

A Word With You

THE world seems to be ready for a new religion—is even yearning for it. This is not merely a notion of some advance-guard thinkers—it is widespread among those who have been brought up in the old religions, and even those in the inner sanctums.

The Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church, the radical revisions of Protestant thinkers, the soul-searching of Jews about Judaism, the changing attitudes of Buddhists, Hindus and others, the proliferation of new sects, all bespeak a deeply felt need for a new approach to life's deepest questions.

What may, or should, emerge from all this? A clue can be found in the Kasidah:

"All faith is false, all faith is true:
Truth is the shattered mirror strown
In myriad bits; while each believes
His little bit the whole to own."

There is some truth in all beliefs; the main error has been in each taking his little section and building a wall against other sections. The job, then, is to piece together the mirror—not merely "eclecticism" or "syncretism," but an effort to get at the underlying truths and see how they connect with one another.

A broad and universal view would have to be taken. Religions have tended to focus too much on individual salvation. A greater appreciation is needed of the sheer wonder of the universe and of natural law; and more attention

needs to be paid to social and economic rightness.

All of today's world religions contain much that is useful from the universal point of view—and we may find forgotten truths in abandoned faiths, particularly the "nature" religions that celebrated the world and the seasons. One of comparatively late vintage was the "religion" that developed out of the French Revolution. Deistic, it worshipped Nature, Reason and Liberty. We could do—and have done—worse than pay homage to these three. It revised the calendar so that months were named after seasons (Brumaire, Thermidor, etc.) instead of pagan gods. It was catching on and might have prevailed had not Napoleon set back the clock (and the calendar) for his own purposes.

Nothing drastic is needed for a new universal religion—just a recognition of basics, the reign of natural law, and the freedom of each to fashion his own connection with God. It may be that the mirror is not broken at all—just that we have spread a net over it and each has decided which aperture he will stand in.

There is room for everything and everybody—even a personal mysticism (which both the dogmatists and the rationalists deplore). The important thing is to accept ourselves as "part of the part" and to accept one another.

—Robert Clancy

Vol 29, No. 11

November, 1966

The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York, N. Y. 10021, supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for the community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

Publication committee: William S. O'Connor, Arnold A. Weinstein and Lancaster M. Greene, chairman. Editor: Alice Elizabeth Davis. Subscriptions \$1 a year; single copies 10c. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

The Henry George News does not assume responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles.