in Whitehead's words, "the reconciliation of freedom and the compulsion of the truth."

Finally, in every human society, there has been some liberty and some restraint, and the values of human life have been won in an environment constituted by the fusion of both in some relevant proportion. Has this fact any wider significance? Does it point to freedom and restraint as operative factors in the more extensive realm of Nature? The answer appears to be an affirmative, and for this reason. In our day we are being taught to think of Nature as a vast community of events actualizing, in the temporal process of the world, values belonging to the eternal realm of possibility. Every new event coming into being in and through the creative process is said to have a dual nature. On the one hand, the event is composed of energies from the past, continuing their existence in the rôle of efficient causation, and on the other of a teleological factor contributed by the transcendent creative activity itself, which controls and directs the concrescent process. The last word is with the self-creative unity of the universe, which puts the decisive stamp of creative emphasis upon the efficient determinations of the past, as a poet decides the stresses to be laid upon words and syllables in the making of his poem, to express the weight of his thought and the clearness of his meaning. If this view be true, the events of Nature, even in the inorganic realm, are not completely determined by the past, but, in a degree appropriate to that domain, are self-creative. Above this level freedom grows from more to more.

Accordingly in nature there would appear to be the same realization of the two elements of compulsion and liberty that characterize human affairs, and thus our deep-rooted belief in freedom is not a mere idle play of the emotions, irrelevant to the physical facts of the world. But, if freedom is pervasive throughout the whole, the view of the universe which lays exclusive emphasis on efficient causation and is blind to the other equally important rôle of teleological self-creation, is clearly a one-sided account of the nature of things.