

THE PROBLEM OF A MODERN APOLOGETIC
AND ITS RELATION TO THE HISTORIC CHRISTIAN FAITH

by

Roy MacEachern

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P R E F A C E

At the outset an apology must be offered for the length of this thesis. Without omitting essentials, the matter has been cut down as much as possible both by complete deletion and by transference to footnotes and appendices. As the thesis now stands the first two chapters may be read as a unit and the rest disregarded entirely. These two chapters are the ones which, if any, partake of the nature of a scholarly investigation. They are, however, so destructive and negative in tone that I have preferred to add the remainder so as not to appear entirely agnostic.

In the more constructive section, little effort has been made to find other authority for my views. These views were not drawn from other sources in the first place, except in a general way. I am, therefore, putting them forth frankly as my own. I have done little more than indicate the lines upon which I should like to be able to do, or see done, a major piece of work.

Much of the interpretation of events as it is given in my second chapter might appear to call for supporting references. Here the source material is largely available to anyone and I have preferred again to put forward as my own what really is my own. The point of view in each several place is dependent upon the point of view as a whole.

This thesis reveals, as well as could be, the cumulative result of my courses at McMaster added to the prior development of my thought. I could present nothing more representative of my education here. If the opinions held are unusual, they are those to which I have been driven as I have reacted strongly from views which appear to me as quite untenable and inadequate for the maintenance of any faith.

Two causes account for the boldness with which certain ideas of current acceptance are repudiated, and the general attitude of confidence with which others are offered. I believe firmly that I have something better to offer than that which I seek to destroy. I believe also that the present theological situation is so bad that it could hardly be worse; so one can tear away at it with a certain exalted feeling of freedom from possibility of doing appreciable harm.

My bibliography is not extensive for the scope of the work, and is largely confined to one aspect of the subject. I have, however, laid under tribute in a general way everything that I have studied in my theological courses. I could almost list every book that I have read. Particularly is this the case in the department of Church History. I have given few references but have drawn upon the whole of the work of these courses, which I think I have in the main digested and made a part of myself and my thought.

R. MacEachern.

CONTENTS

| Chapter | Page |
|--|------|
| I The Modern Apologetic | |
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Logical Deduction From Natural Phenomena. | 3 |
| 3. Logical Conclusions From Religious Experiences. | 8 |
| 4. Feeling as an Organ of Knowledge. | 13 |
| 5. Pragmatism. | 21 |
| 6. The Moral Consciousness. | 23 |
| 7. Mysticism. | 30 |
| II The Historical Development. | |
| 1. The Hebrew Background. | 31 |
| 2. The New Testament, Early Christian and Ancient Catholic Church Periods. | 37 |
| 3. Roman Catholicism. | 47 |
| 4. The Reformation. | 51 |
| 5. Post-Kantian Protestantism. | 56 |
| 6. Newer Movements. | 75 |
| III An Attempt at Reconstruction of the Older Theology. | |
| 1. Values to be Salvaged From the Post-Kantian Drift. | 80 |
| 2. The Argument From Miracle | 83 |
| 3. Faith. | 89 |
| 4. Is it a Gospel? | 96 |
| IV Conclusion. | 103 |
| Appendix | |
| A Theological Objections to a Miraculous Conversion . | 106 |
| B The Origin of the Moral Consciousness. | 109 |
| C The Worship of an Objective Deity. | 117 |
| D Further Quotations, Professor Baillie. | 120 |
| E Further Quotations, Professor Wieman. | 125 |

CHAPTER 1

THE MODERN APOLOGETIC

Section 1. Introduction

There are three ways in which attempts are commonly made to justify theological convictions. First there is the strictly rationalistic or speculative method. An attempt is made to draw metaphysical and theological conclusions from the observed phenomena of the material Universe.¹ Second there is the somewhat similar attempt to draw conclusions, by logical process, from the nature of the religious or moral consciousness and certain specific forms of religious experience. The claim is made that theology is subsequent to and derived from religious experience, which latter is regarded as more fundamental and vital. Third there is the claim that rational deduction, or pure reason to use a Kantian term, is not man's exclusive avenue to a knowledge of that which is ultimately real. A more direct, and some say a more certain, knowledge of the Divine may be had through feeling or the religious or moral consciousness.²

1. This viewpoint is neither exclusively nor characteristically modern. Professor Baillie, *The Interpretation of Religion*, p.75, says: "Rationalism and the Speculative Method in theology are in no sense creations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but represent, as we have seen, a well-established tradition that goes back through the Middle Ages to the attitude assumed towards religion by the Greek philosophers."

2. op. cit., p. 256, Preparatory to outlining his own position, which will be referred to in due course, Baillie summarizes the situation as follows. "On the one hand there are the rationalists, who would have us identify religion with cosmological theorising. On the other hand there are the romanticists and sentimentalists, who would find its real essence to consist in some felt stirring of the soul which precedes and is independent of every kind of thought and idea. These two opposite readings of religion hold something like an even balance against one another in contemporary theological literature, and in a sense they may be taken as serving to destroy one another, or at least radically to confute and correct one another's errors."

Section 2. Logical Deduction From Natural Phenomena.

A few years ago the scientist and materialistic philosopher were confident of their ability to rule God out of the Universe by explaining it all upon other grounds. The contention proved so obviously false that the theistic or deistic position was the more firmly established. Today, however, the scientist is more and more tending to an agnostic position.¹ He will neither affirm nor deny the theistic postulate. The onus of making a positive claim and substantiating it is thrown back upon the theologian. There may have been, as Deism affirmed, a single first cause back in the beginning of things which created the Universe potentially, and then left it to unfold itself. Or, as the theory of emergent evolution would rather indicate, the first cause may be closer, and may intervene at various stages of development. Again the first cause may be an immanent principle always at work. But no one knows anything about it. It is utterly beyond our ken.

This view appears to be eminently sound. The whole elaborate structure of philosophic speculation crumbles before the child's query, "Who made God?" We cannot explain a mystery by substituting for it a far greater one.

Even if we could infer the existence of a Supreme Being from some such ground as the existence of order, ~~and~~ design or purpose in the Universe, we would still have nothing approaching the Christian conception of God.² Our Deity would exhibit a strange aptitude for system and

order on one hand, and capriciousness and ruthlessness on the other. His most evident characteristic would be His complete disregard of human values, and all moral considerations as we see them. The old problem of the books of Job and Ecclesiastes would remain unsolved.

No better case can be made out from the study of history. A few isolated instances may indicate that an unseen power works for good, but many others give an equally strong suggestion of at least sheer indifference if not of perversity and evil. Progress in human society may be admitted. But this does not necessarily indicate anything more than the triumph of those types of conduct that have human value. Any observable consistent tendency of this sort may be urged as an indication of a good Creator; but such argument is more than countered by the complete lack of indication that the material environment is geared to the process, either as definitely helpful or as intelligently disciplinary.⁴ The Hebrew writer was a philosopher, and one who saw pretty deeply into the heart of things, when he said that the world of nature had been cursed as far as man was concerned.⁵

The working bee is like a little electric battery which runs until it exhausts itself. Guided by some instinct, she works incessantly for a few weeks, and then, when age or injury comes, she leaves the colony to go and die alone. The drone does nothing, and shares the same fate. No purpose for them is evident, but we posit no blessed hereafter or other form of compensation for them. We are

simply content to make use of them for our interests, concluding that they were created for our benefit and we have some high destiny in which they have no share. We have no right at all to assume that man is more than a similar organism driven by a more complex mechanism of thought, feeling and will to fulfil the purpose, or perchance the mere caprice, of some unknown creative power, and at the end of it all yield up his existence. The most likely conclusion to be drawn from the evidence of the whole constant and ruthless biological struggle is, that any spiritual order of beings there may be simply preys upon us for purely selfish ends, even as we and every other form of life of which we know prey upon some other. In fact the immediate and natural response of primitive man to the idea that gods existed was in the form of attempts to derive some advantage from them either through the cajolary of prayer or the compulsion of magic. That seems to have been the unspoiled empirical judgment and it forces us to ask ourselves very seriously how many of our subsequent conclusions from the same data represent but wishful thinking.

The nearest approach we could get to a hypothesis bearing upon a religious issue is in connection with some form of immortality. From analogy with the law of the indestructibility of matter or force we might infer a probable indestructibility of life. But this need not necessarily imply any continuance of individual consciousness. The evidence is simply insufficient to save the honest thinker from ending with a question mark and a heartache.

1. Baillie, op. cit. pp. 43, 44, furnishes the suggestive thought that it is the duty of the student in any special field of enquiry rather than the philosopher understood as one performing a special coordinating function to decide what are the conclusions to be drawn from the data of that field. That is true providing that the special student gives real attention to the philosophical question and does not pass a hasty and uncritical opinion in a realm where his interest and training are inadequate.
 2. Baillie, op. cit., p. 90.
 3. Lord Balfour as quoted by Baillie, op. cit., p. 84, "To me then it still seems that the common sense 'argument from design' is still of value. But, if it carries us beyond mechanical materialism, it must be owned that it does not carry us far towards a religious theology. It is inconsistent with Naturalism. It is inconsistent with Agnosticism. But its demands would be satisfied by the barest creed which acknowledged that the Universe, or part of it, showed marks of intelligent purpose. And though most persons willing to accept this impoverished form of Theism will certainly ask for more, this is not because they are swept forward by the inevitable logic of the argument, but because the argument has done something to clear a path which they were already anxious to pursue."
 4. Baillie, op. cit., p. 337, gives the following quotations from Huxley and Bertrand Russell. Huxley - "Ethical nature, while born of cosmic nature, is necessarily at enmity with its parent." Russell - "That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins - all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built."
- "Brief and powerless is man's life; and on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day."

5. Genesis 3:17.
6. Charles, The development of Religion Between the Old and New Testaments, p. 22.

Section 3. Logical Conclusions From Religious Experiences.

The psychologist lags behind the natural scientist, but he appears to be slowly reaching the same position of agnosticism with respect to metaphysical and theological deductions from the data of his field. Psychic experience can be very largely explained. Where it eludes our comprehension the mystery is impenetrable and no valid conclusions can be drawn.

The religious experience of regeneration has been the starting point of the apologetic for many Christians. It, however, demonstrates nothing except a psychological law. Acceptance of certain ideas, and response to them with a certain degree of whole-heartedness, produces a certain result in the human personality.¹ The same law runs all through life. The man who gives himself up to the idea that the greatest value is to accumulate money becomes miserly, by nature as well as in practice. The one who idealizes power becomes dictatorial. He who regards sensuous pleasure as the chief end becomes a sensualist. The man who admits and surrenders to all the implications of the belief that there is a God back of the Universe who cares enough about human beings and their destiny to have come to the world in human form and lived and died to reveal Himself to and help men, that back of all the mystery of life, if it could be seen whole, there lies reason and justice, and, above all, that grace will be given sufficient for every need and therefore he can succeed against sin if he tries, that man will not be the same after such belief has entered into

him as he was before. The miracle would come in if he were. The biggest mystery in connection with the matter is that so many of us who claim to believe all these things show so little evidence of it in life and character. Most of the trouble probably lies in too frequent belief in some gross distortion of the truth or in a pretense at belief when we really hold nothing but a speculative theory upon which we have taken no action.

Except for the possibility that similar psychological phenomena are to be found in non-christian cults, or unrelated to specific religious influence of any kind, the Christian apologist might make out a slender case by building his argument from the nature of a few unusual conversions. A necessary conclusion would be that the company of the redeemed is small. In the general run of regenerative experience the constant factor is the need of belief to produce the result. The character and degree of intensity of the result depends upon the nature of the belief which is entertained, the temperament of the subject, and other more or less calculable psychological factors. The overwhelming weight (one is tempted to say all) of the evidence is against anything in the nature of a divine creative activity at the time. Once concede that conversion may be virtually instantaneous or more or less gradual, according to the way in which the surrender of heart and mind is made, and the ground is pretty well cut from under any case for a miraculous interpretation. It becomes a well-nigh inescapable conclusion that those beliefs which, if not anterior to the experience, are at least concurrent

with, and a constituent element of, it, require independent justification. Exactly the same situation arises when this experience is viewed from the angle of forgiveness, or when such an experience as that of comfort in sorrow is considered. Professor Baillie gives a very clear exposition of the psychology of these experiences but he draws the conclusion that religion lives by insight. How the soundness of the insight is to be confirmed he fails to indicate.²

Professor Oman has a peculiar attitude upon this point. He seems to regard conversion as ground for asserting a direct invasion of the Divine through the subconscious, but proceeds to analyse the experience in such a way as to destroy his own contention. He refers to the need of a "conscious vision of the Father." Clearly then the whole matter hinges upon the nature and accuracy of this vision.^{3 & 4}

The argument from the regenerative experience may take another form which is very close to that implied by Professor Oman. It is recognized that regeneration comes through belief in Christ, but a divine postulate is thought necessary to account for the result. In fact the belief which appears to induce it is not in any way differentiated from the total experience.⁵ This whole position would appear to be untenable and a mere confusion of a clear cut issue. If interest in Christ as a mere man can be induced and sustained in sufficient degree, and the regenerative result thereby produced, then we have a form of Humanism which duplicates historic Christianity, as far as practical and social values are concerned. Any theistic postulate becomes

entirely out of place. If however a belief in Christ as divine is required to induce the experience, we are just back at the old impasse. The experience is but an interesting psychological phenomenon, and our basic divine postulate still awaits a valid ground of assertion.

1. "Finally, brethern, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:8.
2. op. cit. pp. 231,2: "Whatever may be true of other experiences, of religious experience it must be said that it is itself essentially reflective in character-born of reflection and constituted by reflection. No being it is granted, could be religious who could not think, and as far as we know or can guess, no being who can think is wholly without the germs of a religious consciousness. Therefore, seeing that thought consists in nothing else than the manipulation of ideas, it cannot be true, as Schleiermacher imagined and as this new school of romantics seems to follow him in believing, that 'ideas are all foreign to religion'. Perhaps indeed the main principle to be grasped in this whole matter is that religion lives not by sight but by insight. A man is religious not in so far as he stumbles on certain new facts but in so far as he discovers new meaning in facts that are already known to us all.....Hence neither is it true to say with the 'Theology of Experience' that religious belief is consequent upon religious experience, nor is it true to say with rationalism that religious experience is consequent upon a prior act of belief; the truth being rather that the deepest of all religious experiences is just the experience of believing."

There are two objections to this statement of the case. The first relates to the comprehensiveness of the term 'experience'. If the intellectualization or other process leading to belief is included the term has become too broad to be useful in theological discussion. The second objection relates to a seeming failure to take into account the nature of insight. In everyday life insight is a capacity for taking advantage of past experience and thought. It is a swift and automatic process of logic. It is analogous to the many physical activities which once had to be learned but have become automatic. When the insight of any individual is consistently confirmed by later events he and others come to trust it. Otherwise they do not. In the realm of theology or metaphysics the reliability of insight is

not confirmed as it is for instance in business or professional life. Therefore we must try and penetrate back of the automatic aspect of it and see what are the presuppositions or logical deductions involved. Any failure to do so opens us to the charge of pious obscurantism. And obscurantism is obscurantism notwithstanding its 'piosity'.

3. Oman, *Grace and Personality*, p. 77; "Is it (conversion) not an invasion of our personality by an influx of the Divine, so overpowering as to seem to justify the belief that it enters through some trap-door in the sub-conscious.....Yet the rapidity and extent of these changes are due not to mystical transformation of the soul, but to the hearing ear and the understanding heart perceiving a new meaning in things, which changes for us our whole world. Not through the unconscious moulding of any force is the heart truly converted, but through a conscious vision of the Father, whereby the world being changed from our world of pleasure and possession into God's world of duty and discipline, and our fellowmen into His children, all things become new." and, p.80: "This view of conversion as a discovery that God is worthy of trust, and not a mystic change in the substance of the soul,...."
4. See extended note forming Appendix A at end of this thesis.
5. See comment added to reference number 2 above.

Section 4. Feeling as an Organ of Knowledge.

Professor Galloway is a modern writer who illustrates this point of view. He concedes that religious beliefs may not be held validly in the face of rational disproof, but affirms that, lacking such positive denial of the pure¹ reason, the postulates of feeling may be accepted as truth. "It is hopeless to make reason the sole criterion of religious validity."² "Only the mutual support of theoretical and practical reason can give a sufficient assurance of religious truth."³ "The certainty which marks religious faith rests largely, though not entirely, on the suggestive power of feeling."⁴ "The religious mind never reaches its object by a cogent inference from what is given, nor does it measure its assurance by a careful computation of what the premises will justify. Beyond question religion, in its advanced stages especially, welcomes the aid of reason, and an enlightened piety cannot be anti-rational. But it establishes relations with the supra-sensible object first and foremost by an act of faith, of which the real motive is the needs and desires of the soul. Religious faith then springs from the presence of human needs, and these needs in their turn depend on the human nature which reveals itself in them....The divine object will always be one which satisfies a personal and spiritual need, and it will permanently represent a value."⁵ "Religious cognition differs from scientific.....These postulates are not rational deductions but values; they are values which are postulated in response to the demands of the inner life, and correspond

to its needs.....Plainly this faith cannot be the antithesis of knowledge: in fact it must be knowledge of a kind.⁶

"The important thing seems to be that we should frankly recognize the dependence of religious doctrines on religious experience."⁷ "In the end the ground of authority must be the character of the spiritual experience itself, with the historic values which have grown out of it, and the faith which is its expression."⁸

In criticising the claim that feeling may be recognized as an organ of knowledge, dogmatism is dangerous. Man is more than a walking intellect. The emotional and volitional aspects of his personality must be reckoned with. To say that cognition is the only organ of knowledge may seem at first sight to be itself an arbitrary claim based upon some emotional or other prejudice. The claim however can be quite well established. It is a clear fact of experience that we can engage in an activity somewhat akin to pure thought. That is, we can sort out some of our prejudices and reason out a problem in a way that is approximately fair. The whole development of natural science and historical investigation in the modern world is an example of this. Feelings on the other hand can only be sorted out and evaluated by the mind. They assert themselves in a quantitative way. It is the mind which must discriminate as to quality, rejecting entirely, or sublimating where it sees fit. ^{Much of} The distinction between liberty and license is found here. Where the emotional nature is controlled by, and directed to ends approved by, reason and judgment there results an integrated and unified personality, or liberty.

