He who does not advance falls back; he who stops is overwhelmed, distanced, crushed; he who ceases to grow greater becomes smaller; he who leaves off, gives up; the stationary position is the beginning of the end.—AMIEL.
This Volume
is sincerely dedicated to
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.
THE OPENING of International House last September meant to some of us the realization of a long cherished dream. For several years we have been planning for and looking ahead to the time when the House would be a reality—a place where students, the leaders of the future, might be together not just occasionally around a conference table but living together from day to day and learning to know and to appreciate each other.

The House was opened in this year of economic stress with fewer foreign students than in former years, with world problems of no small significance confronting us, but we believe that students have greatly benefited by this experience. Opportunities have been provided for acquaintance and friendship through daily contact in the building as well as a great variety of activity. And we hope that these contacts have proved beneficial in furthering the purposes of the House. The House has presented a challenge to all of us to lend ourselves sincerely and untringly to the purpose which the donor had in mind when the building was dedicated. We hope that as the years come and go the spirit of cooperation and friendliness will continue to prevail.

BRUCE W. DICKSON, Director
The New Internationalism

A PLEA FOR DIVERSITY

By Raymond B. Fosdick*

In his recent presidential address before the British Association in London, Sir Alfred Ewing, himself a distinguished engineer, frankly confessed his disillusionment about the benefits of modern science. He looked back “on the sweeping pageant of discovery and invention” in which he used “to take unlimited delight,” and now it seemed dust and ashes. In sentence after sentence he echoed Ruskin’s lamentation over man’s growing enslavement to the ingenuity of his inventions. Science can give us more and more food, but what use is it, if through lack of reasonable distribution we starve in sight of this new wealth? Science can give us leisure that was never dreamed of by our grandparents, but of what avail is leisure if man does not discipline himself to use it with mental and spiritual profit? Science can give us power to learn the structure of the atom and track down the neuron to its final hiding place, but what good is it if we use this power to turn the world into an armed camp in preparation for the next cataclysmic slaughter?

Sir Alfred’s voice is not the croaking of a be-nighted medievalist. He does not advocate any moratorium for scientific invention. He merely affirms what many other scientists have affirmed before him: that in this generation man is fighting a war for mastery over the creatures of his own invention.

The Focal Point of Modern Problems

Now this attempt of man to tame his own machines is without doubt the focal point of most of the problems of this age. It is not confined to a single country or to a group of countries. It is not limited even to the Occident. For our machine civilization is irresistibly pushing its way into the far corners of the earth. Russia has embraced it with passionate ardor, and all along the frontiers of Africa and Asia the resistance of the machineless age is giving way to the machine. It is becoming increasingly self-evident that this world cannot remain half mechanized and half free. It is more and more inconceivable that the looms of Manchester and the spinning wheels of India can operate at the same time or the same globe. In the long look ahead, even the tremendous figure of Gandhi cannot keep India on a handicraft basis any more than Henry Thoreau could stop the march of the railroads a hundred years ago. My own instinctive sympathies and my spiritual allegiance are with Henry Thoreau rather than with Henry Ford; but I am compelled to admit that the dynamic forces which, superficially at least, have shaped our age and seem to be shaping the future, are coming from Dearborn rather than from Walden Pond.

At this point perhaps a qualification is necessary. It is at least conceivable that in a fit of rage over their domination, or in a mood of weariness over the pace which they create, man might turn on his own machines and smash them. It is even more conceivable that through perversity or ignorance he might find himself increasingly unable to make use of them. His mismanagement
of economic laws or his insistence upon war might easily bring about this result—and the landscape of the future would be decorated with hills of junk and festoons of rust to mark the burial place of our contemporary civilization.

I say that this eventuality is conceivable. My belief, however, is that somehow or other—and probably on a basis none too intelligent—man will keep his machines. Having once harnessed physics and chemistry to do his work he will not easily be driven to abandon them. He will doubtless make cruel and costly mistakes in their operation. He will be ruthless in following their leadership. He will leave behind him the wreck of a world which in some aspects, at least, was fair and beautiful. But in laying hold of the physical sciences as a weapon for his own advantage, he has tasted the blood of conquest, and now he will not stop until he comes to the end. The jungles of Africa will go down before a flood of automobiles and radios, and the billboards on the highways of Asia will proclaim the advantages of sewing machines, canned soups, and shaving soaps.

