



succeeded. His conscience was not at ease.

Now the post-Christian view which is gradually coming into existence—it is complete already in some people and still incomplete in others—is quite different. According to it Nature is not a live thing to be revered: it is a kind of machine for us to exploit. There is no objective Right or Wrong: each race or class can invent its own code or “ideology” just as it pleases. And whatever may be amiss with the world, it is certainly not we, not the ordinary people; it is up to God (if, after all, He should happen to exist), or to Government, or to Education, to give us what we want. They are the shop, we are the customers: and “the customer is always right.”

Now if the post-Christian view is the correct one, then we have indeed waked from a nightmare. The old fear, the old reverence, the old restraints—how delightful to have waked up into freedom, to be responsible to no one, to be utterly and absolutely our own masters! We have, of course, lost some *fun*. A universe of colourless electrons (which is presently going to run down and annihilate all organic life everywhere and forever) is, perhaps, a little dreary compared with the earth-mother and the sky-father, the wood nymphs and the water nymphs, chaste Diana riding the night sky and homely Vesta flickering on the hearth. But one can't have everything, and there are always the flicks and the radio: if the new view is correct, it has very solid advantages.

But is it? And if so, why are things not going better? What do you make of the present threat of world famine? We know now that it is not entirely due to the war. From country after country comes the same story of failing harvests: even the whales have less oil. Can it be that Nature (or something behind Nature) is not simply a machine that we can do what we like with?—that she is hitting back?

Waive that point. Suppose she is only a machine and that we are free to master her at our pleasure. Have you not begun to see that Man's conquest of Nature is really Man's conquest of Man? That every power wrested from Nature is used by some men over other men? Men are the victims, not the conquerors in this struggle: each new victory “over Nature” yields new means of propaganda to enslave them, new weapons to kill them, new power for the State and new weakness for the citizen, new contraceptives to keep men from being born at all.

As for the ideologies, the new invented Wrongs and Rights, does no one see the catch? If there is no *real* Wrong and Right, nothing good or bad in itself, none of these ideologies can be better or worse than another. For a better moral code can only mean one which comes nearer to some real or absolute code. One map of New York can be better than another only if there is a real New York for it to be truer *to*. If there is no objective standard, then our choice between one ideology and another becomes a matter of arbitrary taste. Our battle for democratic ideals