Where the emotions are not so governed there is license. It follows that, even if the possibility may exist theoretically of pure emotion being an organ of knowledge in some way comparable with pure reason, we have no means at all of availing ourselves of it. The most acceptable postulate is that our emotional impulses are governed ^{and given direction} by past thought and conviction, originating in our own minds, influencing us from our environment, and, perhaps, residing in our ancestry.

Much confusion may arise at this point by an uncritical assumption that the supreme emotion, love, is in itself so absolutely pure as to require no moral restraint based upon intellectual appraisal. Hardly any idea could be more obviously false. Love is fundamentally selfish. It would lose its quality and value otherwise. No one would desire to be loved out of mere compassion. We crave to be wanted and valued. Even the love of God is represented to us as being based upon His yearning for communion with and response from us. This selfish motive behind His love for us is the very element which constitutes its drawing power upon our hearts. If uncontrolled, such love degenerates into an utterly selfish passion to possess the object of desire without regard to the good of the object, or an equally selfish over-indulgence of the loved one. The mystery of the atonement is in some way bound up with this need that love itself must conform to the regulation of moral principle. Even God's love must conform to justice based upon the facts of the case.

Through the practical experience of men of science

and business in the modern world, it is becoming axiomatic that the road to true judgment is by way of rigid exclusion of emotional bias of any kind. In all social relationships where modern men of high moral aim think deeply, the principle becomes established that, although emotional factors may and should be taken into consideration, they must never be allowed to rule. Before any emotional expression may be permitted, a valid reason must be found. The child must not be spoiled through uncontrolled affection. Nepotism and favoritism of any kind should enter but slightly into business appointments and transactions. The political appeal should be to reason and not to sectional or individual prejudice. The jury should be furnished with all the facts to enable it to reach a fair judgment, but not biased by any impassioned harangue. The fierce nationalism of the day, based so largely upon emotional appeal and prejudice, must give way to a calm and judicious consideration of international justice and obligation. The attempt to bring every human activity under the control of reason is the sign of man's attempt to transcend the merely animal. Surely this is ^{the essential} ~~the~~ respect in which, if at all, we are made in the image of God. Professor Wieman suggested that the development along this line has

9

scarce begun.

Religion should be expected to lead rather than retard the march of progress. Converts must be presented with the claims of the faith calmly. They must be convinced that acceptance is right and proper because reasonable.

Compulsion has had its day as the means of winning converts. Emotional influence with appeal first to fear and of late more to love has been tried. Sooner or later a sound appeal to reason must be found or the whole effort dropped.

The only possible excuse for the sensational or emotional appeal is as a stimulation to thoughtful consideration. There can only be a real warrant for this in case of indifference, or where an emotional barrier is hindering an honest facing of the issue. On the other hand an emotional outlet for religious belief and life may be allowed. The temple is proper as a place for worship. Emotion, like art in any of its forms, is legitimate as a means of expression once other considerations have affirmed the worthiness of that which is to be expressed. As motive power in the engine emotion has its place, but it should not be allowed to climb upon the driver's seat and whisper advice, much less take hold of the wheel. The heart having its own reasons is an idea that sounds well in poetry, but it constitutes cheap philosophy and very poor religion.

In passing, this principle may very well be related to poetry and literature in general. It is significant that the Enlightenment, so-called, was mediated to the English theological world at first by a poet, Coleridge. Much of our theological development has been but a part of
10
the larger movement of Romanticism. The idea, so prominent in our literature, that feeling is a reliable

organ of knowledge can fairly be charged with being one of
 the most morally devastating ever propounded.¹¹ It appears
 to be eating ~~away~~ like a canker at the roots of our civil-
 ization, and to be one of the major causes of the present
 chaotic condition. Happily there are indications that it
 is passing away.¹² The literary, or other, artist has his
 place as one who takes worthy ideas, which in any case are
 commonly accepted and can reasonably be substantiated, and
 gives to them a beautiful form of expression. He helps us
 to find an outlet for our own deepest convictions and so
 more completely vitalize them.¹³ There is nothing more
 exasperating to an honest mind than to be captivated by a
 beautiful form of expression of some substance regarded as
 worthless. There is still a wealth of meaning in the
 distinction which regards science as a way to knowledge and
 art as a medium of expression.¹⁴

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1. Professor D.C. Macintosh of Yale supports this view but with not so strong an emphasis upon feeling. His position may be more that of Baillie which will shortly be referred to. In his section of *Is There A God?*, p.181, he says: "Belief in the God we need to stimulate and encourage our best endeavor we have seen to be logically permissible in the light of what we know.... The Christian then has the moral right to believe that the personal God he needs, a God great enough and good enough for his worship and trust, actually exists."
 2. Galloway, *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 266.
 3. *ibid.* p. 269.
 4. *ibid.* p. 257.
 5. *ibid.* pp. 185, 6.
 6. *ibid.* p. 32.
 7. *ibid.* p. 168.
 8. *ibid.* p. 50.

9. Wieman, *The Issues of Life*, p. 16.

10. Baillie, *op. cit.*, p. 202. "The Romantic Movement made itself felt in almost every region of spiritual activity--in poetry and in literature generally, in music, in aesthetic theory, in political theory, in ethical theory, and in many other fields; and in each field it stood for very much the same thing -- for a tendency to be altogether done with reason and to fall back upon other and simpler forms of mental life----In the field of theological theory----it has taken the form of an attempt to find the real source and spring of the religious consciousness somewhere in the mind below the level at which reflective thought arises, that is, somewhere in the pre-rational or pre-intellectual region."

11. Selbie, *Schleiermacher*, p. 19. "At its worst it (Romanticism) is individualism run mad, divorced from all obligations to morality and knowing no standards save those of a rather sensuous taste." *ibid.* p. 20 a quotation from Eucken. "The Romantic Movement provokes the full strength of our opposition only when it takes that which has in art a certain justification and makes it fill and dominate life to the exclusion of everything else. It then becomes evident that the unfettered expansion of feeling is unable to give a satisfactory meaning to life; that the 'infinitely free subjectivity' lacks steadiness and viril force; that the vain mirroring of self and love of abstraction are a wearisome burden; and finally, that the contempt for morality, usually characteristic of this school, together with its incapacity to picture morality save in caricature is merely a sign of its own shallowness. It becomes ever more and more obvious that this vague subjectivity lacks spiritual depth, and that there is not much substance beneath all the shimmer and sparkle. As the movement develops, it is seen to be more and more worthless, more and more involved in subtleties of barren sentiment. This is why some of its most prominent representatives have had in the end to resort to external supports, and submit to some form of ecclesiastical authority, not indeed without casting about it a halo of romance quite foreign to the historical spirit."

After such an arraignment any concession of even a moderate place in life for the romantic viewpoint must remind us of the arguments advanced for the moderate use of alcohol as a beverage.

12. Sperry, "Yes, But-", pp. 140, 1. "Nothing is plainer here (in the present drift of the arts) than the spent quality of romanticism. It survives today mainly in its spurious and degenerate forms of sentimentalism, and even its authentic classics of yesterday, when seen or read or heard again, do not fit the tempers of this age." "They (the ultra-modern young people) have become realists about themselves, and once they have become realists the romantic game is up."

13. Smith, What Can Literature Do For Me? p. 7. "A poet is a man who feels as we feel but has the gift of expression. Literature includes all writings that express for us what we consciously or unconsciously feel the need of saying but cannot."
14. The following is a quotation from Feuerbach with reference to Schleiermacher's position. "It is clear that where feeling is held to be the organ of the infinite - the subjective essence of religion, the external data of religion lose their objective value."
 "If God were a being distinct from thy feeling, he would be known to thee in some other way than simply in feeling; but just because thou perceivest him only by feeling, he exists only in feeling - he is himself only feeling."
 "The last refuge of theology therefore is feeling. God is renounced by the understanding; he has no longer the dignity of a real object, of a reality which imposes itself on the understanding; hence he is transferred to feeling; in feeling his existence is thought to be secure. And doubtless this is the safest refuge; for to make feeling the essence of religion is nothing else than to make feeling the essence of God. And as certainly as I exist, so certainly does my feeling exist; and as certainly as my feeling exists, so certainly does my God exist."
 Taken from Baillie, op. cit., p. 214.

Section 5. Pragmatism

There is a peculiar twist given to pragmatism that is more or less another form of the argument from feeling or human need. The consistent pragmatist claims that the only value of ideas is their usefulness in individual and social life. He would admit religious belief in so far as it is practically useful and helpful, without regard to any question of its absolute truthfulness. He may go so far as to say that the only sense in which it is true is that it is useful. God becomes but a useful myth. Immediately a difficulty arises. "For any individual, the God who ceases to be independently real ceases at the same time to be useful: value cannot maintain itself apart from validity."¹

Many attempt to overcome this difficulty by the bold claim that the belief in God is true because it works. A precedent is claimed in the realm of science where an hypothesis is set up and if it works it is taken to be true. However, when one is dealing with psychological phenomena the situation becomes vastly different. It is a patent fact that beliefs do yield results whether true or false. Comforting news, if believed, brings relief and satisfaction while distressing news brings the reverse. This is quite irrespective of the accuracy of the news. A boy's worship of a supposed heroic character will do much for the boy's own character quite apart from the accuracy of the conception itself. Jesus said that men should be known by their fruits.² He made no mention of ideas being

so evaluated. If a man shows the appropriate fruitage in his life, we may validly conclude that he does believe what he says he believes, but we cannot infer the validity of the belief itself. That demands independent verification. Indeed the very emphasis upon the human values and satisfactions which flow from religious belief must tend if anything to suggest that the belief may have no foundation in fact at all, being the mere projection into reality of human hopes and longings.³ From its pragmatic value we can merely assert that a belief would be a good and valuable one, if true. In other words we can decide that a message is a glad one, but we cannot thereby determine whether or not it is a message. There is no leap from valuable to valid, if we are to remain honest men.

1. Galloway, op. cit., p. 262.

2. Matt. 7:16.

3. Wieman, op. cit., p. 156. "Meeting the needs of the human heart (in the way of forming a definition of God) always means conforming to established tradition. The greatest teachers of religion have never tried to shape the idea of God to meet the needs of the human heart, but, rather, have declared that the human heart must be changed to meet the requirements of God or be damned."

Section 6. The Moral Consciousness.

A stronger case than any yet referred to is made out by Professor Baillie from the standpoint that the moral consciousness is an organ of knowledge. A few quotations will serve to show his point of view and also to indicate how essentially Kantian he is. "Religion is a moral trust in reality."¹ "The central affirmation of faith may accordingly be expressed by saying that the inner core of reality must be continuous with the moral consciousness."² "First faith emerges out of the moral consciousness and then, having emerged, it quickens that consciousness."³ "Our conclusion can only be that religion, though indeed it is grounded in our nature as thinking beings, is yet grounded in some other kind of thinking than that which the scientist and metaphysician have in greater perfection than the rest of us."..."We seem to be left with the sole alternative of believing that the kind of intelligent or rational insight in which religion takes its rise is none other than moral insight, and that faith in God is thus in some sort an outgrowth of our consciousness of value."⁴ "It follows that the only ground on which the battle between religion and irreligion can be fought out to an effective issue is that of the interpretation of the deeper implications of our moral experience."⁵ "The objectivity of good and evil - that is where swords must be crossed in defence of religion."⁶ "It (faith) is a moral trust in the ultimate source of power, a confident reference of our values to the real order of things."⁷ "The very heart and nature of things, the most ultimate reality that there is, demands that I be pure and

true and tender and brave.' No obligation can be absolute which does not derive from the Absolute."

"So it is that human reflection, in every clime and time, has unfolded out of its basic consciousness of duty and value certain convictions about the ultimate nature and constitution of things."⁸ "Thus we come to see that in the last resort the determining conditions of religious belief are moral conditions. It is not by developing our logical acumen nor yet our powers of speculative inquiry, but by deepening our moral experience and clarifying our moral insight, that we can hope to come to a firmer faith in the Divine."⁹ "It has always been the received teaching that the true knowledge of God is 'hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.' The assurance of the Divine Companionship has in every age been promised not alone to the learned thinker, nor to him in anywise pre-eminently, but to all those who have sought it with a true and humble heart."^{10, & 11. & 12.}

The weakness of this presentation is quite obvious. It is just another form of the totally unwarranted leap from value to validity. In fact the attempt to project into reality a God made after the standard of our own moral consciousness is coming dangerously near to making our God in our own image and, by worshipping Him, to worship ourselves. The moral consciousness is a psychological phenomena of great interest to the psychologist and the sociologist, and to the minister in the course of his practical duty; but to the theologian or the metaphysician as such it

indicates little or nothing. Here again it is necessary to avoid the logically indefensible expedient of explaining what we cannot understand by the postulate of a Divine Being whose origin is an even greater mystery.

There are two possible ways of regarding the moral consciousness. It may be thought of as a basic element in the human personality which, like a muscle in the physical body, develops along the lines^{of} its own inherent and unalterable tendencies. It may, on the other hand, be thought of as more analogous to a chemical mixture the ultimate nature of which depends upon the ingredients which go into it.

Even if the moral consciousness does develop according to some inherent law, that signifies nothing except that it does so. It is all very well to assert, and, if we allow the predispositions of our background of Christian thought to guide our judgment, we most surely will assert, that, if we must choose one of the two alternatives, we prefer to believe than disbelieve that the ultimate source of our moral convictions is one with the ultimate power in the material universe. But if we are going to be strictly fair in our judgments, either because we feel that this is the only road in the end to truth and satisfaction, or because our moral consciousness itself drives us that way, we may have to assert the contrary. As already pointed out, the failure of the material environment in which we find ourselves to show any consistent evidence of moral control is just where the riddle is to be found. This material environment, at

least indifferent to ethical considerations, may be the very means chosen of God to develop in us a moral nature independent of all outside circumstances; but, until we have supporting evidence for such a conclusion, any positive assertion of it looks like the work of imagination under the stimulus of despair.

13 There is a possibility, as Professor Oman points out, that moral stamina may develop better without theological postulates at all. The idea is far from uncommon that religion is more of an opiate to deaden than a stimulus to encourage moral progress and endeavor. Perhaps, if we were to divest our minds of the idea that there is a Being behind the clouds willing to help us, we should the quicker make up our minds that we must do whatever is necessary ourselves. Indeed, if we are able to emerge from the present chaotic state of theological speculation to a place where we can justify a continuance of something like the historic Christian Faith, it will be just this realization of the moral value of being to some extent left alone which will help us to reconcile the idea of a God who does love us and does desire fellowship with us with the extent to which He does leave us alone and only reveal Himself indirectly and indefinitely. Any real God who is not the mere manufactured product of our own consciousness seems to be desperately far away most of the time. A tremendous strain is thereby placed upon the honesty of the religious individual who longs to think otherwise.

If the moral consciousness takes its character

from the constituent elements of thought, religious and otherwise, which have, through the centuries, gone into its formation, our problem is more complex still. It is probably true that the deepest convictions of men rarely have been, and rarely are now, the result of clear logical deduction. We may have formed our beliefs largely in response to our own needs and our own value judgments. But we have increasingly felt the need of rationalizing these judgments after the fact and rejecting those which cannot be confirmed. In a reference already given,¹⁴ Professor Wieman speaks of this as an indication that the race is "growing up". It may be a fair assumption that the recent great interest of religious philosophy in the genetic study of the moral and religious consciousness has about outlived its usefulness.¹⁵ Slowly but surely we are tending to the place of admission that this consciousness, if not entirely so, is far more the result of our religious and moral convictions than the cause of them. Obviously then this consciousness can no longer be accepted as the starting point of any religious apologetic.

The whole attempt to find an inward authority for religious belief seems doomed to certain collapse. Indeed, if the validity of the moral consciousness as a means of apprehension of ultimate Reality must be denied, we cannot even turn to Jesus Christ as an objective authority upon any such ground¹⁶ as the witness of our moral consciousness to Him. We must find, if we can, other ground for asserting that He is our authority, and then we must allow our moral consciousness to assume the form

to which the resultant convictions will lead it. A clear line must be drawn between psychology of religion on the one hand and theology on the other. The latter, when once established, may make use of the former; but the former can never cross over to the latter. There is no bridge.

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1. Baillie, op. cit., p. 318.
 2. ibid. p. 325.
 3. ibid. p. 332.
 4. ibid. p. 257.
 5. ibid. p. 338.
 6. ibid. p. 339.
 7. ibid. p. 340.
 8. ibid. pp. 350, 1.
 9. ibid. p. 363.
 10. ibid. p. 365.
 11. See Appendix D for a further list of quotations from Baillie.
 12. This last quotation from Professor Baillie, and a similar inference which he subsequently (p. 368) draws from Jesus' declaration "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein," call for comment. It is very questionable whether the childlike quality which Jesus was recommending was that of clear moral perception, for, as Baillie himself admits in the second last quotation included above, this moral perception requires to be developed in the experience of life, and should therefore be more acute in the adult. Neither, surely, can it be that a little child is trustful and ready to believe anything which anyone may tell it. There is nothing more characteristic of a child than the desire to question and understand. It soon learns whom it may trust and whom not. What is characteristic of the childlike mind is a freedom from deep rooted prejudice and an ability to see the point of a simple argument. The child has not got its capacity for clear judgment warped by set ways of thinking which have hardened into blind allegiance to certain points of view. It is open to conviction. With its whole life constantly expanding and its interests broadening, it is used to sudden and far-reaching reversals of opinion on the basis of fresh evidence. It does not feel sensitive about affirming today what it denied yesterday, or *vica versa*.

As a result of the rapid tempo and ever recurring upheavals of our modern world we adults are recapturing much of the childlike mind. Jesus' admonitions in regard to the need of a childlike mind

doubtless had reference to the sincere but bigoted men of His day. They apply in our time most specifically to theologians and other Christians who accept as profound truth and cling to ideas which, if they were released from the involved and often incomprehensible jargon of philosophical terminology and presented in simple language, any schoolboy would recognize as untenable. One great lesson out of this text of Scripture is that anything really true, as far as religion is concerned, can be expressed in very simple language.

