

## ON ACCEPTING THE UNIVERSE

When human beings try to understand the nature of the universe, they stress those aspects of reality which most concern them. Thus all conventional religious interpretations of the nature of things have declared that either in this world or another world to come, goodness and human value are primary and guaranteed. The scientific interpretation of reality finds otherwise; that the universe is indifferent, amoral, insensitive and impersonal.

In theory, the conventional religious view is one by means of which men can feel far more comfortable. They are assured, if they believe it, that their concerns are taken care of, that their values will triumph ultimately, and that the disastrous things that happen to them are either unreal or unimportant. Unfortunately, few people can so ignore the data of life as to be able to accept such a view completely. To be forced by intellectual honesty to give up the conventional

religious view and accept the scientific view is often a traumatic and devastating experience. How, then, can one accept the universe with gladness and joy?

1. For the sense of security promised by the man-centered view, which is never quite real enough to be altogether firm, we must develop the capacity to meet and deal with insecurity. We must come to know that disaster is just what has happened but not the act of an angry God; then only the disaster must be dealt with, not the haunting fear that God has become an enemy. We must learn to respect ourselves and our capacity to deal with disaster as other men have. We must recognize that death will come to all of us, but until that time, if we have the courage to respond bravely, no disaster need cause us ultimate despair.

2. Proper interpretation of the scientific view reveals that goodness and human value are as real as anything

else in the universe. Men are a real result of what is going on in the nature of things; hence whatever they do is equally real — goodness and value are among the things they do. Furthermore, whatever resources we find to enable us to increase the values and quality of

life, have also happened and are real in the universe. They are ready at hand for us to use, and chief among them are other people whose potential for achieving value is greater than that of anything else. — *By Rev. John MacKinnon.*

### REFORMS IN THE PHILIPPINES 1887

We believe then that it is time to give the Philippines representation in the Cortes and freedom of the press. With these two reforms carried out wisely by a minister and a governor who do not allow themselves to be influenced by anybody, all other reforms that may later be presented will succeed; under their protection, they will prosper. Whereas now that the country has no voice in public opinion nor in the legislature, when a reform is ordered, it cannot be known here (Philippines) whether it is executed or not, if the governor general, in order to please Such and Such a One, suspends it, mutilates it or interprets it in his own way. A free press would watch over its implementation and the deputies could defend it in the Cortes. With these two reforms we believe firmly that the pessimists and the discontented will disappear from the moment they are furnished with a medium to inform them. It is already something to be able to complain when one feels outraged. — *By Jose Rizal in "The Philippines at the Spanish Congress", La Solidaridad, 31 March 1890.*