We must look forward, therefore, to a world that is bound together in terms of time and space far more closely than at present—a world that is tied together by the ever-increasing centripetal force of international interests. We shall harness wind and sunlight; we shall reduce distance to minutes and seconds; and whether we like it or not, we shall accustomed to having the Argentine and Czechoslovakia dropping in for tea.

Indeed it may be argued that the basic difficulty of the present age is that the world is only half mechanized. According to this thesis, the crudities of our contemporary machine system are due to the fact that we are living in the midst of a conquest, and wars of conquest are always times of unsettlement. We are witnessing a struggle between two different kinds of worlds: the old world and the new; between two different centuries: the eighteenth century and the twentieth century. One civilization is built on top of another—like the ruins of a Greek city—and we are trying to live in both civilizations at the same time. Until one civilization is completely dominant, until the machine, for good or evil, has extended its mastery over the entire earth, there can be no peace, and but little basis for an ordered life.

However valid this conception may be, the fact remains that we face in the future the probability of a thoroughly mechanized world, and consequently a world from which external diversities will gradually disappear. Inventions like the radio and the movies will tend to level civilization to a common denominator. Possessions of the same kind and type—whether they be Paris fashions, or breakfast foods, or styles of architecture, or men’s hats, or cigarettes—will gradually break down the differences which hitherto have made of civilization a garment of many colors. Even in that paradise of the far-off island of Bali, the infiltration has begun, and it will probably not be long before the picturesque costumes of the women will succumb to the Rue de la Paix, and the indigenous dancing and music of a light-hearted people will be a forgotten memory.

**Spiritual and Intellectual Uniformity**

The effect of mechanization, of course, shows itself not only on the material side of life but on the psychological side. Out of environmental uniformity is coming, and will come increasingly in the future, a spiritual and intellectual uniformity of far greater significance. Common physical surroundings and possessions, and inventions like...
radio and the movies, tend to foster common mental reactions. Standardization cannot be employed on one side of life without having its repercussions on the other side. Just as inventions can develop the crowd mind on a national scale, so it is conceivable that they can develop the crowd mind on an international scale.

Possibly there are those who believe that this type of progress—or rather this kind of change—is desirable. Certainly there are many thoughtful people who, in trying to escape from the palsy and discord of today, look hopefully forward to a future that is characterized by a good deal of uniformity. Particularly among some groups that are working for peace there seems to be at least a subconscious dream of a kind of heaven on earth—an Augustinian City of God, a Baconian New Atlantis, in which all divergencies have been smoothed away. There is a tendency, in some quarters at least, to visualize the coming international life as the ultimate ant-hill, the triumph of collectivism, the perfect state in which individuals and nations renounce forever their right to be out of step.

The question that arises, therefore, is this: In building our new interrelated world, or rather in being swept into it by our own machines, how far do we want to go toward uniformity? I do not say that we can surely control our own destiny in this matter. We are in the grip of forces that seem at the moment to be stronger than we are. The attempt to soften the impact of the machine on the future of man may prove disillusioning. But at least we can establish standards by which we can pronounce the evolution good or bad. We can decide as a race where we would like to be, even if we are not completely successful in developing a practical method of getting there.

What we are desperately working for in this generation is a harmonious basis of international life. Our civilization is politically and economically disheveled, due in large part, we now believe, to the sudden shaking down of the races of the world into a single community. Until we can organize this community, until we can equip it with institutions of control, there is little hope for relative peace. The difficulty is that the new community does not particularly care to be organized. We are still thinking in terms of formulas that long antedate our own sensitively interdependent age of science and technology.