13. Oman, op. cit. p. 59. "Because morality can be so readily corrupted by compromise between moral independence and religious dependence, the history of modern Ethics is little more than an account of various attempts to free morality from religious authority and religious motives, and to find in itself its own sanctions and the reward of its own laws."
14. Note 9, Section 4 of this Chapter.
15. See Appendix B for an extended discussion of the origin of the moral consciousness.
16. Refer back to Note 3, Section 5 of this Chapter.

Section 7. Mysticism.

In a discussion of this kind the testimony of the mystic must not be overlooked completely. Any claim that the whole of the affirmed mystic experience of mankind has been but a form of self-delusion or self-hypnotism is rather too sweeping. From inorganic substance through the plant and animal kingdoms to man himself, each successive order of existence does appear to be sensitive to a wider environment. It is therefore no unreasonable postulate that man has a spiritual nature by means of which he may make contact in some degree with a spiritual realm beyond himself and his fellows. Yet the knowledge so gained is indefinite, too much so for the formation of any very specific beliefs. If we could review the sum total of mystical experience of every kind, and subtract all elements reasonably attributable to prior religious beliefs or moral convictions,¹ it is very doubtful if we could find enough consistent data for the formation of a theological system of the most rudimentary sort. Here again it would seem that there is no bridge from the manward side to a knowledge of anything divine.

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1. Rufus M. Jones, article in Contemporary American Theology, p. 202. "And it may of course be taken for granted that mystical experience in every age will be colored and dominated by the prevailing climate of the time."

CHAPTER 11.

The Historical Development.

Section 1. The Hebrew Background.

In a very genuine way Christianity is a continuation and development of Judaism;¹ but since the time of Marcion there has ever been a tendency to ignore or minimize this. Many modern Christian leaders would place themselves with respect to their religious thought in the line of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle rather than in that of the Hebrew prophets and historical writers.² Yet there is surely some significance in the fact that Jesus Christ came of a race with a philosophy fundamentally at variance with that of Greece. Though the development in Stoic and Skeptic was of a different order, the Greeks had started out, and to a considerable extent continued, with a confidence in the capacity of the human mind to fathom the mystery of the Infinite, and erect great philosophical systems very largely upon the basis of intuitive knowledge. The Hebrew was profoundly skeptical of any such ability. As surely as the Greek conception of God tended to that of an immanent Spirit in the Universe akin to, if not in some sense at one with, the spirit of man, the Hebrew thought tended to the idea of a transcendent Being of whom man could know nothing except by a gracious self-revelation in some manifestation that was additional to the ordinary phenomena of natural or psychic law.³

Although the Hebrew may not be charged with any highly developed or fully articulated philosophy, he had a

philosophy just the same. Indeed any attempt to account for the origin of man and the world presupposes a latent philosophy of some sort. This philosophy is quite evident and appears in the book of Genesis. Man has no power within himself to fathom the mysteries of the Universe, but God has made specific revelation along some lines. This revelation must simply be accepted. To try to gain a knowledge of good and evil is a blasphemous attempt to become as God Himself. This lofty attitude of mind lies at the root of all sin. The proper attitude for man is to accept his limitation as a being confined to a material environment of time and space, as much with respect to his mind as his body, and be content in all moral and spiritual judgments to fall back ultimately upon what God has already seen fit, or may yet decide, to tell him. The culmination and epitome of this trend of thought is to be found in the conviction that the Divine Law had been given in complete and written form by miraculous means to Moses upon Mount Sinai.

The same philosophy lies behind the narrative of the incident of the Tower of Babel and in other parts of the Old Testament. Man cannot look upon God's face and live. As a very high privilege Moses was permitted to hide in a cleft of the rock and get a fleeting glimpse of God's hinder parts as He passed by. God was considered to have revealed Himself from time to time in some exhibition of material power. It was not always or necessarily a breach of natural law, such a special manipulation of such law as to constitute an evidence of the activity and interest

of the power behind it. The divine will was similarly made known through the fall of the lot, or through dream and vision. The belief grew that, throughout the long history of Israel, her arms had prospered when Jehovah had been served faithfully but disaster had followed upon every lapse into indifference or idolatry.

In the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature there is much of the same strain of thought. In several places sin is mentioned as having been derived from an attitude of desire to delve into the secrets of heaven.⁵

Objections to the above interpretation of the Hebrew religious development will of course be made. It will be urged that such a passage as the nineteenth psalm argues the existence of God from observation of the natural manifestations of His power, and recognizes His laws because of their inherent worth to men. It will be claimed that the prophets in Israel as much as the philosophers in Greece were breaking with traditional concepts and affirming higher ideas of the nature of revelation. The psalm in question does not urge the authenticity of either God or His law from the human value judgment of the latter. The glory and power of God are recognized in the heavens, but only upon the basis of an assumed belief that God does exist and that He did create all things. Even if some isolated passage or passages may seem to reason in a philosophical manner toward a conviction about the existence and nature of God, this certainly is not the main trend of Hebrew thought.⁶

The high moral and spiritual teaching of the prophets may be ascribed largely to their own insight and judgment. But commonly accepted beliefs about God, otherwise arrived at, formed the basic raw material with which they worked and the foundations upon which all of their super-structure was erected. We parallel this today when we start with the conviction that God is like Jesus Christ and draw our conclusions. As our moral inclinations become moulded to this basic conception and all of its implications, we form our judgments without much conscious logic. But far more of our judgments have a rational origin than those which we reason out at the time. The incumbency is upon us to recognize the dependence of all these rational judgments upon the soundness of the original postulates.⁷ The ancient Hebrew prophet cannot be expected to have been so severely logical as we in our day must be if we are to be honest men. He may have gone far beyond the deductions legitimate from his premises. He may have approximated to the ways of the philosopher or the modern theologian. But in doing so he was going contrary to the distinctive genius of his people and of his religion. If we can validly conclude that God in Jesus Christ came in due time and gave a confirmation to the pronouncements of prophetic speculation, the matter of any original lack of authority is of small concern. If not, the teaching of the prophet loses ^{much of} its weight and becomes just another man's opinion.

With our knowledge of the circumstances, we may easily read the causes of the ups and downs in Israelitish

military history in the concurrent history of the greater states of Assyria, Egypt and Babylon. But in so doing we have not explained why these great historical movements should have so combined, over a long period of years, with Hebrew religious trends as to give the strong impression of a divine hand watching over the chosen people. It is this very concurrence of unrelated phenomena which has the evidential value. If the success and failure of Israel could be traced solely to internal conditions, we might infer nothing but the sociological value of their religious ideas. We may attach no significance to the cast of urim and thumim as such, and place little credence in dreams and visions, but we cannot study the history of Israel in any fair way without recognizing at least the possibility that some unseen force was indicating purpose with a degree of consistency not in evidence elsewhere. Israel was indeed a chosen people. It is not unworthy of the dignity of an all-wise and loving God to speak to His children of any age in such language as they, or their leaders who influence their thought, expect from Him and can understand. The fact is that this race with its skeptical philosophy and pre-occupation with material and practical things, evident even in its ways of giving expression to religious devotion, did show a consistent development along a certain line for over a thousand years of varied fortune and diverse external influences until finally it gave Jesus Christ to the world.

The early Christians of the gentile world were effected profoundly by their acceptance of the Old Testament as "records of a past more ancient than any commemorated in the literature of Greece and Rome - a past, moreover, which was professedly the past, not merely of a particular nation, but of the whole human race."

2. Dean Inge, as quoted by Baillie, op. cit., p. 62.
 "Our civilization is a tree which has its roots in Greece, or, to borrow a more appropriate metaphor from Clement of Alexandria, it is a river which has received affluents from every side; but its head waters are Greek. The continuity of Greek thought and practice in religion and religious philosophy is especially important." Baillie himself adds:
 "The sixteenth century theologians liked to think of Moses and David and Jeremiah as belonging, in a large sense, to the ~~spiritual~~ same spiritual fellowship as themselves. The modern theologian will have something of a similar feeling with regard to Socrates and Plato and Plotinus, Zeno and Seneca and Epictetus."
3. Baillie, op. cit. pp. 394, 5, mentions a consistent difference between the religions of Aryan and Semitic peoples. He traces to an origin in the primitive concept of mana the tendency of Aryan peoples to a theanthropic type of religion with emphasis upon the immanence of the Divine. By contrast he ascribes to an animistic origin the tendency of Semitic peoples to a theocratic type favoring ideas of the transcendence of God.
 In respect to the Greeks he says, op. cit., p. 452:
 "What the Greeks did was virtually to put aside the idea of revelation altogether and seek out a solution of a wholly different kind. The characteristic note is struck by Xenophanes in his favorite couplet (written perhaps about the end of the sixth century)
 'The Gods have not revealed all things to men from the beginning, but by searching they gradually discovered what is better.'
 Here discovery on man's part is definitely substituted for revelation on God's."
4. Exodus 33: 21-23.
5. I Enoch 7:1ff, IV Ezra chap. 4, Sibylline Oracles III 255.
6. The philosopher, Pascal, asserts definitely that no biblical author makes use of nature in order to prove God. See Baillie, op. cit., p. 185.

Section 2. The New Testament, Early Christian and Ancient Catholic Church Periods.

With this background it is interesting to notice the extent to which the early Christians, and indeed many down to our own day, have based their confidence in the divinity and authority of Jesus Christ upon His fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. We can admit with the modern scholar that the writers of these prophecies were not even trying to predict any specific or far off events. Probably the writer of Micah 5:2 was but giving voice to his disgust with the rulers of his day and asserting that God would have to go again to the sheepfold for another such as David. Yet succeeding generations looked more definitely for a Messiah to be born at Bethlehem. Almost certainly the writer of Isaiah 7:14-16 referred to immediate events and declared that they would take place before a child conceived about the time of his speaking would be born and grow to years of understanding. The Hebrew word used refers merely to a young woman with no suggestion of virginity. However when the Septuagint translation was made in the second century B.C. the Greek word for a virgin was used. Either before this translation or later as a result of it some expectation of a marvellous birth of the Messiah seems to have grown up. At least such a fact would, in the light of the prophecy, have a tremendous meaning for people of the time. Even if it is the case that neither Christ's birth in Bethlehem nor His birth to a virgin have direct bearing for us upon His status as a revelation of the Divine, there may be evidential value in His coming in

the way which would be most convincing to the men of His day. There is possible ground here for an assumption that God exists and that He was glad to vindicate the skeptical attitude of mind that wanted material signs, in that He gave such as He could. Indeed it is some indication of an overruling providence that, among all of the expected signs which could hardly have been given without violence to God's plans and purposes, there were these few of a very definite character which ¹ could.

quite naturally the early Christians regarded Jesus Christ as a direct revelation of the Divine, ² attested by fulfilment of prophecy and marvellous works of power. He was believed to have exercised an authority over all natural, physiological and psychic phenomena even to the point of having raised first others and finally Himself from the dead. ³ A certain body of truth was believed to have come from Him. Therefore the first conception of Christianity was that of a glad message given with sound credentials for conveyance ⁴ to the whole world. There might be rejoicing that the message was a glad one, but belief in it was asked for upon the basis of its authenticity as a message.

It was soon found that belief in this message, with all that it implied, produced a remarkable change in human personality. In the absence of anything like our modern appreciation of psychological laws - though Paul himself was a psychologist of no mean order - this transformation tended to be ascribed almost entirely to the direct agency of the Divine Spirit which Jesus was reported to have promised to send in His stead after His departure. Paul laid great stress

upon this redemptive experience, but there are no sufficient grounds for any assumption that he ever departed from the idea that his Gospel was fundamentally a message which he must deliver and which people must believe in order to be saved.⁵ To the Philippian jailor Paul declared the essential need of belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not know what further instruction was later given. Although almost any sort of a case could be made out by the judicious use of isolated texts, the study of Paul in a broad way indicates that, along with his 'Christian mysticism,' he held to the Gospel as a message. Unfortunately his writings which have come to us are all upon special topics and are addressed to believers. His few reported speeches are also of an unusual character. We simply have no adequate record of his every day method of presenting the claims of Christ or his conception of the Faith. Obviously we are all in danger of ascribing to him that way of presentation which we think to be correct. Without doubt the interpretation given here is colored by the views expressed in Chapter I. In fact that is the very reason for putting in the opening chapter material which otherwise belongs, and must in part be repeated, at a later point. Even if Paul did incline strongly to a mystical appeal he may have been wrong in doing so. Mysticism was in the atmosphere which he breathed, and the marvel is that neither he nor the early Church succumbed to it entirely. Other influence must also have⁶ been very powerful.

Of the written Gospels, the fourth lays most stress upon the idea of the redemptive experience. This

Gospel is much the most mystical, philosophic and Hellenistic in its point of view and manner of presentation. Yet here again there is no mistaking the idea of a redemptive experience based upon belief in a revelation authenticated by material signs. Words could not put the matter more plainly than it is found in the ending of the twentieth chapter, almost surely the original conclusion.⁷ Nicodemus comes to the Master and makes confession of intellectual conviction of the divine character of the new teaching. Then he is warned of the need of that degree of surrender to it⁸ which will bring the changed life. The fifteenth chapter of John appears at first sight to imply the need of a mystical experience of union with the Divine, but closer observation shows that the emphasis is really upon the need for abiding in the teaching which has been given. Even if this teaching were mystical the significant factor is that its validity was assured not by itself but by reference to Christ.

The emphasis upon the work of the Holy Spirit, which is so great in this Gospel, is also worthy of scrutiny in this same connection. The Spirit is not to speak for Himself. He is to bring to recollection the instruction and activities of Christ. He is to lead men, or at least the immediate band of disciples, as soon as they are able, to a fuller understanding of all this material. He is to give comfort and power for the Christian witness. In all respects He is to aid in proclaiming the Gospel and in bringing to⁹ the minds of hearers a conviction of its truthfulness. Indeed, even if the mystical language in this Gospel, and in the Pauline writings, is to be taken literally - and

there is sound objection to doing that - there still remains, as certainly as in the Synoptic Gospels, the conviction that the task of the followers is the proclamation of a message. Not only is there an entire absence of any thought of a self-evidencing experience, coming apart from the risen and exalted Jesus, which may be shared, or which another may be told how to get for himself; but there is no consistent suggestion of any self-evidencing experience at all. The former circumstance is to be expected out of loyalty to Christ, but the latter cuts clean across the main current of the religious thought of the whole Graeco-Roman world. Taking the New Testament as a whole and attempting to catch its dominant spirit, we find that any idea of an inward authority for religious knowledge is remarkably absent. As we shall see, such an idea is very modern and springs from a philosophical assumption which is foreign to the essential genius of the whole Hebrew - Christian development.

The strongest argument for the New Testament origin of this idea of an inward authority is the claim that Jesus Christ Himself constantly directed His appeal to the hearts and consciences of men. If we are to accept the records as written, we have Him performing any number of ^{such} spectacular miracles as should have convinced the people of that day beyond question. When they would not believe it was not through honest doubt but a condition of stubborn prejudice. Then of course He appealed directly to the conscience. In and around His own home He is reported to have felt that He could do no mighty works because of this attitude of unwillingness to be convinced. If we are to start with a set

conviction that these miracles did not take place as recorded and yet hold that the narratives are in other respects substantially correct, it may be questioned if we are not ourselves bringing such a stubbornly closed mind to the subject that we too can learn nothing from Jesus Christ. ^{at least one} ~~The~~ real lesson to be learned from Jesus' teaching is that emotional and traditional and wilful prejudice can blind minds to the clearest of evidence.

Whatever doubt there may be of the theology of the New Testament, that of the churches of the second century is clearly defined. It is based upon the idea of a body of truth revealed specifically by Jesus Christ.¹¹ In contest with Gnostic and Marcionite, three great bulwarks of orthodoxy were erected, The New Testament Canon, The Apostles' Creed and the idea of Apostolic Succession. The earliest conception of the latter was not one of sacerdotal authority. It was that of a means for guaranteeing the authority and purity of "the Faith once for all delivered". The Church was thought of as an organization to guard, transmit and disseminate this sacred treasure of saving truth. Considering the diversity of agency through which the great number of small and large churches had been established,¹² their ability to agree upon, and organize around, certain fairly well defined central convictions is a strong indication of a degree of definiteness and uniformity of belief at the outset.

Then came the Montanists with their fantastic claims to spiritual illumination, and the main body of Christian opinion hardened in favor of its received traditions. Possibly there may be found here the origin of, or at least

a strong impulse toward, the notion that the Bishops, in true line of succession from the Apostles, are the ones, not only to guard and transmit the deposit of truth, but to receive the enlightenment of the Spirit in order to elaborate and apply it to changing conditions. Some such idea, in combination with the desire of the Emperor for uniformity as a political value and the encroaching Greek influence lending confidence in the validity of philosophical speculation, must have gone into the strange complex out of which, within a few generations, came the bold pronouncements of the great Councils upon subjects so largely beyond the range of any human knowledge. But to go back of these Councils and study the work of the Apologists of the second century will indicate very clearly what were the accepted Christian positions then, and what strong antipathy there was to the schools of philosophy.¹³ The Apologists stressed that Christianity said what the philosophers had already said, but said more, said it better, and said it with God's own authority in Scripture and Logos. In this simple question of the authority behind the teaching there is involved a divergence of point of view that can scarcely be overemphasized. The same question is with us today and must sooner or later precipitate a clear cut issue in the Christian Church.

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1. One dare not raise a question like this without mentioning the case of "Doubting Thomas" and thereby dealing with a grossly misinterpreted passage of Scripture. Thomas had followed the Christ and seen the evidences of His life and His work. Like the other disciples he had been told in advance of what was to happen. His companions whom he knew well, and whom he should have trusted to some extent, had assured him of the several appearances of the risen Lord. He had far more evidence than the thousands of

Christians of succeeding generations have had to accept. He had let his discouragement get the upper hand and made up his mind that he was simply not going to believe. He made a highly exaggerated, and what he no doubt thought of as an unrealizable, stipulation as a condition of his belief. Even to this stipulation Christ acceded. Then Thomas was rebuked, not for wanting a reasonable ground of evidence as a prerequisite to belief, but for being unwilling to make the slightest venture of faith on any evidence short of entire certainty. The companion incident is the Old Testament one of Gideon. There we have a man asked to venture his life in what looked like a hopeless task. He wanted to be very sure that he had heard the voice of God and not the voice of his own imagination. His proper caution was honored.

