

task awaits young Laurent, who is destined to become a real scientist with the modesty and tenacity that such a title demands. Since Goethe wrote *Wilhelm Meister*, many German novels have dealt with the 'formative years.' The *Chronique des Pasquier* treats the formative years of a French humanist.

Moreover, it is clear that humanism is synonymous with that enlightened individualism that Duhamel defends. It is not by chance that Laurent, in the prologue to the *Notaire du Havre* and Duhamel in his *Prière sur la Montagne Sainte-Geneviève* both invoke Joachim du Bellay. But on the very morning, full of rain and wind and sudden bursts of sunshine, at the very moment when I was going to start this portrait of Duhamel and his double, another character appeared: the radio was broadcasting Mussolini's speech. The imperious voice spoke of a revolution that was going on, warned its hearers against the dangers of an easy life, proclaimed Fascism to be a school of heroism. And I could not help noticing that everything dynamic in the vocabulary of the democrats and the liberals has been appropriated by their opponents. Coming back to Georges Duhamel, it seemed to me that I was better able to distinguish the part of his work that already belongs to the past from the part that may influence the future. The vision of a man strictly bound to his party and his corporation runs counter to Duhamel's individualism, which considers the individual far more advanced than the group. The most violent attacks against enlightened individualism no longer come from the defenders of Americanization. However moving the *Prière sur la Montagne Sainte-Geneviève* may be, it is already an epilogue to Georges Duhamel's first crusade. The times are past when abuses were glorified for the sake of a fictitious prosperity. To defend individualism, Duhamel will have to answer other adversaries and start out on a new crusade. But he will no doubt reply by saying that he has already begun, that one shows the value of individualism only by painting a noble image of the conscious individual, and that the *Chronique des Pasquier* proves his point.

### EINSTEIN, THE PHILOSOPHER

By DR. SAMUEL SZEMERE

Translated from the *Pester Lloyd*, Budapest German-language Daily

OSWALD SPENGLER complains in his *Decline of the West* that the philosophers of our time ignore its great political problems and do not take sides. Leibnitz and Kant, in spite of all the activity they devoted to scientific and philosophic problems, were deeply moved by the burning

problems of their epoch and took pains to make their positions clear. Our philosophers, on the other hand, remain specialists devoted to their abstract field of knowledge, untouched by the currents of the life around them. And Spengler regards their inability to understand this life and to take part sympathetically in its struggles as a symptom of decline, which, together with many others, indicates the lack of creative power to-day.

Albert Einstein cannot be reproached for having remained a specialist or holding aloof from life. This inexhaustible student of theoretical physics, whose genius in this field has led him to make some of the most important discoveries in the history of science, also feels impelled to take a stand on all the essential matters of our time. His personality is too many-sided to confine itself to remote abstractions, and he is much too impulsive to smother the reactions that living reality arouses in him. Of course, scientific truth lies closer to his heart than anything else, but freedom and human values, peace and social justice—everything in life that gives human existence a higher value—concern him. His writings express an especially rich character deeply attached to values of every kind.

This universality of his speaks to us in his latest book, *Mein Weltbild*, which has been published by the Querido-Verlag in Amsterdam. It contains a collection of essays, speeches, letters, and statements drawn from various stages in his life. If we try to discover the outstanding features of his philosophy as it is defined here by the hand of a master, we reach the conclusion that Einstein values personality above all else and believes that it is the highest good of which the children of earth are capable. 'I do not feel that the state is the sole valuable element in human life, but rather the creative, sensitive individual, the personality. It alone creates what is noble and sublime, whereas the herd, as such, remains insensitive in thought and feeling.'

The great artists and discoverers are the only noble forms humanity takes. Only the single individual, the creative personality who thinks and judges for himself, can create any values for society and thus further its higher development. Greco-European-American culture, especially the culture of the Renaissance, rests on the freedom of the individual. When Einstein evaluates our period in these terms he finds but little satisfaction. The number of natural leaders has undergone a precipitous decline. In the field of art, the lack of individuals is especially noticeable; in politics, the intellectual independence and sound emotions of the citizen have declined enormously. Dictators have arisen and are tolerated only because there is not enough appreciation of the worth and right of the personality. Einstein's political ideal is a democratic one. He is convinced that an autocratic system of force quickly degenerates. 'For

force always attracts the morally second-rate, and I am convinced that tyrants of genius always have scoundrels as their successors.'

In regard to the relation between the state and the individual, Einstein considers the possibility of free individual development as supremely important. 'The state exists for man, not man for the state. As I see it, the most important function of the state is to protect the individual and to give the creative personality the opportunity to develop.'

Human personality flourishes in an atmosphere of inner freedom and peace. This conviction is one of the foundation stones of Einstein's philosophy; it determines the attitude he has taken toward the great issues of our time. He advocates the creation of a superior international court above the state, the abolishment of universal compulsory military service, and radical disarmament. He sees little prospect in mere agreements to reduce armaments. The important thing is all or nothing. An obligatory international supreme court would have to have executive power guaranteed by all the participating states and be able to take military and economic sanctions against any disturber of the peace. Einstein is an eloquent advocate of everything that promotes conciliation among nations. He welcomes the graduate school course in Davos not only because it promotes life and culture but also because it has succeeded, to a high degree, in establishing relationships between individuals of different nationalities, a kind of education favorable to a European community of feeling.

