

and many other beautiful sight and molded this little town. These sights give to a citizen of Straubing the same feeling of hope and happiness as the Eiffel Tower gives to a Frenchman and as the Statute of Liberty gives to an American.

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Justice or Injustice

Carolyn Wilson

FROM Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat," I gather that the author considers individuals to be pawns which are moved about by a merciless and arbitrary power. This theory of determinism implies that there is little man can do to control his destiny. However, such a belief violates the ideals which I hold essential. The system of free enterprise is based upon man's will to work and could not endure long if men thought their labors might not be justly rewarded because of some arbitrary mechanism's whims. Distinction between right and wrong could be discarded because the cruel power might, according to its fancy, turn upon the right and protect the wrong. The personal sense of ethics belonging to man would become distorted and dulled, for we cease to struggle against the odds of life when we cease to believe that justice lies at the end of the fight. With this impersonal power that has man's destiny tightly in its grasp, there can be no real justice. A curious creature, man will beat his head against a stone wall of obstacles and failures and of human-dealt injustices if he believes that his labors will be rewarded when the final count is taken. We mortals will take these wrongs from our equals, but when we come to expect them from the top force of the universe, we have lost everything.

In the light of what has been said, one might ask what I do think men should believe about this question. In answer I can only state my views on the subject. Mr. Crane intimated an insignificance of man in the universe, but I cannot agree with him. Man is a noble creation worthy of being dealt with in a thoughtful manner. Man was given a brain with more capacity than any other known form. He was given the important power of distinction to guide him, and a conscience to keep him on a high moral level. At the very center of his being was created a soul that is the glory of the race, that is the power man fighting for his ideals, that is the real person. Why and by whom are we given these cherished treasures which have enabled us to rise from the skin-wearing, cave-dwelling beast; to bear great, profound mortals who are worthy of their endowment; to discover the secrets locked so securely in and around our planet? My answer

is that this "arbitrary, unjust" power has given us all we have, but not with the intention of destroying us, the fruit of his toil. I think he has set us upon the earth for universal good with the intention of being perfectly truthful and just in his treatment of us.

It is quite apparent that Mr. Crane's mechanical power and my God can not both exist as rulers of man. They are too opposite. Therefore, he who believes in one can not believe in the other. One is the object of the pessimist, the cynic, and the rationalizer. The pessimist likes to believe in that which is dark and depressing because he is afraid to believe in good. The cynic believes man is essentially bad and thinks some cruel power should deal with him. The rationalizer attempts to explain his mistakes and free himself from the responsibility of them. What is a better way than to transfer the blame by saying, "I failed because the great power was against me."? These are the believers in an arbitrary, cruel governor, the negative thinkers. On the other hand, those who believe in my God are the positive thinkers, those who have hope, those who love their fellow men, those who admit their weaknesses as well as their strength. Only a small number are the kind God pictured when He made man, and none of them are perfect. They explain the young person's death, the failure after a courageous struggle, and the savage outbursts of the elements by calling them seeming injustices. I am one who thinks that although in our grief for a lost loved one we cry out to God and ask "why," the answer is vaguely known. We have the largest scope of comprehension on this little sphere of life, but our understanding is to God's as an ant's size is to an elephant's. I firmly believe that no so-called disaster is an injustice. God has His reasons, and the reasons, though not understood by us, are just.

Which are the valuable citizens, the leaders and the "salt of the earth"? Are they the negative thinkers or the positive thinkers? Today when the question of nations and their citizens is so important, this question is vital. Those who have an incentive to work because they think that justice instead of reckless cruelty is in their Divinity, will actively aid a community, a nation, or a world. Bringing the discussion to a smaller area, I cite the example of certain nations which are ruled by despotic individuals who crush or raise their people at will, and seemingly without reason. Those people, who constantly live in fear of a knock on the door, are not keen and alert. They are not courageous, deep thinking, or noble. They are either afraid or sensually and spiritually dulled. I can see a definite parallel between such behavior and the behavior that can be caused by a deterministic point of view. The civilization which is to survive will be made up of the leaders and citizens who work toward goals and sincerely believe that God's sense of justice allows each individual a good deal to say about what his future holds.