2. Gilmour, *The Bible and the Christian Religion*, pp. 7, 39, 56. "It (Christianity) is a religion that came into being through historic events which inspired convictions about God, and the world, and man."

"The basis of Christianity is, then, credal. The confession on which Jesus saw the possibility of building His society was the belief that He was the Christ."

"The important thing is that the Church was born out of a conviction that Jesus was the Saviour and Revealer as no one else had been or could be."

Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 45. "To the claim of Godhead which is made by Christianity for its Founder there is, I believe, no genuine parallel."

3. *ibid.* pp. 76, 7. "The affirmation that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh, that the Savior from the power of sin and death, whom it proclaimed, was no beneficent element in nature (like the sun), no mystical hero (like Mithras), no purely ideal figure (like the wise man of the Stoics), but a real person who, at an assignable date, had appeared in Judaea and of whose life, and especially of His death and resurrection - since it was on the ground of these that He was regarded as a Savior, - credible witnesses could be produced; this affirmation was a fundamental tenet of Christianity, in the strength of which, during the earlier centuries of its existence, it fought and conquered its rivals for the spiritual allegiance of the Roman Empire."

ibid. pp. 100, 1. "A Christianity without the belief in the resurrection of a Christ as an historical event would be another Christianity than that which the world has hitherto known; and if a mistaken belief in His resurrection could have created it, the discovery of that mistake must inevitably deprive the Christian Church, wherever this discovery was itself believed and taken seriously, of the abiding inspiration of its religious life."

4. It must be failure to recognize or appreciate this fact, or failure to allow for at least the possibility of such a view being the correct one, and similar failure to conceive of the possibility of all religion having much of its origin in

speculative conclusions, true or false, from observed phenomena in the Universe, that can underlie such a statement as that of Baillie, *op. cit.* p. 94, to the effect that if religion depends upon external argument then "the valid grounds for believing in God's existence are different from the grounds which have actually led the world to believe in it."

5. Gal. 1:11-12.
6. The strange words and manifest agitation of Jesus as recorded in John 12:23-36 seem to have been induced by the attempt of a few Greeks to have a talk with Him. As no record is left of the response made to the request of the Greeks, it seems that the association in the mind of the one recording the incident is merely that the attempted interview prompted the sayings which he was about to set down. The declaration that a corn of wheat must die to bear fruit, the exultation in the thought that the world beyond His own race was to be drawn by the message of His cross and the strange momentary revulsion—"Save me from this hour"—may indicate more than a mere concern about His own impending death. He may have realized something of what must take place as His simple message would be engulfed and buried for centuries in a maze of speculative accretions only in the end to emerge again. It is a fair assumption that Greek thought has been a snare rather than a handmaid to the Gospel.
7. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."
8. John 3:2ff.
9. John 16:7ff.
10. Mark 13:58.
11. See forward to Note 13.
12. Streeter, *The Primitive Church*, p. 44ff.
13. Stewart, *Modernism, Past and Present*, p. 21ff.
 "But at least for what was believed in the churches of the second century we have a surer source of information. It was the period of the Apologists, in conscious contact with pagan thought, and defining the Christian faith defensively with such rival through in view. An Apologist will naturally limit what he has to defend to the irreducible minimum, so that although much more may have been generally held, the points upon which he insists must have been those agreed upon as fundamental. Moreover, though there are certain differences, one can construct a tolerably uniform body of belief, common to Justin of Flavia Neapolis and Athenagoras of Athens, to Theophilus of Antioch and Tatian the Syrian and Tertullian of Carthage.

To the reader of our time it seems not less remarkable for what it omits than for what it includes."

"One rises from a study of the apologies with a picture of the second century Christian as believing that, through the Old Testament Scriptures, culminating in the record of the teaching of Jesus Christ, certain truths were supernaturally disclosed regarding Providence and duty and a life beyond the tomb. In general it is what we still know as the Christian conception of God - the Infinite Creator, ordering the Universe according to the council of His holy will, and purposing for man made in His image the gift of immortality. The Apologists further insist that man has been misled, and that the great revelation designed to bring him back was made through messengers of God in many lands, but in a special degree to the Chosen People through the prophets of the Old Testament. Of those prophetic messages the climax has been met in Jesus Christ, to whom indeed many of the earlier made predictive reference, and whose fulfilment of such forecasts was the surest proof of the supernatural revelation. A Christian, we gather from these second century writers, is one who adopts the view of God, of man, of duty, and of the immortal hope which Jesus Christ, corroborating earlier messengers, has bidden His followers to cherish."

"Two features are noticeable here. There is a singular absence of any doctrine of either Trinity or Atonement, and there is no real emphasis upon the historical Person of Jesus Christ. Perhaps Justin Martyr has discoverable dogma on these subjects. Yet even he does not lay stress upon it, and in the other Apologists it is hardly discoverable at all. But if these doctrines are conspicuously absent, there is a doctrine at least as conspicuously present. The Apologists are haunted by the ideas about demoniac agency in the world. They declare the Christian revelation to have superseded all human knowledge otherwise obtained, and all guesses ventured in the philosophic school, adding that it was rendered necessary because man's mind had been darkened and he had been prompted not only to sinful acts but to absurd speculation by demons. It was a demoniac deceit they say which produced the polytheism of common belief, against which the philosophers - being themselves only half enlightened - had kept up a futile struggle. The spirit of evil had tampered with the philosophical systems themselves. It was thus as a rescuer from diabolic attack that the Prophet had been commissioned of God."

Section 3. Roman Catholicism.

Down through the long centuries the Roman Catholic Church has held tenaciously to this early conception of the primary place of dogma. For its members the Christian Faith is primarily a body of truth to be accepted and believed rather than a life to be lived, although the Church is rather rigid about enforcing such restrictions as she does place upon conduct. Much influence from the pagan world in which she was cradled has crept into this old Church, and some of its philosophy; but in her essential concept of the nature and source of revelation she has remained true to the Hebrew and early Christian as opposed to the Greek, and as we shall see the modern Protestant, viewpoint. The Scholastics may have admitted the Greek ideas, but always concurrent with rather than in substitution for the others. In the externalities of her cultus and her development of sacramentalism and sacerdotalism this Church shows the influence of her early Roman environment; but, otherwise, she has shown a far more consistent tendency than Protestantism to absorb and bend the ideas of the world around her to her own use rather than herself make any fundamental concessions to them. She may compromise in many things but there is a place where she draws a line.

A very brief summary of the historical development of the Roman Church will serve present ends. Constantine reversed the Imperial policy toward the Church from fierce persecution to high favor. The vast flood of more or less nominal converts well-nigh submerged the original Christian

element. It is amazing that anything of value should have remained. For centuries after the collapse of the Empire the Church stood as the only integrating influence in Europe. She alone retained any vestige of the old civilization. In large degree she assumed the place of leadership and power once enjoyed by the Caesars. By right of merit, if not by legal title, much of the temporal power passed to the See of St. Peter. The Church forged a strong organization and evolved a high theory of ecclesiastical right and privilege. Possibly she was taking the only course which could have preserved Christianity in any form to succeeding generations.

One interesting result is the extent to which an old Roman paganism continued in Christian dress. The old religious feasts and symbols took on Christian significance. The old association of religion with State solidarity and patriotism was there, along with the old imperialism and the old tendency to use force to compel conformity. The secular ruler feared religious discord as a weakening social influence. The Church was content with external acts of submission to its authority and conformity to its cultus. So the two worked hand in hand to destroy all opposition. In large degree grace became thought of as ministered through priestly power and divinely appointed sacramental acts. The need of heart felt repentance for sin, though never dropped as a theoretical doctrine, was lost sight of in the performance of outward acts of penance until the shocking traffic in indulgences became possible.

A strange turn in Roman Catholic piety comes

in with Loyola. In his spiritual exercises he realized the psychological values of a highly emotional and imaginative type of belief. He discovered that a real quickening of the human spirit could be brought about through well directed contemplation of the basic material of the Christian Faith. (In his case of course this material was supplemented by certain accretions of the centuries). Much of the strength of Roman Catholicism of today is herein accounted for. If the system of prayer is carried out properly it becomes largely a repetition in miniature of Loyola's exercises. When pictorial representation of the stations of the cross is added in the impressive atmosphere of a great cathedral the effect upon a sincere believer is naturally very strong. The statues and crucifixes all play their part. In result the individual is induced to believe, in anything but a detached and coldly intellectual manner, that there is a God, that He did reveal Himself in Jesus Christ, that He does love men to the uttermost, and that He demands a fitting response. There is no ground for wonder that, in spite of all pagan forms and observances and superstitions, and the weakness of many of its high claims, this Church still maintains its hold upon its people and does them good. It lays the emphasis in the right place, the teaching of those things commonly believed. In simple fact it remains at heart a Christian Church in an age when the claim of many to such designation is rather vague. There is small wonder that, as it looks out upon a distressed and demoralized Protestantism floundering in a maze of unprofitable philosophical speculation, it becomes

all the more inclined to discourage any tampering with its own apologetical framework. The Roman genius for the practical is completely dominant for the time being. It remains to be seen if this policy can be continued in a thinking and enquiring world with new problems ever to face.

1. The word 'pagan' is used throughout this discussion as meaning non-Jewish and non-Christian.
2. Sperry, op. cit., p. 62. "Over the centuries that are gone the Christian religion has had a strange power to possess itself of ideas that were no part of the Galilean heritage, and to turn these ideas to its own account. In particular, from the year 150 through the year 600 - i.e. from the Apologists through Gregory the Great, Christianity compelled Greek philosophy and Roman law to come and serve it in defending the faith and fashioning the Catholic Church."

Section 4. The Reformation

Was the Reformation, particularly as it is exemplified in Martin Luther, a mere transfer from one authority for dogma to another; or was it a rediscovery that Christianity rests primarily upon an experience of the human soul in contact with its Maker? Probably in some sense it was both. Luther had what was almost an obsession in regard to his own sinfulness. No doubt this was partly a matter of disposition and partly the influence of the thought of his time. As a young man he was influenced profoundly by a narrow escape from death, and this increased his anxiety about his soul's salvation. Staupitz pointed out to him that repentance began with love toward, rather than fear of, God. Study of Occam, d'Ailli, and Biel led Luther to depend upon the objective facts of revelation and distrust his reason. Study of Augustine, Anselm, Bernard, and Tauler helped him as he gradually came to believe that salvation was a free gift of God based upon full trust in the divine promises. Study of Romans convinced him of the theory of salvation by grace alone. Finally there came to him the confidence of his own salvation. "Thenceforth, in his own personal experience the sum of the Gospel was the forgiveness of sins. It was 'good news' filling the soul with peace, joy, and absolute trust in God. It was absolute dependence upon the divine promises in God's¹ 'word'."

In other words, all of Luther's experience was based upon a reformed theology derived from study of

Scripture with the help in its interpretation of men of recognized standing. Much of the sacramentalism and still more of the sacerdotalism of the Roman Church was sloughed off. The basis of authority became the Scripture and, in some degree, the Church of the earlier period and the great Councils, rather than the Pope and the Church of the day. But the type of authority for belief remained unchanged, as much if not more for the followers of Luther as for himself.² In Lutheranism political alignments soon led to a set orthodoxy as rigidly enforced as the old and as much involved with the secular power. In the Reformed Churches there evolved more freedom from State control and more emphasis upon the Scripture as the sole authority with some right of interpretation vested in each individual. The transition to the viewpoint which is now most characteristic of Protestantism came much later.³

Luther's own experience was not mainly one of redemptive mastery, either sudden or gradual, over sinful tendencies and moral defeat, such as we find described in "The Epistle of Paul to the Romans." The element of moral victory may have been present, but the main emphasis is upon the gaining of freedom from intellectual anxiety over his status with God. To an extent which could not in the end do other than lead to moral relaxation, both Luther and Calvin emphasized free grace and man's helplessness to do anything but wait for it. This free grace took the form of intellectual conviction. Right conduct was induced partly by a feeling of gratitude and love toward God and partly by the moral power that came from the confidence and assurance of the

consciously redeemed and heaven bound individual. Both Calvin and Luther just missed getting back to the early position that man is not only free and able to do so, but must, if he is to be saved, lay hold of the truth of his own volition and believe it in such a way as to produce a fruitage in his own life and character. They completely failed to appreciate, it would seem, the rather non-⁴ Pauline elements in the New Testament and the attitude of the early Church which tended to retain a healthy element of Jewish legalism but make it inward and vital. Strangely enough this latter view is the one which seems to stand forth most clearly in Jesus' own teaching. The paradox of it all is that ~~this~~^{the} theology which made so much of free grace had immediately to impose the most rigorous legalism of the wrong kind.

History would indicate that the characteristically Lutheran and Calvinistic view of grace becomes morally stimulating to certain intense souls who first become deeply concerned over their religious status and go through a period of fierce struggle with doubt or sinful habit. The intensity of desire for better things is present to start with and conversion gives peace and confidence of victory. Those individuals who lack any strong interest to start them off must, under this theological system, be put down as the ones not called of God unto salvation.

Under the attacks of Deism and Rationalism in the eighteenth century the spiritual current ran low; but a new lease of life came from an unexpected quarter. The Evange-

lical Revival in England produced a new technique, the Enlightenment in Germany forged a new theology. Before passing to a consideration of the latter, it is well to mention that the true heirs of the Reformation are the 'Fundamentalists' of our day. They have a vigorous Christianity closely approximating to the early Reformation type, even to the same bitterly critical attitude toward those who differ from them.⁵ Some of them exemplify a rather cold confessional orthodoxy, but the majority are warmly evangelical. All rest their position upon a high doctrine of Scriptural infallibility which quite fails to stand up under frank examination, either as true in itself or as historical. The Evangelicals also rely greatly upon the vitality and self-vindicating quality of their religious experience. They are far closer than they realize to the type of theology which they most consistently condemn, and which must now have our attention.

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1. Walker, A History of the Christian Church, p. 339. Indeed the whole outline of Luther's development as given herein is taken from the same source p. 337ff.
 2. Baillie, op. cit., p. 231. "Lutheran orthodoxy, for instance, had taught that faith begins in the presentation to the mind of certain doctrines of revelation, that the next step is taken when the mind accepts these doctrines, and that only then can saving faith (that trust in God which is the essence of personal religion) take its rise in the soul. The three stages were called respectively *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia*."
 3. Oman, op. cit., p. 3. "The supreme crisis of Christianity throughout the ages, it has been maintained, was not the Reformation but a movement two centuries nearer our own time---- The Reformation, it is maintained, was a mere breach in outward organization, which left the old foundations of external authority unassailed in principle, and the body of dogma which rested in it unquestioned in fact."

4. If it is true that the meaning, in its original setting in Habakkuk, of Luther's great text from Romans is that the just man shall live by his faithfulness, then the whole structure of Lutheran and Calvinistic teaching about free grace depends, in spite of their reverence for the Scripture, upon false exegesis of it. Paul would surely have appreciated the Hebrew meaning and his use of the text must be understood to some extent in reference to its background.
5. I can say this as one who at a certain stage of religious progress (I hope it is progress) was a 'Fundamentalist' by considered judgment. I still have a deep respect for those of that persuasion. In one sense their whole position is based upon lack of knowledge of the facts, and in some cases, it must be admitted, a reluctance to look at them, but in another sense they see far more clearly than the more liberal minded. They see that the alternatives offered to them are of little if any value.

Section 5. Post-Kantian Protestantism.

The new departure in protestant thought can be traced to the influence of Deism in the eighteenth century. This movement started in England but was carried to France and Germany by Voltaire. It opposed the notion that all Scripture is verbally inspired and of equal authority, it repudiated the idea of eternal damnation for the heathen, and it refused to regard the book of Genesis as an authority in science.¹ Like most movements which react strongly from current ideas it went to the other extreme. It denied all special revelation, and made the high claim that the unaided reason could infer from the observation of nature an adequate basis of belief for a simple but effective religion. As we have seen this was an old viewpoint with antecedents back in Greek philosophy.² The whole move was an attempt to establish rather than destroy religion. Starting from the Deistic position, Lessing claimed that revelation merely hurries a natural process and gives knowledge a little sooner than it would ordinarily have come.³ Kant, Hegel and Schleiermacher followed in a quest for a basis of faith in the nature of moral and spiritual conceptions themselves rather than in external authority of any sort.⁴

Kant's philosophy had its thoroughly skeptical aspect. Like the school of Locke, Berkeley and Hume, he limited the scope of pure reason to the experienced world and knowledge to phenomena. He did this however to clear a way for his assertions in regard to the validity of what he called the practical reason.⁵ In his positive philosophy

"he made the real evidence for religion that of the moral sense, of the conscience and hearts of men themselves. The real ground of religious conviction is the religious experience."⁶ "Revelation is experience, not instruction."⁷ "Religion was a profoundly real thing to him in his own life. Religion is a life. It is a system of thought only in the way of a deposit from a vivid and vigorous life."⁸ "Only from the God within could we learn anything of the God without, and the God within alone should we adore."⁹

Kant had been a deep philosophical thinker but had little ability to express himself in a clear and interesting fashion. Schleiermacher was a preacher with the faculty of appealing to the public. He was a mystic by temperament and had been influenced from childhood by the sect of the Moravians, so similar to the English Methodists. Kant's new way of regarding religion captivated his mind and he carried this way into the religious thought of his day.¹⁰ He did, however, recast the Kantian thought in a somewhat new mould. For Kant the inward knowledge had come in the form of a moral imperative which was often stern and contrary to the dictate of feeling. For Schleiermacher the basis of all religion was a feeling of dependence upon the absolute, a seeking by the heart of its highest satisfaction. Clearly he reacted both from the older rationalism and the more recent Kantian emphasis upon the will.¹¹ He traced all religious impulses to a common one behind rather than a common factor within, and proclaimed all religion to be the immediate consciousness that everything finite exists in and through the Infinite, everything temporal in and through the

¹²
 Eternal. "Religion then is essentially feeling - such
¹³
 is Schleiermacher's central position."