INTELLECTUAL and political freedom is so much his element of life that he at once foresaw the consequences of the recent political shift in Germany. His statement of March, 1933, defines his position: 'As long as I am able to choose, I shall stay in any country only so long as political freedom, tolerance, and equality prevail there. Political freedom includes the freedom to write and express orally any political convictions and tolerance toward the convictions of others. These conditions are not fulfilled in Germany to-day.'

He left Germany, resigned his position in the Prussian Academy of Science, in which he had been a distinguished member for many years, and gave up his Prussian citizenship. Yet he did not participate in a French attack on German anti-Semitism. He refused the invitation that had been offered to him on the ground that, however strongly he felt about the terrible events in Germany, he could not as a German participate in a movement emanating from the officials of a foreign government. Secondly, as a Jew who had seen injustice done to his fellow believers as well as to himself, he did not want to pass judgment on his own case, preferring the judgment of disinterested parties.

One part of the book is devoted to Jewry. This contains Einstein's statements on the Jewish ideal, Zionism, Palestine, and the destiny and welfare of the Jews. His spiritual solidarity with his race he expresses as follows: 'To strive for understanding for its own sake, to cultivate a love of justice amounting to fanaticism, and to strive for personal independence—these are the traditional underlying motives of the Jewish people that make me feel that my belonging to them is a grace of fate.' He regards the acceptance of life in all its forms as the essence of the Jewish philosophy. 'Life is holy. It is the highest value on which all others depend. If one sanctifies the superindividual life one has esteem for everything spiritual, and this is the marked characteristic of the Jewish tradition.' To illustrate how much the consciousness of the sanctity of life lives in the Jewish people, he relates what Walter Rathenau once said to him: 'When a Jew says that he is going hunting for pleasure, he lies.' The tragic history of the Jewish race seems to him to have been decreed by destiny. Yet he cherishes the view that as long as the Jews remain the guardians of truth, justice, and freedom, they will create more values that will ennoble humanity.

Naturally enough, science occupies the central position in the philosophy of a man who has studied it profoundly. To him it is not only one cultural element among others, but from a subjective point of view it is the redeeming power, the court of last appeal. It offers a simplified and commanding view of the world, and, as the man of understanding focuses his attention on science, he transcends the world of personal life, which offers no rest or security. But the strongest and noblest driving force of scientific endeavor is a religious feeling closely related to the emotion that the creative religious people of all times possessed. He stands in ecstatic amazement before the way in which reason reveals itself in the harmony of natural laws, which immeasurably surpass all else in human thought. Research work also leads one to religion in so far as it makes one aware of the limits of the understanding. No matter how far it goes, it finally encounters the impenetrable, and the feeling that an end has been reached fills the researcher with religious awe.

Goethe's words occur to the reader at this point: 'He who possesses art and knowledge also possesses religion.' Einstein calls this cosmic religion and devotes some wonderful words to it: 'The most beautiful thing that we can experience is the mysterious. It is the elemental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and science. He who does not know it and is incapable of wonder or amazement might as well be dead or have no sight. The experience of the mysterious, even when mixed with an element of fear, has also led to a religion. Knowledge of the existence of what is to us impenetrable, manifestations of the deepest reason and most illuminated beauty that our reason can comprehend

only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge and emotion go to make up real religion. In this sense, and in this sense only, I am among the deeply religious men.'

Thus we discover that Einstein's philosophy is fundamentally a metaphysical one. The world we comprehend floats in a bottomless measureless sea, and confronted by this endless beauty and wisdom even the most gifted scientist bows with respect and inner awe.

### MOHAMMED 'POLDI' WEISS

By ANTON KUH

Translated from the *Prager Tagblatt*, Prague German-language Daily

THE adviser of Ibn Saud, king of the Wahabis, who is now fighting the neighboring kingdom of Yemen, comes from Vienna. His name is Mohammed Leopold Weiss, and he is about thirty-six years old. Since I spent part of my youth with him, let me give a brief story of his development. In 1917, as an advanced high school student, Leopold Weiss neglected his studies and avoided his parents' house, spending his time in cafés and going for walks at night with the psychoanalyst, Otto Gross, whom he respected greatly. This bewitched relentless student of dreams, whose conversation was so fanatical that it amounted almost to a religion, was his master. Weiss hung on his words, never noticing the waiters filling the water glasses hundreds of times over around the table of the *Herrenhof*. Gross was the teacher and Weiss his faithful disciple. The bread on which young Leopold Weiss lived at that time was conversation, and his favorite topics were China and the Orient. 'Poldi' Weiss was looking for a god and found one.

In 1920, Leopold Weiss went to Berlin in search of work. He met a woman fifteen years older, and, after he had made a few attempts to write for the moving pictures, set forth with her and her son, who was not much younger than Weiss, to Palestine.

In 1922, Leopold Weiss was writing dispatches for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* under the pseudonym of Pol Torren. When some of these articles appeared in book form, they caused a sensation and an unpleasant one. Leopold Weiss was the first Jew whose dispatches took the side of the Arabs. Outsiders did not know why and blamed him for various reasons. His friends, however, remembered his conversations about China and recalled that he had always defended the Orient against the encroachment of Occidental industry. About this time he adopted Mohammedanism, though in a purely intellectual fashion.

In 1924 he returned to Germany and then set forth again for the