For instance, we are still thinking in terms of economic nationalism, and we are trying to use it as a means of shelter from world adversity. In spite of the fact that our machines have woven the economic life of the world into a single gigantic fabric, and have stricken the word “self-contained” from the dictionary of possibilities, we attempt by means of tariffs, prohibitions, quotas, and exchange restrictions, conceived in terms of boundary lines, to doctor up and plaster up a system that can no longer exist in a world like this. We are trying to fit a philosophy of separatism into a situation in which the watertight compartments have already broken down. We are trying to run a twentieth-century world with ideas devised for an eighteenth-century civilization. Our statesmen either do not know or will not admit that the era of economic nationalism is dead, and unless we are prepared to destroy our factories and sink our ships, it can never again be resuscitated.

National Autonomy Has Passed

Moreover, the passing of economic nationalism has dealt a blow to the nineteenth-century conception of political nationalism from which it can
scarcely recover. The old days of national autonomy, as our fathers understood it, have definitely passed. The time has gone when any one country is free to act in its unqualified discretion. Sixty nations cannot span the earth with their ships and airplanes and competing systems of commerce and expect the business to run without some centralized technique of understanding and supervision. But a centralized technique involves the abandonment of the old conception of sovereignty. Just as soon as you introduce the collective principle into the management of the world's affairs, you knock the chief prop out from under political nationalism. Which will you keep: your machines or your old provincial loyalties? You cannot keep both. The inescapable logic of a mechanized world forces us toward institutions based on the collective principle rather than on the decisive principle.

And here, again, we are confronted by the conflict between old ideas and present realities. The attempt to establish the World Court and to bring into being the League of Nations is fought by means of formulas that are hoary and tottering with age. Confronted by a situation that is utterly new, we cling to the past with pathetic insistence. Every attempt to translate our economic interdependence into institutional terms is met by the ghost of the sovereign state, still seeking feverishly to retain in its hands the ruins of its empire.

But the knell has sounded for the old concept of political nationalism just as it has sounded for economic nationalism. We may paint it and prop it up for two or three generations; we may bolster it up with palliatives; but it has already begun to crumble under the onslaught of the machine age, and unless we are prepared to toss our machines into the scrap heap, we or our children after us will be charged with the responsibility of giving this exaggerated parochialism decent burial as an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century phenomenon which was not fitted for the new environment of the twentieth century.

Now, having said all this, the question still remains: Does the passing of economic and political nationalism mean the breaking down of all the cultural differences which hitherto have given such variety to human civilization? Does the future promise only a melting pot of architecture, religion, philosophy, and art, in which divergencies have been boiled away, leaving a residue of one substance, temperature, and color? Are we passing on to our children a world that has been reduced by the process of propinquity to its lowest common denominator?

*Nationalism Versus Nationality*

It is at this point, it seems to me, that we must put down a few stakes. Here we must set up our lines of resistance. Our task is the purification of the old concept of nationalism—the difficult and delicate task of letting political nationalism be diluted without destroying nationality. For nationalism and nationality stand for different things. Nationalism is a modern emotional phenomenon which in our time has degenerated into jingoism, imperialism, and intolerance. It is the identification of all the interests and activities of a country, cultural and otherwise, with its political sovereignty. It is the doctrine that all human loyalties must be subordinate to loyalty to the national state. It is an optical illusion which induces groups of people to mistake their own foibles and prejudices for the future of civilization. It is marked by a spirit of narrowness, exclusiveness, and patriotic snobbery. It inculcates in its citizens the belief that they are
living in a world by themselves, sufficient unto
themselves. In brief, it is a threat of power
rather than an expression of culture.

Nationality on the other hand is primarily
cultural and only incidentally political. Histori-
cally it is much older than nationalism. Through-
out the ages it has been one of the chief instru-
ments by which the aims of humanity have been
advanced. It has been the great conservator of
human differences in all the aesthetic manifesta-
tions of civilization. More than any other factor,
it has promoted divergencies in modes of
thought and contrasts in customs and manners.
It has been the form in which the aspirations of
men for liberty and free development have found
expression.

If, therefore, we can dissect nationality from
nationalism, if we can cut away the cancerous
growth of the last two centuries, we shall preserve
the priceless instrument by which all the
ages have been responsible for the building of
distinctive social orders and their supporting cultures.
The word "America" should stand not for mili-
tary or economic self-sufficiency, but for the
liberating worship of a broad and narrow tradi-
tion, not for an unshakeable belief in our excel-
ence over all other nationalities. It should stand,
if it can, for a distinct culture, a distinct con-
tribution to the technique of human relationships,
a capacity for new creation in everything that
makes for the good life.