But this concept of feeling includes also much
 of the idea of intuition, "a sense and taste for the Infinite
a feeling of absolute dependence, which is the same as
¹⁴
 to say a feeling of dependence upon God." According to him
 "the basis of this (religion or piety) is an immediate self-
 consciousness in which man is neither in the first instance
 active or reflective, but receptive or dependent, and that
¹⁵
 in an absolute manner." Although he offers a lofty
 characterization of Jesus Christ, Schleiermacher is not
 prepared to concede that He is the only mediator between
 God and man. "There are other ways of approach which men
 have found possible in the past and may still be available
 for some time..... The point to be sure of is that there is
¹⁶
 something divine in our humanity."

Schleiermacher's ethical theory is outlined in his
 Monologues. A feeling of mutual dependence among men is the
 basis of morality. The happiness and welfare of others not
 merely reacts upon one's own, but the two are in large
 measure identical. "The contradictions and miseries into
 which immoral or unmoral conduct plunges us, are the witness-
 es of the fact that this inviolable unity of a man with
 humanity is operative, even if he ignores it. Often it is
 his ignoring of this relation which brings him through
 misery to consciousness of it. Man as moral being is but
 an individuation of humanity, just as, again, as religious
¹⁷
 being he is but an individuation of God." Schleiermacher

was therefore not only a mystic but a pantheist. He was greatly influenced by Spinoza and much of his thought is
¹⁸
 Buddhist rather than Christian.

Any consideration of Schleiermacher's position is rendered difficult by a lack of clearness as to the
¹⁹
 content of feeling as he used the term. Apparently he believed that in religious experience he was not dealing with something entirely subjective and divorced from any objective reality. He does however seem to have been much more concerned with the practical life value of the subjective experience than with any question of the objective
²⁰
 validity of the object of worship. This "greatest of all
²¹
 romanticist theologians" left his followers (the term is used very broadly) to divide into two groups. There have been some, like Galloway, inclined to assert that feeling is itself an organ of knowledge. There have been the thoroughgoing pragmatists for whom the matter of the ultimate validity of religious belief has been a matter of little or no concern. One thing at least is clear. "His (Schleiermacher's) definition of religion makes it
²²
 aesthetic and destitute of moral quality."

To Ritschl we owe a fresh and clearer way of stating much the same view. He taught that religious convictions originate in value judgments which give a know-
²³
 ledge of objective reality. Obviously this is just a broader assertion of the original claim of Kant for the validity of convictions gained by something other than the speculative method. In his claim that the great concern of his philosophical career was to "abolish knowledge in order

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to make room for faith," Kant identified this form of apprehension of reality with faith. It is the old task²⁵ of the philosopher which goes back to Socrates and Plato and represents, as we have seen, the very antithesis of the distinctive element in the Hebrew-Christian development of thought. Troeltsch and Otto have endeavored to affirm the existence of a religious consciousness distinct from the moral or aesthetic. But their views have not found much²⁶ favor.

Among modern authorities, Professor Oman declares that conscience and heart give their own direct and in-²⁷escapable witness to truth. Professor Baillie, who has been the major source used in preparing this thesis, belongs with those who would incline to regard the moral consciousness as the sole organ of knowledge of ultimate reality, and the sole ground of religious faith.²⁸ Offering in support a quotation from Kant, he asserts that, whereas scientific knowledge, as a product of the intellect alone, is more or less hypothetical, religious convictions proceed from²⁹ the whole personality and are therefore certainties. Again he declares: "Closely allied to the utterly false view that faith has to do with probability is the prevailing³⁰ tendency to speak of it as a hypothesis." Over against this sweeping declaration is the view of Kant, which he mentions and discusses, to the effect that "practical faith can never amount to theoretical knowledge, or be made the³¹ foundation for scientific metaphysical construction."

There is a real difficulty here which must not be

overlooked. Anything which can be evaluated at all by the speculative mind, and so appear to the mind as more or less hypothetical, must be so regarded by the mind. Any proposition which does not come to the mind at all by speculative process, but is capable of intellectual apprehension, must be doubted and held not merely as hypothetical but as most likely a mere illusion. Once a dualistic theory such as that of Kant is accepted, it is necessary to go all the way, as he did, and regard the two ways to knowledge as entirely separate. Indeed we must go the length of admitting that they are in inevitable conflict.

To achieve a unity in the control of the personality one of two courses must be adopted. The practical reason, or moral consciousness, or value judgment, must be crushed and an attitude of complete skepticism adopted toward anything which does not rest upon rational grounds. Or the desire for rational satisfaction must be crushed. In this case the persistent question arises as to whether the greatest of all moral surrenders has not been made. To use a colloquial expression which is most characteristic of our realistic age, we come to a place in our thinking where we cannot 'take it', so we give way.

This problem may be seen more clearly by an illustration from another realm of life. Many men, perhaps through consideration of the emotional satisfaction derived, and possibly with a little touch of satisfaction to their vanity, or perhaps from some degree of moral conviction that it is the right thing to do and the right way to think,

become strongly convinced that a certain woman to whom they are married, or aspire to be, is quite the finest of her kind. With them it is not, perhaps never was, a hypothesis, but an absolute certainty. Perhaps an occasional individual may relieve a troubled conscience by compromising upon the belief that the lady of his choice is merely the most suitable mate in the world for him. Now obviously, if a large number of different men have these exalted ideas of the worth of a large number of different women, and if we may further presume that, should the accidents of fate have brought about a different distribution of the parties, the judgments formed would have been altered to suit the circumstances, we must conclude that the means of knowledge made use of are not very reliable. We may be content to approve of a comfortable delusion which has been found to be socially useful, or even be content when the joke is upon us, but at long last we all must question the soundness of the whole attitude toward one of life's most important aspects. It might be better for each man to realize his own limitations to such an extent as to be happy and contented with a life partner whom he recognizes with frankness to be just a fair match for himself and therefore far from any exceptional treasure.

Surely our religious convictions cannot endure unless they can be advanced, upon the basis of pure reason, as at least reasonably strong hypotheses. The position of the romanticist theologian seems quite untenable and that of the advocate of the validity of the moral or religious consciousness very little better. In fact the sheer

audacity of a claim to a capacity vested in every individual for a knowledge of ultimate reality, more definite and certain than the knowledge which the scientist can form about the phenomenal world, far dwarfs the most extravagant claims of Papal infallibility. It seems that an arrogant self-confidence has so blinded us that we can no longer see anything in true perspective.

32

Any thorough-going criticism of these theological trends must offer some suggestion as to the true nature and origin of the moral and or religious consciousness. As has been mentioned, a discussion of the moral consciousness is furnished in an appendix to this thesis; but some remarks are necessary here, bearing upon the issues more directly under discussion.

It is significant that Kant restored through his postulate of the practical reason just those beliefs which he had formerly held but which he found himself unable any longer to affirm by pure reason.

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These ideas were also the ones which had been held for centuries by the most highly respected men of his race. They were those which had been drilled into him as a child and which he had no doubt long accepted as the guiding principles of his thought and conduct. They were the ideas upon which it was believed that the well being and social coherence of mankind depended. Quite naturally when he was forced by rational consideration to deny all validity to these ideas, something in him rebelled and would not have it so. The most reasonable assumption is that his practical reason was but the drag

or inertia of past conviction which had become part of his very being. The whole of human life is replete with examples of the same sort of thing. He lived in a day before the emphasis which we now have upon psychology and the subconscious mind as a reservoir of past impressions and a brake upon human thought keeping it from plunging violently in all directions. Otherwise he could hardly have trusted his practical reason in such naïve fashion. We ourselves might laugh at his idea as completely absurd if it came to us as something new. But it is hoary with age and respectability. Two influences bear upon us very heavily. A decent humility and a shrinking from the loss of cherished religious convictions which we can see no other way of justifying.

When Schleiermacher was captivated by Kant's mode of thought he turned attention to his emotional impulses rather than to any stern moral imperative. This indicates not merely a wider knowledge of the nature of the religious consciousness, but probably a difference in the man's own temperament and the background of his life. Nearly everyone's intuitive knowledge, or practical reason, or emotional impulse, or value judgment is conditioned strongly, if not entirely induced by, his mental and environmental background. In some degree mental telepathy may play its part along with the conscious desire to think in tune with one's fellows. There is no more certain fact of sociological research or common everyday observation than the tenacity of beliefs that have become intimately associated with the mores and institutional life of a people. The strongest mind

can scarcely break away and think with anything approaching a freedom from prejudice. There can be no overestimating the significance of the fact that this tendency to find the assurance of religious belief within rather than without is the product of a mature, though rather decadent, Christian civilization where for long ages the teachings of the Christian Church had been accepted, at least nominally, by the great majority of people. The most morally and intellectually inexcusable aspect of the whole sorry business has been the attempt to read these modern ideas back into the earlier times.

As has been urged repeatedly in this thesis, these ideas, in so far as they are old, are Greek. If they are true, and if Jesus Christ is the eternal God appearing in human flesh, it is passing strange that in His incarnation He did not assume the form of a philosopher. No early Christian leader was more kindly disposed toward the learning and culture of his day than Paul, but he failed in Athens when he asserted the resurrection as the guarantee of his message.³⁴ A glance at a concordance will reveal the frequency of reference in his Corinthian Epistles to a wisdom that did not make men wise. Surely this reference is to those who wanted a religion with an appeal to their own moral judgment or intuitive or artistic faculties and would not even investigate one which professed to rest upon external credentials.

The common assumption that an experience of the human soul in contact with God is the source of religious

belief cannot be affirmed validly. Most of us were taught some simple theology from the earliest dawn of our understanding, generally that what the Bible said was true. Upon those of us who accepted the instruction guilelessly, the ideas involved did their work. Even adults who are not already indoctrinated are strongly influenced toward current views which have the support of many emotional factors. Few of our most cherished beliefs of any sort are ever arrived at by any conscious process of clear logic,³⁵ even though that may be the ideal at which we aim. Out of the belief that such is, or may be, possible may come the conviction that we actually do have a vital contact with the Divine. Thus the belief is confirmed for us.

Fear still plays a big part in religious belief. After all the teachings of the Church may be true and if so it will some day go hard with the unbeliever. By believing one has everything to gain and nothing to lose. Our earnest assurance of the authenticity of our experience serves to convince others. It may be asked fairly how much of the intense zeal of Christian witness nowadays originates in doubt rather than conviction. The one who is testifying may be trying just as hard to convince himself as the other fellow. Even theological students may be advised from time to time to throw themselves into the active work of the ministry to escape their mental difficulties. For centuries the Church evangelized largely through immediate coercive measures; then it appealed to fear of the torments of hell in the future; more recently emotional enthusiasm and appeal of the high pressure salesmanship type has been in vogue

with emphasis largely upon love. Some day we may reach the place where we shall present the claims of our faith in a calm and reasonable way in the confidence that they will stand the strain.

It is very questionable if anyone who thinks the issue out clearly can lay claim to any mystical experience of a sort which in itself could not as readily be an illusion as a reality. All the experience of others in the same position affords no additional ground of confidence. In fact this is but further suggestion of error. Just as, admittedly, belief is a constituent element of every religious experience, and if we could penetrate back of belief we should be penetrating back of feeling; ³⁶ so it may be fairly suggested that rational conviction is fundamental to every postulate of the moral consciousness or any other form of value judgment. The inescapable conclusion is that the antecedent or concurrent belief requires independent intellectual ground of affirmation in order to give validity to the experience of the judgment.

In attempting to perpetuate our religious beliefs through any sort of inward appeal, we seem to be somewhat in the position of depending upon the momentum in a flywheel after we have discarded the motor which set it going. If the flywheel is heavy and very well balanced it may run on for a long time, but sooner or later it must slow down and stop. When once well in progress, the rate of slowing down may accelerate. In the world of today religious doubt is so rampant and respectable that strong opposition is

afforded to the non-rational forces which tend to perpetuate our beliefs. The momentum of these is being lost very rapidly in spite of the longing for the consolation of religion that distracting times have brought.³⁷ Given a return of material prosperity and social security, it may be doubted if protestant Christianity, with its present methods of propagation, would last a generation as a real force in social life.

A slightly different turn may be given to the customary apologetic by asserting that the historic Jesus Christ appeals directly to the human heart and mind as supremely moral and divine. We accept Him, rather than our own sense of right and wrong, as our authority; but our acceptance of Him is based upon the direct appeal which He makes to our spiritual faculties rather than upon any external credentials. Here again we may be merely coasting upon the stored up momentum of past ideas. These ideas about the nature of the Divine and supreme moral excellence, which we have come to accept as axiomatic, and by which we ~~affirm~~^{recognize} the supremacy of Jesus Christ, may have grown up in our social order under the influence of centuries of belief in Christ as an authority affirmed by the very external and most material credentials which we now propose to disallow. These more or less axiomatic convictions attempt to reassert the notion that was their own origin, and so end in absurdity. Having built a fine house we think that we have no further need of the foundation.

In one sense it may be said that, in the interest

of finding some view less obviously subject to a charge of dishonesty, one is inclined to the position of Professor Baillie in preference to those of Professors Galloway and Oman. However in another sense the reverse is the case. If our theological convictions must be drawn from a consideration of the religious consciousness, we had better start with the latter as it really is. Feelings would seem to play as large a part as moral considerations in the ordinary religious activity.

In approaching the conclusion of this section of the discussion it may be questioned quite frankly whether the post-Kantian drift of our thought has not led us up a blind alley from which there is no exit save by retracing our steps right back to the entrance. The dualistic theory of knowledge involves a principle which must be accepted or rejected without compromise.³⁸ Acceptance of it is a return to the type of philosophy which failed pitifully nineteen centuries or more ago and seems to be failing as pitifully again today. These views were only turned to in modern times as a counsel of despair, and they have all the earmarks of an attempt of theologians to fight a rear guard action and stave off inevitable defeat as long as possible. It is an interesting speculation as to whether future generations will look back upon the last century as a time of magnificent struggle through a transition period of the world's thought, or as a time when the current theology was no less contemptible than that of the petty legalists with whom our Lord Himself had to deal in the course of His earthly life. Although with no realization

of it, Kant and his followers have been pioneers in the new and fascinating study of religious and moral psychology. As such they have made a rich contribution to the world's thought. Our mistake has come from regarding them as theologians or students of morality in any objective sense.

1. Stewart, op. cit., p. 158.
2. Infra. note 1, section 1, chapter 1.
3. Stewart, op. cit., p. 196.
4. *ibid.* p. 198. "In the first place a succession of thinkers were to argue that what is essential to the Christian faith is not the historical events in the New Testament, but the moral and spiritual conceptions - independent of any sequence in time - which this record can illustrate. These formed the philosophical group. For them the miraculous element in the Bible is rejected, not because the evidence has been examined and found insufficient to support it, but because miracles have plainly nothing to do with 'the moral and spiritual ideal', and are indeed irreconcilable with the postulate of universal law on which all our thinking rests....Representatives of the first class of modernists were such as Kant, Hegel and Schleiermacher."
5. Moore, *Christian Thought Since Kant*, p. 47. "There is thus in Kant's philosophy a skeptical aspect. Knowledge is limited to phenomena. We cannot by pure reason know anything of the world which lies beyond experience. This thought had been put forward by Locke and Berkeley, and by Hume also, in a different way. But with Kant this skepticism was not the gist of his philosophy. It was urged rather as the basis of the unconditioned character which he proposed to assert for the practical reason. Kant's skepticism is therefore very different from that of Hume. It does not militate against the profoundest religious conviction. Yet it prepared the way for some of the just claims of modern agnosticism."
6. *ibid.* p. 45.
7. *ibid.* p. 50.
8. *ibid.* p. 74.
9. Stewart, op. cit., p. 200.
10. *ibid.* p. 203. "With a deeply religious spirit, and also a profound misgiving about traditional dogma, he heard

with great joy of that witness within the breast that can dispense with external proof. Kant had explained how the doctrines and ritual of the Church had at most only a symbolic significance. Scouting the idea that the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of priests, and that its requirements are either rigorous creed or elaborate ceremony, he had exalted the 'inner and ethical element', and declared that by its moral appeal every system of dogma must in the end be judged. To Schleiermacher this was a prophetic note, and in his 'Discourses on Religion to its Learned Despisers' (1799), he expounded the new sort of apologetic to which Kantian reasoning had led him.....Those Discourses marked an epoch in German liberal theology."

11. Cross, The Theology of Schleiermacher, p. 312.
12. Stewart, op. cit., p. 204.
13. Baillie, op. cit., p. 204.
14. ibid. pp. 205ff.
15. Selbie, Schleiermacher, p. 62.
16. ibid. p. 77.
17. Moore, op. cit., p. 79.
18. ibid. p. 80.
19. Baillie, op. cit., pp. 208ff.
20. Selbie, op. cit., p. 47. "Schleiermacher is far more interested in the subjective presence of God with us, than in any objective certainty that we can attain about Him."
21. Baillie, op. cit., p. 203.
22. Cross, op. cit., p. 313.
23. Two quotations from Baillie, op. cit., pp. 285 and 286ff, will make the Ritschlian position reasonably clear.
 "Religion, he (Ritschl) tells us, has to do with our consciousness of value, and is a faith in the reality of the objects to which that consciousness introduces us. All religious affirmations are thus essentially judgments of value."
 "Ritschl's usual form of statement is that 'religious knowledge consists in independent value-judgments,' and this way of speaking has sometimes given rise to serious misunderstanding; for it has been taken to mean that religion introduces us only to an ideal realm which has no existence apart from our own thoughts. That is, of course, a misunderstanding of the grossest kind; for it is precisely the reality of the ideal world (or

world of values) that Ritschl, like Fichte and Lotze before him, is most anxious to insist upon. 'Besides the reality of nature,' he writes, in words which either of these might have penned. 'theoretical knowledge must recognize as given the reality of spiritual life, and the equal binding force of the special laws which obtain in each realm. 'To avoid this kind of misinterpretation, many of Ritschl's disciples, and notably Kaftan, have preferred to speak of religious judgments not as being themselves judgments of value but rather as being based upon or grounded in such judgments. Faith, that is to say, does assert the reality of its own objects, but its conviction of their reality is always grounded in a prior recognition of their value. That this was Ritschl's own essential meaning cannot be doubted; for, as has been said, it is precisely with the relation of moral values to real existence that Ritschl believes all religion to be concerned."

24. Baillie, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
25. *ibid.* p. 2601 "There was danger of faith being crowded out by natural science, and Kant felt that it could only be rehabilitated by means of a thoroughgoing examination and nice adjustment of the rights of the two claimants. It was the task which Socrates and Plato had set for themselves more than two thousand years before, and ever since it had been the fundamental task with which philosophy had occupied itself."
26. *ibid.* pp. 245 and 246. "Surely he (Kant) is entirely wise both in affirming that there are certain ultimate ethical principles which are genuinely self-evident, and in denying that there are any specifically theological propositions for which a similar claim can be made."..... "Even the most elementary of our religious beliefs are felt to stand in need of some kind of further evidence and substantiation, and are capable of being doubted if such support does not appear."..... "Our fundamental moral values are given to us directly, and intuited by us directly; but for everything in religion that goes beyond this direct intuition of moral value, there is required the activity of faith."
27. Oman, *Grace and Personality*, pp. 142, 156, 157 and 164.
 "In the strict sense we should not even try to believe; for we have no right to believe anything we can avoid believing, granting we have given it entire freedom to convince us."
 "The Old Testament still speaks to our hearts because it is this supreme search after one God, not as an intellectual conception, but as a moral victory to unite all our life into one, and because of the confidence it gives us that those who seek after God in this way will find Him."
 ".....our experience of God in the insight of conscience and the aspiration of the heart...."

"A god of love must be self-revealing in all His intercourse, at all times and in all ways, and not alone in special actions. The love of God and the fellowship of the Spirit are always and everywhere revealing themselves, and to restrict themselves to special channels would merely prove the love imperfect and the fellowship narrow hearted."

These brief quotations are not a very satisfactory outline of Oman's position. I found him much more difficult to understand than Galloway or Baillie. At least he seems to have great confidence in the subjective or value judgment, in intuition as applied to religious truth. He also adds the emotional element, 'the aspiration of the heart,' to the moral consciousness as a part of the means of knowledge of the ultimate.

28. Baillie, op. cit., pp. 273 and 274. "The Ritschlian school, and others who were not Ritschlians, came to realize that the determinative dependence of religious faith on moral values was not merely a possible starting point for the defence of faith, but the source from which faith originally springs and the key to its inmost character."
29. ibid. pp. 374ff.
30. ibid. p. 378.
31. ibid. p. 269.
32. Galloway, op. cit., p. 168. "A Church would not hold together if its members were generally agreed that all formulations of religious truth were more or less hypothetical."
33. ibid. p. 282.
34. Acts 17:31.
35. This is emphasised by Galloway all through his book to which frequent reference has been made. But the point he seems to miss is the indication thereby given of invalidity rather than validity of the relative ideas. The ideas tend to perpetuate through emotional influences and mere gullibility rather than for sound reasons.
36. Baillie, op. cit., p. 212.
37. No clearer indication of this could be given than the eager interest displayed by the general public in Buchmanism, a movement which purported to afford a means of religious certainty. A remarkably large number of people seemed willing enough to make the sacrifice of will or anything else demanded if they could be sure they were giving way to something real.

38. Baillie, op. cit., p. 243. "The cardinal contention in the interest of which the whole labor of the Critical Philosophy was undertaken by Kant was the contention that natural science does not really exhaust our justifiable knowledge of reality, because in our knowledge of good and evil we have available to us another and equally indisputable revelation of truth."

Section 6. Newer Movements.

Several fresh movements indicate an impending break with this whole post-Kantian line of development. There has been the emphasis upon Scientific Humanism,¹ which would give us a religion without any God at all. There is the view of Professor Wieman that a real God can be found by the use of "scientific method"; but not the personal Being of traditional Christianity. There is the Barthian movement which would deny all way of knowledge from man to God, but proceeds to assert the reality of a special and somewhat mystical revelation of God to man which is given in history and individual experience.

Barthianism has a high doctrine of transcendence. It asserts the qualitative difference between time and eternity. God is the wholly other. Eternity does however occasionally break through into time. This occurred in connection with the historic Jesus, not so much in His whole life but with respect to certain instances, notably the resurrection. The individual is enabled to believe only by virtue of a special and enlightening breaking through of the Divine into the human consciousness.

The theory is excellent. If acceptable, it might be adequate for theological needs. In large degree it is but a reassertion of traditional teaching about the function of the Holy Spirit. It is a genuine reversion to much of the theology of the Reformation. But without some supporting evidence for his claims Barth is wide open to the

objection that he has just repudiated one form of subjectivism to accept another which is even more indefensible. As a moral value he has made some substitution of humility for conceit in respect to human powers; but has he met the obvious objection that he too is merely succumbing to the pull of tradition?

Professor Wieman offers substantially the same criticism of Barth as the above.² His own idea of God may be difficult to understand at all, much less describe in a few words, but there is no ambiguity about his insistence upon a sound method of enquiry.³ At the risk of being so simple as to misrepresent, it may be stated that he insists upon a limitation of theological enquiry to the method used for scientific enquiry. For him God is but a term applied in particular to a detectable "order of interaction in the Universe", and in general to everything actual or possible which man may find in the Universe to evoke his admiration and worship as ministering to his highest interests and pursuits. He finds that good and evil are very real factors in the Universe. They are objective to man's own consciousness. He uses the term 'God' for that which is good. He makes no claim that the good, or God, must ultimately triumph, except to assert that only it can do so. The triumph of evil would involve extinction of everything including itself, for evil is negative and destructive rather than positive and constructive.⁴ "God cannot be a personality."⁵

A question arises immediately. If we must discard

the belief in a Divine Being Who is in some sense a personality and as such distinguishable from the mere sum total of good elements of, or some order in, the Universe, Who controls the latter, and Who may be trusted to guide it to some good end which involves our perpetuation as self-conscious entities within this order and in communion with Himself, then it is hard to see how a religious attitude can be maintained which will even approximate to that produced by the historic Christian Faith or have for us the same values.

If our task is merely to become adjusted to the actual Universe in which we find ourselves, including its possibilities of good and ill, in such a way as to further what we conceive to be our highest interests, with no guidance in regard to the latter and no assurance, or even fairly definite intimation, of the future course either of the Universe or ourselves, then it would seem that a more Stoic philosophy is in the end inescapable, and there can be no avoiding such moral lag as may come with it.⁶ For a time we may whip up our flagging zeal and seek the good alone; but sooner or later we must be driven by cold logic to capitulate to the total situation.

It would seem that even Humanism is more hopeful. If the idea becomes rooted that all moral and spiritual worth is vested in ourselves alone, we may find therein a motive to achieve the highest as we are able to conceive it. It may fairly be asked if both Wieman and the Humanists do not owe their zeal for the good, and much

of their concept of this good, to the very beliefs which they have discarded. What will be the result upon a generation or two of people subjected to their teaching?

Out of all this searching after the light some convictions emerge clearly. Our God must be found by scientific enquiry and not be the mere product of tradition or creative art. For the scientific method is indeed the only road to knowledge of objective reality which we can trust, and only what we can trust with a clear conscience is of value for moral and religious life as we have come to think of it. On the other hand if we are to have a religion that will appeal to and satisfy the total personality, and yield moral and redemptive values somewhat commensurate with those of the historic Christian Faith, we must find by our honest scientific method a God who approximates closely to the one whom our faculties for creative art would formulate. Other factors may urge us to the quest for what we want to find; but in the end we must find it and not imagine it. Of course, if no more stimulating belief can be entertained upon legitimate grounds, we shall have to make the best of it with Humanism or some such substitute as Wieman offers; or we may have to adopt an entirely agnostic position in regards to theistic considerations and confine our practical activity to ethical societies rather than churches. But it may be hard for some of us to think of this as a Gospel.

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1. For this term I am indebted to Professor Shaw of Queens University. I have made no study of the movement beyond listening to his most interesting address upon the occasion of a recent visit to McMaster.
 2. See appendix E giving a number of quotations from this writer.

3. Wieman, *The Issues of Life*, p. 101. "'Life is more Than logic' it is sometimes said, and that statement is sometimes offered as an excuse for resorting to something else than cold intelligence to attain the high values of life. Of course life is more than logic. It is habit and personal attitude, it is metabolism and emotion and much else. But all these activities must be brought under the control of intelligence if we are to enter into the highway of life by any other way than by accident."
4. op. cit., *The Wrestle of Religion With Truth*, p. 188. "The disordering principle of evil could have no being if there were no order to disrupt. Evil could never completely triumph, for in the very moment that it destroyed the concrete order it would destroy itself."
5. Op. cit., *The Issues of Life*, p. 220.
6. Sperry, op. cit., p. 15. "I may be a necessary cog in the social machine and may draw much moral strength from that knowledge, but once let me suspect that the whole machine is merely idling, getting nowhere, achieving nothing, and my moral energy flags at once."

CHAPTER 111

An Attempt at Reconstruction of the Older Theology

Section 1. Values to be Salvaged from the Post-Kantian Drift.

The closing paragraph of the last chapter gives the lead to what must be said under this heading. If for the moment we may concede the truth of the historic Faith, and assert that a vital redemptive experience is demanded by our God, then our recent theology has laid emphasis upon a vital truth. The Church has come to realize that the end result to be striven for is a redeemed and ennobled quality of life and character both in the individual and in society. Mere academic belief has no value in itself. It is but a means to an end. Any return of the true protestant mind to the idea of enforced confession of religious belief would seem to be out of the question. Our natural progress is towards the insistence that belief must not only be voluntary but arrived at by a sound process of logic in the mind of each individual. Though the concept of salvation as an inward and vital experience has never been wholly absent from Christian thought, it has been grossly overlaid for the most part by such external conceptions as imputed merit with little or no relationship to altered character.¹ The Protestantism of the nineteenth century has to be thanked for much of our recapture of a more primitive Christian emphasis.²

We have also realized that the religious appeal in ordinary practise is to the heart and conscience rather than to the mind, as the instinct to seek religious reality arises largely from practical rather than speculative needs.³ But we

must not forget that a non-speculative origin of the religious impulse does not deny its ultimate demand of speculative satisfaction. We have also learned that the redemptive result is dependent upon an appeal that is morally stimulating; but here we must avoid the mistake of calling the Divine to the bar of our moral consciousness. To do so is but to make our God in our own image and so worship ourselves. Even though the inward call to duty or worship may cut across selfish desire and be in the form of a stern imperative, it is still but one aspect of the personality asserting itself as master over the others. To bow to that sort of command is not necessarily to heed the voice of any God.⁴ But perhaps more than anything else we have learned to recognize that, when through some prejudice the heart and will are set against belief, argument is vain. An attitude of readiness to accept truth must exist and this is moral rather than coldly speculative.

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1. Moore, op. cit., p. 150. "The sense that salvation is inward, moral, spiritual, has rarely indeed been absent from Christendom. It would be preposterous to allege that it had. Yet this sense has been overlaid and under-run and shot through with the other and disparate idea of salvation, as of a pure bestowment, something achieved apart from us, or, if one may say so, some alteration of ourselves upon other than moral or spiritual terms."
 2. *ibid.* p. 83. "Now every external, forensic, magical notion of salvation, as something purchased for us, imputed to us, conferred upon us, would have been utterly impossible for Schleiermacher. It is within the soul of man that redemption takes place. Conferment from the side of God and Christ, or from God through Christ, can be nothing more, as also it can be nothing less, than the imparting of wisdom and grace and spiritual power from the personality of Jesus, which a man freely takes up within himself and gives forth as from himself."
 3. Baillie, op. cit., p. 183. "Nevertheless it is undoubtedly true that in philosophy we seem to be in the first

place concerned with the intellectual desire to understand, whereas in religion we are much rather concerned with the practical desire to find a firm foundation on which to build our lives."

Also on the same page a quotation from Auguste Sabatier: "There is this amount of truth in the ancient hypothesis that religion arose out of fear, namely, that it places us on the practical arena of life, and not in the theoretical region of science. The question man puts to himself in religion is always a question of salvation, and if he seems sometimes to be pursuing in it the enigma of the Universe, it is only that he may solve the enigma of his life."

Also on page 185 a quotation from Pascal: "How remarkable it is that no biblical author makes use of nature in order to prove God." And one from Hume: "The first ideas of religion arose not from a contemplation of the works of nature but from a concern with regard to the events of life, and from the incessant hopes and fears which actuate the human mind."

4. See extended note in Appendix C.

Section 2. The Argument From Miracle.

Consideration of the miraculous element in the Gospel narratives, upon which, if the foregoing historical interpretation is correct, the Church has traditionally rested for its external authority, involves two questions. Would miracles have evidential value if true? And if they would, can their authenticity be validly asserted? Let us presume for the moment that the narratives of the New Testament are entirely accurate.

Certainly a miracle cannot give absolute proof of anything beyond its own occurrence. But it does have some evidential value. It may form the basis of a reasonable hypothesis. The power exercised by Jesus Christ over natural laws and forces, disease of the human body and mind, and even death itself, suggests very definitely His relation in some fashion to whatever power lies back of the phenomenal world in which we find ourselves. There is still the possibility that this power was using Him to play a cruel joke upon us; but that hardly seems to be the most likely explanation. It appears more reasonable to suppose that this power was seeking, by the only evidence which could have any value, to vindicate Him to us as a teacher and revealer of truth. He laid claim to a knowledge of God's existence and character. In fact He claimed to be Himself an exemplification of that character and in some sense the embodiment of the Deity. In His control over physical forces and all the powers of the environment to which we find ourselves subject, combined with His own unique moral strength which appears to transcend anything explicable as a mere psychological freak, there

is a foundation of evidence upon which to accept Him as a witness from a realm beyond our ken. In this way we take the phenomena of Jesus Christ, as we have it in our records, and consider its significance exactly as a scientist must consider any object of his study. We draw our conclusions in essentially the same way.

There is a further possibility that the miracles were not miracles at all in the sense of being a breach of natural law. They may have been an exemplification of this law in its highest form. There may be a supreme law to the effect that moral excellence in sufficient degree has control over physical force of every sort. This might solve the riddle of the centuries, the lack of coordination between material blessing and moral virtue. From this standpoint the appearance of Jesus Christ upon earth has immense import for the formulation of a theological system. He is but a single instance, and a law is not well established upon such ground. But He presents to us the only instance in which such a law could operate fully, and so, lacking any other instances, an hypothesis must be set up upon the basis of the one.

There is also evidence that this unique power of His was capable of some delegation and was made use of by others of His immediate following. If in any degree we regard the power exercised by others as inherent in themselves rather than delegated by Christ, we have further instances of the operation of our law; for we have reason to believe that they were men of exceptional character. Furthermore, in all cases, and supremely in Jesus Christ Himself, the power that

came through moral excellence was not used for selfish ends but for the benefit of other human beings. We have therefore some ground for hope that the supreme and ultimate power in the Universe, or at least that power which controls our particular environment, is moral, according to the standards which appeal to us, and careful of our welfare. We must also take into consideration the evidence for exhibition of similar power under any other circumstances in the world's history. We must decide whether such additional evidence supports or contradicts the evidence of the Christian miracles, and, if the latter, whether we can regard the Christian miracles as having any unique character to lend them an evidential value not found elsewhere.

Jesus Himself continually implied that power through faith was in some respect a dependable law rather than an arbitrary phenomenon. He promised similar power to anyone who could exercise the needed faith, and, on at least one occasion, He seems to have implied that such faith depended upon the background of the life. He demanded repeatedly an exercise of faith on the part of those whom He healed, and He often ascribed the results to such faith. In so doing He has left a mystery upon our hands. We do not know to what extent this faith partook of the nature of a natural control of matter by mind, particularly in cases where the cause of disease may have been largely mental, or to what extent the faith issued from, or was intended to lead to, a purity of life or, otherwise expressed, faithfulness.

If we accept the miraculous as evidence, a

multitude of questions will arise respecting the conclusions to be drawn. ^{Two} One of these may be indicated. In such matters as scientific understanding Jesus would appear to have shared the imperfect knowledge of His day. Of course it may be that He understood things more perfectly but had to speak in terms comprehensible to His hearers. If He should appear among us, He would have to use our terms of description and our descendants in a few centuries might regard Him as woefully ill-informed. There is therefore an element of doubt as to the area of truth in which He may be taken as an authority; but obviously His moral and religious teaching was central to His purpose and the rest was supplementary. An even more interesting problem arises about Jesus' reference to the devil. Must we, upon His authority, believe in the existence of a whole kingdom of evil spirits under a head possibly as absolute in origin as God Himself.? Or did Jesus merely make use of the thought forms of His day as a vehicle for practical moral teaching and really not deal with such questions as the origin of evil and the source of temptation?

If we may believe that through Jesus Christ we may know that a God exists; that the nature and character of that God are shown to us in Him to some extent, and possibly to the full extent of our capacity for appreciation; that in His direct teaching, and far more in His confirmation of so many things that otherwise we could not be sure about, including the inference, as much from His character as His specific statement, that if certain vital ideas were not correct he would have given fair warning; ² that we may place some trust in

the mystical sense of guidance which comes to us because He promised to send His Holy Spirit for that very purpose; if indeed we may trust that He is always at hand to guide through these very problems every individual who seeks the truth with an open mind in order that he may walk therein; then we have a basis upon which to build a theology. In addition to all we have the self-sacrificial love in which all of His power was displayed.

The question of the authenticity of the miracles is of course a large one. It involves the whole field of New Testament criticism and the early history of the Church. Any discussion here would be hopelessly inadequate. However, as in connection with the evidential value of the miracles, a few leading thoughts may be thrown out. As long as we regard these elements of our tradition as valueless or worse,³ no true or fair appraisal of their probable authenticity is likely to be made. If however we recognize that they are a vital link in our chain of evidence, and without confidence in them our Faith must perish or be altered out of all recognition, our judgments in regard to them may undergo a surprising change.

Without making any claim to expert knowledge in a highly technical field, one may venture the suggestion that at least as much credulity is required to explain away these miracles as to accept them. The case is likewise with the whole business of doubting the general historical accuracy of our tradition. From a high doctrine of verbal inerrancy we have reacted to a violent extreme in the other direction.

The backward swing has set in already and we can but hope that it can ~~be~~ honestly ^{be} carried a long way.