That is why the standardization involved in
the machine age is such a threat to the future.
For each nation has its distinctive contribution to
make to the spiritual wealth of the world, and
the stereotyping of life and environment in terms
of fixed molds is calculated to dry up the sources
of enrichment. This is a lesson which here
in America at least we have not learned. When
the United States intervened in Haiti in 1915
one of the reasons given by Secretary of State
Lansing was that the population of that island
"should enjoy a prosperity and an economic and
industrial development to which every people of
an American nation are entitled." But why are
they entitled to it, particularly if they do not want
it? In Haiti, people are governed not
by clocks but by the sun and the seasons. They
have an instinct for leisure. Their recreations
are not a matter of paid admissions or forced
disciplines, but are utterly spontaneous. What
is to be gained by introducing to Haiti taxicabs,
and quick-screen counters, and professional base-
ball? It will be at best a poor imitati
on of America, and we shall smother the particularized
life of a promising people with a color which
certainly will be drab in Haiti, whatever it may be
in the United States.

Or take Mexico upon which America fre-
quently looks with condescension. Here is a
country with a highly developed indigenous art,
and a country of fiestas and flowers and gaiety, a
country in which economic wants have scarcely
been stirred. In her philosophy of life, in her
sense of leisure, in her lack of exacting organi-
zation, in her picturesque arts, Mexico has a significant
contribution to make to the Western world. Why
should she go down under the steam-roller of
the machine age? What will it profit us if in
exchange for a few gadgets she allows her color-
ful and vigorous culture to be diluted and
debased?

Conserving Diversity

The conservation of diversity in a machine age
is to this generation a supreme challenge. For
it is not by Ford cars, or by economic penetra-
tion, or by the spread of culture behind armies
and navies that we shall create a world fit to live
in. The preservation of the music of Bali is of
infinite greater importance than introducing its
inhabitants to European education or filling its
roads with motor buses. The art of Japan has
a far deeper signification to the future than any
benefit that can be derived from having the Japan-
ese flag float over Manchuria. The real mean-
ing of France to the world is not bayonets nor
the tradition of Clemenceau; it is the appreciation
of beauty and the dignity of the simple life. A
country that in this age can produce the towering
figure of Gandhi has a spiritual gift for humanity
which words can only falteringly describe. What
has our Western civilization to give to India as
an adequate exchange for such a contribution?
It is not by standardization that we shall build
a sunnier world than this; it is by diversity. In
an infinite variety of people, of works of art, of
great personalities, of widely contrasting cultures,
lie the strength and hope of the future.

This thesis, it seems to me, is directly applicable
to this new International House which we are
dedicating this evening under such happy aus-
spicies. Here we have the whole world in mini-
ture. Here are represented the cultures and
customs of nearly three score nations. Here is
a laboratory of human relationships. Like every
community and social group, a certain amount of
organization for the promotion of understanding
is necessary. Just as a nation has its police sys-
tems and commerce commissions, and just as
the world has its court at The Hague and its league
at Geneva, so here, too, in this International
House we have committees and executives. But
this framework of organization has nothing to
do with the kind of product that comes from this
house. We are not trying to develop a homo-
genous type. This is not a melting pot. If the
influence of this institution is to create groups
that act alike and think alike, then it will have
completely failed of its purpose. I should hope
that this place would be a home of honest differ-
ences, a refuge for conflicting opinions, a haven
for contrasts. I should wish that this institu-
tion would be a forum for economic ideas orthodox
and unorthodox, a center of social and cultural
theories that reflect the whole range of human
experience. I should hope that here would be
woven a fabric of variegated pattern and of many
shades and colors—a fabric from which a flag
might be fashioned to unfurl in the face of a
levelling mechanism. In brief, if I should be
asked to suggest a motto for this new house, an
inscription to be placed over its doors, I would
give you these words:

Not standardization but diversity.
Not nationalism but nationality.
National Room B.