In a controversial matter of this kind each side thrives on the offensive. The liberal scholar was convincing as long as he was criticising the old and established views. There was so much valid ground for attack. Today the position is reversed. He himself ~~is~~ enthroned in the position of orthodoxy and must withstand attack. The weakness of his position is exposed and his reconstruction of events is seen to be as bad if not worse than that for which it was substituted. We have far from seen the last of Pilate's question, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"

One conclusion can be drawn with practical certainty. Both with respect to the accuracy of our historical details and the inferences to be drawn therefrom, there will be little if any certain judgment. The result will be a series of hypotheses of varying degrees of strength. A definition and practice of faith will have to be found which will fit into this situation.

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1. Mark 9:29.
 2. John 14:2.
 3. Baillie, op. cit., p. 379. "It is true that the apologists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were in the habit of endeavoring to clinch matters in favor of Christianity by appealing to the 'miracles' embedded in its sacred writ; but nowadays the presence of these incidents in the records is more commonly felt as an obstacle than an aid to nascent belief."

Section 3. Faith.

Faith is many sided. In one aspect it is synonymous with faithfulness. In another aspect it comes close to laying hold upon some law regarding the influence of mind over matter. It may border upon mental telepathy. We do not know how far the effect of our confidence may go in influencing other minds or the material world. But in its simplest form, in which it most frequently becomes the basis of activity, it is one of the most common and comprehensible elements of everyday life. The business man makes use of it in nearly every venture he makes, the scientist in every experiment, the participant in every social relationship, and the religious man in his belief in God. Unless serious consideration of the issue can be avoided entirely, faith is called for wherever there is an element of doubt in connection with a life activity.

Life situations which open the way for faith are roughly of three kinds. There are the cases where a doubtful issue can be avoided entirely without serious loss. For example, the banker when requested to make a dubious loan, or the business man when urged to embark upon a doubtful venture, may simply decline the risk and forfeit nothing but the possible profit. Then there are the cases where declining the risk must result in serious loss in other directions. If the banker declines to make any loans, and the business man to take any risks, both will soon be out of operation. If the young man refuses to take any chances at all in the selection of a young lady

he can hardly have a home. Faith can only be escaped at great cost. The third type is more interesting still. A doctor has to decide between alternative forms of treatment where it is almost impossible to decide which is best but one must be used. An aviator in an injured machine has a choice between trying to land it safely or risking a jump by parachute over unsuitable country in a high wind. It is almost impossible to determine which is the better plan, but he must do one or the other. In these cases faith cannot be avoided; the only question is what to have faith in.

In any of these situations the decision can be made upon the basis of mere chance, or from considerations of excessive caution or a fear that amounts to panic. But the man whom we most admire acts otherwise. He considers the arguments for or against the proposed venture. He knows that he cannot be certain but that the contingencies can be estimated to some extent. He decides to venture at the dictate of reason. In a sense he takes a leap into the dark, but it is a leap in the direction in which reason bids as far as reason can decide the matter. Only if the decision hung upon such a small weight of evidence as to be practically negligible, would other than reasonable considerations determine the issue. Then the man would admit frankly that he was entering into a blind gamble. Faith therefore, in this one of its aspects, is so simple that a child can understand it. By no means is it an organ of knowledge, but a frank admission of the limits of knowledge. It is a response to the hypothetical character of our surroundings.

The wise man in business, professional or scientific life knows well the danger of allowing his feelings to befuddle his judgment, and he guards against this. He is careful not to become overly optimistic once he has embarked upon a venture. He courts no blissful but unfounded confidence, and can scarce conceal his disgust with those who do so. He finds moral stimulus in the honest venture entered into with the clear consciousness that it is a venture. He would not dream, even from the emotional standpoint, of exchanging this for the cheap satisfaction of shortsighted optimism. He may allow for moral considerations according to his particular code, he may even trust a business instinct which he knows full well is a vague accumulation of memories from his past experience, but he depends upon no sixth sense divorced from or subsidiary to rational considerations.

Possibly in salesmanship, or other activities where success is largely dependent upon confidence in the outcome, a different situation is found. Here there is a strong tendency to let enthusiasm run away with judgment. But surely no business man with any moral fibre would consider that frame of mind the most worthy and ennobling. Notwithstanding its greater temptation to lapse from the paths of rectitude, religious faith must conform to as high a standard as is found in the best of secular life.

In the last of the group of possibilities mentioned above, it was pointed out that a venture of faith may be necessary upon anything but conclusive evidence. Some venture becomes necessary and the choice is a close one. No matter

how meager, the evidence must rule. For many today, and perhaps increasingly in the future, the venture of Christian belief will have to be upon this basis.¹ Christianity offers the postulate that God holds each one of us responsible for every bit of light given. He is the judge as to its sufficiency to demand action. Refusal to consider is counted as rejection and will be punished accordingly. Perhaps the one who is too lazy morally or intellectually to face the issue may, in a sense, be described as faithless; but anyone who faces the issue squarely must exercise faith, just as truly to reject as to accept. When anyone rejects, our quarrel is with his judgment or with some prejudice militating against fair consideration of the issue. The claims of Christianity are so vitally tied up with the activity of living that no one can go on for an hour without basing thought and action upon an assumption either of their truth or falsity. Of course one of these alternatives is urged upon us by more immediate and selfish considerations while the other requires more allowance for future contingencies and a vigorous moral effort. Accordingly the decision in its practical aspect represents to us a choice between a negative or inert attitude and one of positive committal to a great adventure. Although, for those who are weary and heavy laden in the right way, there is an approach to Christian faith in order to find rest for the soul, in the main it is a perversion of the Gospel to urge a venture of faith for the joy to be derived. The paradoxical situation is that joy comes incidentally when the venture is made upon more worthy considerations.

The really distinctive quality about religious faith is that it is so irrevocable and unverifiable. The soundness of the venture can never be fully ascertained in this life. There is no accumulation of knowledge from experience of similar ventures in the past to go by. The issues are eternal and the conscious committal is of the whole life. Rarely is the decision made suddenly and without antecedents. Influences have been long at work to create strong emotional and moral urges. In fact the final decision may be dictated almost entirely by non-rational influences and the background of mental influence may be overlooked. Even when one feels rather sure of the evidence, the venture is the greatest in life. It is the highest form of faith. Possibly the closest parallel is the committal made in marriage by those who do not anticipate divorce under any circumstances. It is this irrevocable nature of the venture which must surely in marriage render so strong the urge to forget all about any trace of doubt there may ever have existed and become quite certain of being right. It may be a sort of defence mechanism against a fear of becoming disloyal and as such have a little justification. The same thing applies in religious faith.

A degree of more or less incommunicable supporting evidence of the reality of God's existence and interest in him may come to an individual through an inward sense of guidance preceding events in his life which could not have been foreseen or self-induced in any known way. Such evidence is much like that depended upon in Old Testament times and is the next best thing to that associated with

Christ. It is as external in character. The emphasis upon this sort of thing is one of the good features of Buchmanism. Unfortunately many followers of that movement do not make sufficient allowance for explanation as natural, coincidental, or telepathic, nor are they sufficiently cautious and critical to distinguish between the factors of real evidential value and those which have every appearance of mere psychic phenomena. This movement furnishes an example of short-sighted enthusiasm over immediate pragmatic values. Any religious movement to endure, or indeed to be honest, must examine its own foundations with a merciless thoroughness.

At this point a reference may be made back to the views of Professor Wieman. As indicated in the last footnote, he recognizes that faith is a venture. He seeks to apply the scientific method to theology. He desires to escape the "miasma of subjectivism". The question is, does he achieve his aims? Searching the Universe to find those things in it which, according to one's own judgment, minister to the highest human aims and interests, and searching one's own imagination for possibilities of a like order, and grouping all this under a collective noun, God, in order to worship them, is a rather subjective proceeding. That which is ultimately called God may have real or possible objective existence, unless it is frankly recognized as an unknown quantity, but the selection of the elements of its composition is entirely a matter of value judgment. No adjustment of the self, or the standard of values of the self, to an objective standard is involved. Evidently then much more separates this view from traditional Christianity than an

academic definition of the Deity.

On the other hand, to consider the phenomenon of Jesus Christ objectively in the manner herein suggested in order to determine its degree of credibility as a revelation of the Divine is truly scientific. To surrender to the Divinity so conceived, if the evidence so warrants, is to worship the real God Whom one has found. Though the evidence may be slight, if what there is suggests the existence of such a God, it is of the very essence of scientific method to venture upon the hypothesis until a better one can be found.

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1. Wieman, op. cit., p. 239. "It should be observed that the age of fixed and certain belief is passing. It will not soon come again. It may never come again. There is much to indicate that the tentative, experimental attitude toward every belief and project will spread farther and farther throughout the whole range of human living."

Section 4. Is it a Gospel?

Only when a message can be accepted as a message is there any point in asking if it is a good one. Then however the question does become pertinent.

By recognizing all religious views to be in some degree hypothetical, the tendency to strife will be lessened greatly. It is when convictions are rigid and there is little or no outreach for further light that bitter contention and a flair for persecution become most inevitable. A scientist can hold to an opinion very firmly, believing it to be the best hypothesis upon the basis of all known evidence, but he does not feel impelled to burn his brother at the stake for differing. Within such reasonable bounds as imply capacity and sincerity, he is even glad to see someone working along a different line; for he knows that he may be wrong, and he is confident that in the end the truth will prevail. Possibly the psychological basis of much of the persecuting frame of mind is a deep subconscious realization that the opinion which the persecuting one holds is largely a comfortable prejudice which he could not justify to an honest enquirer, or but a hypothesis which he craves to regard as a certainty. On the other hand, if one really feels that a certainty has been arrived at, and obviously such certainty is available to anyone else of normal capacity who chooses to make an honest attempt to get it, we can readily see that it must become almost impossible to refrain from regarding the person who differs as immoral rather than merely misled.

Nothing is more native to human hearts and minds than the longing to venture into the unknown. Where the quest is a worthy one the result is moral invigoration. We employ this venturesome spirit in giving practical expression to religious beliefs and there is no reason why it should not be valuable when used to a reasonable extent in arriving at and retaining the beliefs themselves.

There is great moral value in a proper combination of external and inward authority. It has already been urged that no inward authority can properly be regarded as a surrender to God, as there can be no assurance that the inward voice is anything but one's own consciousness or some phase of it. A true and deep humility, and a real sense of discipline, comes most surely when somewhere, external and superior to self, there is a "Thus saith the Lord" admitting of no appeal. On the other hand, the exercise of human judgment in weighing the evidence in order to decide to what extent the authority is valid, and the constant weighing of historical data in order to determine what the authority does assert, is valuable and far more invigorating morally than dependence upon some authority so definite and specific as to call forth no such activity. There is value in self-examination, and in a whole-hearted living up to one's own ideals and the dictates of one's own conscience, possibly supplemented by a little real guidance as the Holy Spirit may be able to slip an occasional word in; but this does not go far enough. It stops short of a real God and consequently of a real religion. It is, in currently familiar terminology, an increasing of the quantity rather

than the quality of the spiritual life.

Refinement of quality comes in another way. A psychological law seems to lie behind the conviction frequently affirmed that grace is free and unmerited, that newness of life comes as a gift of God without striving or effort. This quality of life may be described as a by-product rather than a product. It is as we worship and adore God as seen in Jesus Christ, not only for the sake of His own winsomeness and beauty as we discern it, but with the belief that He is an absolute standard, without any thought of an effect upon ourselves, that the effect upon ourselves does come. It is as we forget ourselves entirely in service of others, for their own or the Master's sake, that we find ourselves growing in grace. It is often when the struggle against sinful habit is given over for a confidence in God's redeeming grace that the victory comes. About the surest way to miss a refined quality of life is to be continually concerned about it.

There is, therefore, pragmatic value in recognizing Christ as an exclusive revelation of God, in refusing to call him to the bar of our moral judgment, but rather to true our moral judgment by his standard, and above all to worship Him for His own intrinsic merit and as God. Properly understood, there is great discernment in the remark of the little girl that becoming a Christian is simply falling in love with Jesus Christ.

Any theological view which will tend to counteract the intense subjectivism of our day will be a great gain. In

social and political relations of all kinds as well as in religion, an overemphasis upon individualism has led us to the brink of anarchy and ushered in an era of reaction to dictatorship. Authority and discipline are necessary if human beings are to organize and live. Any great confidence in knowledge attained through intuition or by some other incommunicable means makes people unsocial, as it militates against an adjustment of opinions. It limits the individual to his own narrow experience, and opens the way to all the prejudice of self-interest and traditional bias. The subjective experience of others or their intuitive judgments may confirm or throw a question mark against one's own; but the two cannot be debated and adjusted to mutual advantage as can opinions which rest upon logical deductions. Athens, the cradle of extreme democracy and the artistic temperament, was not a very successful State from the standpoint of social organization. There probably has never been a period in the world's history when there has been ^{then there is today} more obvious need for a thoroughly objective authority by which all thought and conduct may be regulated and coordinated.

In this treatment Christianity is recognized as unique among the religions of the world, and in a final sense the only true one. Others may have broken bits of light; but Christianity must supersede and replace them without making any concessions itself or undergoing any modifications that do not come from a better understanding of its own origins or a further revelation from God. No ambiguity is left with regard to the central place of Jesus Christ, the historical figure, both as revealer of truth and as redemptive agent. The dependence of the Christian Church

upon its Hebrew foundations is recognized clearly and a consistent strain of thought is traced throughout to show a unity of movement. Recognition of the Hebrew background and special emphasis upon Jesus' own teaching is bound to make clear that the great task of the Church is the building of the kingdom of God on earth. Attainment of any heaven in the beyond depends upon effort put forth to make one here.

In another respect religion is brought down to the level and reality of everyday life in the modern world. It is made honest in the form of a search along scientific lines for the truth as far as that can be known. It is not a cheap attempt to gain currency for beliefs merely because they satisfy spiritual needs. All dualistic theories of knowledge are disregarded as savouring more than anything else of compromise with truth. The hypothetical character of all human knowledge is recognized in order to meet the honest doubt of the most skeptical mind. In no respect is religious knowledge set off in a compartment, or religious faith differentiated from the faith exercised in other relationships of life. A note of insistence is introduced in the presentation of faith as an activity unavoidable for any individual who faces the religious issue in any serious way.

Finally the vexed question of the miraculous, so often unnecessary for, or offensive to, the modern mind, but inescapable in Christianity, unless historical origins are to be regarded as hopelessly distorted, is given a prominent but credible place. It does not constitute all the evidence

for the Faith, and it might not be sufficient in itself apart from the moral supremacy of Christ. Still it is a necessary link in a chain and without it the others are of no avail. The incongruity of Jesus performing unnecessary miracles is avoided.³

For all these benefits nothing must be forfeited except a certainty of conviction, or perhaps more correctly a frenzied search for such. This certainty, though dear to many an honest heart, is of dubious philosophical value and has been by no means an unmixed blessing in the practical life of the Church over its long history. Many other values seem to have been waived aside; but such is not really the case. Their inability to stand in their own right has been questioned only in order to place a foundation under them which will make them firm and useful.

Even if the view must be adopted that to regard religious belief as more or less hypothetical will make the task of the Church more difficult and her message less satisfying, the answer is that 'half a loaf is better than no bread.' If a stage in the development of thought has been reached where, in so far as religious faith is concerned, I must, to use a rather paradoxical expression be 'better than my fathers' if I am to be as good, then the challenge of the situation must be frankly accepted. Merely trying to avoid the difficulty in its entirety, or to postpone the inevitable facing of it, is not going to accomplish any result of genuine value.

1. Sperry, op. cit. p. 34. "Thus, no truly religious man, in those moments of his life which give him a right to be so called, ever thinks of himself as 'having a religious experience.' He does not peek through his folded hands at himself at prayer; he looks into the face of God and gives thanks that his life is preserved. The slightest suggestion of any furtive glancing at himself as being involved in a religious experience invalidates instantly any claim that he may lay to the experience. The saint never says, 'I am now having a religious experience.' He says, 'My Lord and my God.'"
2. This illustration is not used in any sense that would constitute a contradiction of my whole thesis as outlined. In the first place I am now discussing the pragmatic values of Christian belief after the logical ground for such belief has been laid. In the second place I am not admitting that, apart possibly for certain biological urges which we share with the animal kingdom as a whole, there is any ultimately irrational or ^{very} irrational element involved in the choice of an object of affection. The use of love in that sense as an argument for some basis other than rationalization for religious belief is something that I cannot accept. Of course, if one insists upon confining attention to the immediate experience of certain types of love affair, some such conclusion could be drawn. But it really is not necessary to be so superficial in one's consideration of such an important subject.
3. A very interesting point is suggested here. If we are capable of finding religious truth through some innate capacity for contact with an ultimate Reality beyond the limitations of sense and time, or through logical deduction from the observed orderly and ordinary working of the Universe, then miracle is an unnecessary and even retarding factor to our success. Possibly, however, we have no real knowledge except that derived by logical deduction from the data which has come to the race through sense perception; and for this very reason, and as the ordinary ongoing of the Universe yields no information, God has specially revealed Himself to us upon the sensory level in Jesus Christ and affirmed this revelation by sensory credentials. There are here two possible viewpoints which seem to be so fundamentally irreconcilable that there can hardly be anything but war to the death between them. The first view rests frankly upon a logically unjustifiable assumption as indicated clearly in the following quotation from Professor Pringle Patterson cited by Baillie, op. cit., p. 40. "There is no such thing as a philosophy without assumptions. Every idealistic theory of the world has its ultimate premise a logically unsupported judgment of value - a judgment which affirms an end of intrinsic worth, and accepts thereby a standard of unconditional obligation."

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion

This last chapter must take the form of a personal confession. I am deeply conscious of one objection which may be raised to this whole thesis. The value judgment as distinct from the factual has been consistently condemned, but just as consistently used, nowhere more than in the very grounds of condemnation. The exaltation of truthfulness above everything else may be regarded as a value judgment. Warrant must be found for any declaration that a mercilessly honest intellectual process must be adhered to even at the expense of all other human satisfactions, when all human thought and activity seems to arise from human needs. While the conviction that truthfulness is the value upon which all other values ultimately depend may have come to me partly as a result of practical experience, I believe that its origin and development in my mind is far more due to a belief that it is of the body of revealed truth. To me God and the ultimate reality are revealed in Jesus Christ as love under the rigid and inexorable control of right and truth and justice.

At rock bottom I believe that I have a complete skepticism of my own capacity for passing moral or spiritual judgments. I am the creature of a material environment and my capacity for any clear knowledge is confined to this environment. My convictions along the moral and spiritual line, though powerful, are second hand. They depend absolutely upon sound inference from revealed truth in turn

guaranteed by material evidence. I believe that I can use my moral consciousness and make value judgments because I have cogent grounds for trusting the source from which they have ultimately been derived. Even though such judgments may have become immediate and spontaneous they run back to antecedents of another character, and when need may arise I am in a position to give a reason for the faith which I hold. I incline to the view that the respect in which the moral consciousness is the basis of faith is that a willingness to weigh all evidence fairly and in a manner free from bias according to the intellectual equipment one has, and act upon this weight of evidence, is the prime requisite of belief. I like to believe, and I think that I can fairly infer, from the character of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, some right to believe, that any individual who is really bent upon finding the truth in matters religious, in order to conform himself to it, will succeed in doing so, as all necessary evidence will be given to him.

For myself there is one alternative from which I find no escape. Very early in life I came to believe that God was like Jesus Christ and would therefore not be satisfied with anything but straight thinking upon my part. Therefore my belief in God in and through Christ must be an honestly reasoned one. If I were to retain my belief in Him by any other process I should feel myself condemned by Him and by myself, through my moral consciousness as moulded by my belief in Him. Therefore I must, irrespective of any question as to how I got my belief, retain it by a rational process or forfeit everything. There is for me absolutely

no middle ground.

In denying the slightest value to some lines of argument I may have swung to an extreme myself and shown prejudice. That must be decided by someone else who approaches the question in a more neutral and detached frame of mind. I have been too recently through the struggle to adjust myself to a concurrent collapse of one set of ideas and disgust with another offered to me in their stead. My feelings toward the latter will naturally not err in the way of being overly appreciative.

Appendix A. Theological Objections to a Miraculous Conversion

The postulate that conversion is an immediate creative act of God is objectionable from the standpoint of a scheme of systematic theology. It introduces a redemptive activity of God other than that through the historic Christ, and so relegates Him to a minor place in the redemptive plan. He may be a sacrifice by which the divine wrath is so far appeased that God becomes willing to be reconciled to man. Then, as in Calvin's scheme, certain individuals are chosen arbitrarily for redemption and others are passed by. But in that case, unless our human logic is entirely at fault,¹ the character of God becomes fundamentally irreconcilable with that of Jesus Christ. Or Jesus may be regarded as merely an example which God has set up to show man what is the ideal expected of him. Then those individuals who demonstrate the excellence of their moral and spiritual natures by their response to the example set and their devotion to the Christ are rewarded by a supernatural transformation of themselves, which may involve a further refinement of their nature or may merely come in the form of a release from certain hindrances of the flesh which formerly restrained them from being their true selves. In this case the divine redemption is again purely external and the real development of spiritual life is a human activity.

This position may indeed be very close to the truth. There is a real sense in which the response to the Christian appeal is an indication of the prior moral and spiritual state of the subject, and of the degree of open-

ness of his mind to conviction. To a certain level the individual rises under the influence of his ordinary life contacts and his responses to them. Then he contacts with the divine provision for a further rise. Possibly all is rigidly determined and the highest doctrine of predestination is the one that most closely approximates to ultimate truth. Possibly human freedom is more or less illusory in that it only operates within the prescribed limits of, and under the constant control of, the sovereign will of God. This is just another of those questions which is quite beyond our capacity to solve. Sufficient that, from our stand-point, and within our circumscribed experience and knowledge, the will is free.

The traditional Christian position is that Jesus Christ in his historical manifestation is the only Redeemer and the only Mediator between God and man. He is the only redemptive agent capable of making men fit for divine recognition and companionship. The Holy Spirit and other agencies at work in the world do no more than assist men to lay hold upon the source of power. From the Godward side our generation was completed nineteen centuries ago. All that we have to do is to avail ourselves of it. This implies that the experience itself is nothing more than an exemplification of ordinary psychic law.

Introduction of the notion of a divine creative act looks more than anything else like a denial of Christianity and the substitution of some resurrected mystery cult of the Graeco-Roman world all dressed up neatly in the garb of a Christian ethic. The question must be raised as

to why God does not forthwith perform the miracle upon everyone.

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1. Here I am implying quite consciously that it is not so much the moral consciousness of Christendom that has rebelled against hard Calvinistic theology as the logical mind which has ~~been~~ detected hopeless contradiction. In so far as it is the moral consciousness which has revolted, it is this moral consciousness as developed under the belief that God is like Christ.

Appendix B. The Origin of the Moral Consciousness.

Properly it is a subject for a thesis in itself, but the present discussion is bound to be incomplete without some more detailed consideration of the nature and development of the moral consciousness. One of Professor Baillie's normative ideas seems to be his conviction that the moral consciousness cannot be accounted for in any satisfactory manner without the postulate of some ultimate Reality with which it contacts or from which it derives. This ultimate Reality is other than the world known through sense perception. He says: "The only escape from it (this argument) is to deny the presence of absolute values in our experience, or, as Kant preferred to put it, the unconditional nature of the obligation with which our duty presents itself to our wills - and that, as we saw, is how the most keen-witted enemies of religion, from the Greek Sophists down to Mr. Russell, have usually tried to escape it. The fundamental truth of religion will never be endangered until somebody succeeds in presenting us with a consistent theory of morals which does full justice to the deepest things in our knowledge of good and evil without in any way relating them to a reality beyond ourselves."

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1. A comparison of this quotation with Genesis 2:17 will indicate as clearly as may be the fundamental difference between the philosophical point of view and that distinctive one which I have tried to show as a thread running from beginning to end through the whole Hebrew-Christian development except where this is perverted.
 2. Baillie, op. cit. p. 352.

All human thought would seem to rest ultimately upon certain direct intuitions or self-evident truths. In geometry there are the postulates and axioms with which a start is made. In arithmetic there are such accepted beliefs as that two and two make four. It is useless to discuss the validity of these postulates. Speculatively, in some detached abstract way, perhaps, they may be questioned; but practically no one can deny them or think and act otherwise than as if they were true. Moral ideas may be claimed to go back to beginnings as axiomatic; but the whole matter requires more than a superficial decision.

Sensuous pleasure, sympathy, commendation, these are values to us. Pain, indifference, the contempt of our fellows for us, these are the reverse. Ideas of a more or less mathematical character also force their way in upon us: there is an elemental conception of fair exchange or barter. If one farmer exchanges a load of hay for a ton of coal, either directly or through the use of an exchange token of some sort, the next farmer should not be asked for two loads on the same trade. If one competent and careful worker gets so much for a day's work, another who renders the same or a similar service should get neither more nor less. Even where this principle is not in practise and it is hard to trace any traditional background for it, there is an ingrained tendency to regard it as just and right. In primitive social organization the principle of 'lex talionis' tends to become the basis of retributive justice.

Again it may be observed that man finds a joy in

producing things. The sense of accomplishment has a value for him. This may be a product of the struggle for existence, or it may be inherent in human nature. No one knows which, and there seems to be no way of finding out.

Let us now consider how some of these axiomatic convictions combine into more complex patterns. In a primitive community the individuals find that it is best for them to live and work together for mutual protection and greater accomplishment. The idea of fair exchange becomes regulative. Soon in a fight one individual finds himself in a position where flight will save his life but result in destruction of the community. On the other hand, he can save the community by sacrificing his own life. Something tells him that he should do the latter. This strange urge may arise from a subconscious reasoning process. He should have benefited from the death of another under similar circumstances if the lot had so fallen. Unless such sacrifices are made from time to time the whole community must soon be destroyed. All have taken their part fairly in the work of mutual defence and the evil lot has fallen upon one. He must accept it. Parental or sex love, which is akin to that which motivates the lower animals and which may be innate or instinctive, possibly plays a part; but a combination of the values resident in self-preservation with the inescapable concept of fair exchange seems to offer the most likely explanations of this moral phenomenon.

In a very similar way it is soon evident that an all round truthfulness is to the general advantage. Therefore

the individual, in a special circumstance where he would stand to gain by falsehood, must sacrifice that liberty. Nearly all primitive moral codes are restricted in their scope to interdependents in a social group. In modern life there are moral codes among criminals who are a unit in their enterprise of preying upon the rest of society.

Slowly moral convictions form and are taught to children. Older people, conscious or unconscious of the extent to which their motives are those of the public good or of selfish interest or privilege, teach the young, among the many other things, to obey and protect them. As rulers of one kind or another arise they teach moral principles which are partly selfish and partly altruistic. They themselves are often, no doubt, the farthest from knowing which.

Moral ideas in regard to sex matters afford some interesting considerations. As man has become distinguished from other animals, he somehow has tended rather consistently to frown upon sexual indulgence except under the customary arrangements thought desirable for the rearing of children. This is reasonable enough when considered. Other indulgence leads to undesired consequences, and is therefore inexpedient. Society starts to punish such conduct and inculcate the idea that it is evil. Obviously a third party may be brought into an unhappy situation through no fault of his own; and just as obviously this transgresses the axiomatic postulate of fair exchange or justice.

Recently a great change has taken place in the general attitude toward sex irregularity. Modern science has devised means whereby sexual connection may be indulged in with reasonable immunity from the arrival of an unwanted child and little danger of injury to the body from the method used to secure this immunity. Our moral standards with respect to this matter are breaking down as a result, not only in the sense that they are being more frequently transgressed, but in the sense that they are being frankly called into question. Thousands are asking *why* a natural and healthy form of satisfaction should not have a reasonable amount of indulgence apart altogether from the question of marriage and family joys or responsibilities. The logical connection between the two has been broken, and, for us who are charged with moral leadership, it is folly indeed to appeal to some non-existent high court in the depths of the human personality just because ^{as} our whole background of thought and training has induced within us a horror of such conduct and we think others should feel just as we do about it. We must find some sound argument for the maintenance of our standards or be prepared to relax or revoke them. Every indication is that mankind will increasingly be guided by reason. To try to prevent this is to try to stem the tide.

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As _{the} primitive man posits the existence of spiritual beings in an effort to account for strange phenomena in his environment, he gets a belief in Gods. In time he ascribes to them the moral convictions which he holds himself. The result in a strengthening of the sanctions behind the moral convictions, and possibly also a drag upon their growth and

development. As tribal organization gives place to national and international, belief in the power and scope of the Gods tends to increase and the drift is toward monotheism.

In Christianity the idea is introduced, not only that God is a loving Father, but that he suffers on behalf of and with men in the course of working out His eternal and all wise purpose for them. (The possibility at least must be allowed that these Christian ideas owe their origin to a unique and special kind of revelation. Indeed religious ideas among many peoples may have as their origin some basic element of genuine supernatural manifestation.) A fresh impulse and direction is given to moral convictions not merely through fear of divine wrath but from the sense of obligation to make a fair return for the love showered upon us and the suffering borne upon our behalf. Even if Christ be regarded as a mere man, the very fact that one member of our race should have given himself so unselfishly for the good of all lays its claim upon us through the axiomatic rule of fair exchange. Lesser examples of the same thing may be found in other religions and in the innumerable cases of self-sacrifice manifested by individuals and groups in the variety of life's activities. In fact much moral impulse of this and other kinds may owe its origin in some measure to accident rather be traceable entirely to logical process. By a sort of trial and error method certain types of mental attitude or conduct may have proven socially useful. So they have come to be regarded as right and have been taught as morally binding.

The fundamental pleasure derived from producing

anything is also a factor worthy of consideration. Many are willing to endure suffering and death in the hope of achieving a result in human society which will endure long after their death and cause them to be remembered. The homage paid in song and story to past heroes seems to catch the imaginations of living men and stir them to like endeavor at any cost to themselves. In time such conduct gets to be thought of as right in itself and therefore to be practised even if it goes entirely unnoticed, or unnoticed by anyone save the Gods.

The vast majority of people absorb their ideas and convictions quite uncritically from their social environment, and the growth of the moral consciousness from age to age is far from an inexplicable mystery. In so far however as it cannot be rationalized, an inexplicable mystery is what it is, and it must be so regarded. In so far as it can be traced to certain axiomatic roots, these, apart from the compelling idea of fair exchange or justice, imply nothing beyond the fact that certain things are values for us. Absolute values they may or may not be. It is hard at least for us to think of right and truth and justice as anything other than absolute values but there is no valid leap from them to religious or theological postulates of any sort. Religion has no necessary connection with morality at all.

An objection may be raised that man cannot have derived all of his moral and religious ideas from nothing at all, so they must emanate from some ultimate Reality. The answer is that, although we do not know enough to make any

positive statement upon such a question, centuries of wild speculation on the part of philosophers and theologians is, apart from all other evidence, ample warrant for a strong hypothesis that the human mind can manufacture almost any idea out of nothing at all. If these so called trained thinkers and logicians can stray so far afield, why cavil at the possibility of error on the part of the ignorant primitive savage and the masses of men of our own day whose imaginations are sharpened by a hundred fears and needs?

As already mentioned, the moral consciousness is of great interest to the psychologist and sociologist, and to the pastor at his task; but as the starting point of any system of theology its value is difficult to discern.

Appendix C. The Worship of an Objective Deity.

If there is to be any real worship there must not be any sense in which the human moral judgment is set up against the divine. I may be excused for illustrating this point from personal experience. Some years ago I became, for by no means the first time, severely troubled over the question of eternal punishment. My moral judgment rebelled against it as unfair and unjust. I could not see how the Creator could entirely escape responsibility if his own creatures were not able to meet His requirements. But the Scripture, which I regarded as the inerrant word of God, was clear on the point, as far as I could see, and I felt that I must accept it without question. The issue in my mind was a clear one between using my own judgment or accepting what God had said. After quite a struggle I took the latter course, going so far as to conclude that, as far as I was concerned, if God said black was white then black was white and I was mistaken in judging otherwise.

Of course my decision at bottom depended upon my own reasoned judgment. I believed that I had good grounds for accepting the Scripture as an absolute authority. In fact this view had not come from a childhood prejudice but as the result of mature study of certain books and the allowance of certain arguments. There were emotional and psychological factors involved in the decision, as well as much ignorance on essential points, but I believed my conviction to have been soundly and honestly arrived at. Some years before I had made my first decision on the point

and as the difficulty recurred with peculiar force I settled it upon the basis that the question of Scriptural authority was a closed one not to be reopened. On the main problem I had to conclude that the God who had revealed Himself in Jesus Christ knew far more about both love and justice than I did. What He declared to be right must be right.

Although, prior to my surrender, I had wrestled with this problem for some time and been unable to find any satisfying way out of it, within an hour of my decision, as I was walking down the street, an accidental glance at a sign gave me a clue to a line of thought that was new. Instantly I saw a possible way out of the difficulty. After a little investigation the matter did work itself out for me. It seemed to be a clear case of enlightenment withheld until I had struck my colors and then freely given. I regard the whole incident as one of the most stimulating morally of my life. Incidentally the sense of guidance and direction was so keen that this is one of several instances in my life which brings me very close to Buchmanism. There is however one essential difference. I had^{VE} never been able to get any guidance on request. Mine comes very occasionally and unexpectedly when God sees that I need it and not when I think that I do. In the meantime it seems that I am required to get along with such other means of grace as are afforded to me and not use God in any sense whatever as a page boy to bring information at my bidding.

In the present connection, however, the point of the matter is that, having my background of experience, there

can be no real recognition of an objective Deity until there is some such complete surrender as to include the moral judgment. To make one's own moral judgment the final criterion of truth is to me blasphemy rather than worship. Practically it is to make one's God lesser than oneself. It is to worship oneself through one's God. In regard to this matter I believe the Roman Catholics are upon more solid ground than most Protestants. To make a surrender to some outside authority is not to deny one's personal integrity, or free will or responsibility of choice, but to exercise all of these in the highest degree. There is a vast difference between using an outside authority as a means to escape from difficult moral decisions and live according to an easy moral standard, and using it as a means to vigorous moral control.

Appendix D. Further quotations from Professor Baillie.

These quotations are given in addition to those already referred to in order that there may be no possible misrepresentation of that writer's position. They are all from "The Interpretation of Religion" and the page number follows each.

Probably the belief of all men in spiritual reality is due to simple faith in their hearts and their fine arguments are really after the fact. "We are accordingly safe in concluding that religious faith cannot be substantiated by appeal to any idealistic philosophy, because it is itself the ultimate source of all such philosophies; just as it cannot be discredited by appeal to any naturalistic philosophy, because no philosophy could be naturalistic which had not begun by discrediting it. And so we return to our original dictum that whereas theology has an all-important contribution to make to speculative philosophy, it cannot in the nature of the case turn to speculative philosophy for any help or guidance in the performance of its own task." p. 41.

"No view of religion can possibly be correct which makes it depend on learned and scientific inquiry; for history shows that those members of our race who are accounted as having possessed the surest insight into religious truth could boast of little learning and of no science at all. 'The basis of our faith', says Herrmann, in words which might be taken as the first axiom of any true theology, 'must be grasped in the same independent fashion

by learned and unlearned, by each for himself." p. 105

"But religious judgments being what they are, and making claim to objective truth as they undoubtedly do, it is psychologically an impossible feat, as well as logically a self-contradictory desire, not to make one's own fundamental religious convictions the criterion of religious truth." p. 123.

"The essential concern of religion is not simply with value but with the relation of value to reality; not simply with ideals but with the relation of our ideals to the actual scheme of things; not simply with human life but with the relation of human life to the ultimate background against which it is set. Thus if it is true on the one hand that the nature of reality is the concern of religion only in so far as it has bearing upon the status and stability of our ethical standards, it is no less true on the other hand that not until these standards have been referred to reality are we in possession of anything that is worthy to be called religion. Conscience provides us with our ideals but (when taken barely by itself) it leaves them suspended in the airy unsubstantiality of wish and desire, of unrealised futurity; while faith gives them a mooring in the real order of things." pp. 317 & 8.

"This view of religion as having to do essentially with the relation of value to reality and as centring itself in the trustful assurance that our values are securely grounded in the real nature of things, is one which of recent years has seemed more and more to engage the assent

of thinkers and investigators and indeed to bring to rest in itself inquiries starting from any different schools of thought. We find, for example, Martineau, the Unitarian theist, telling us that 'the very gate of entrance to religion, the very moment of its new birth, is the discovery that your ideal is the everlasting Real, no transient brush of a fancied angel's wing but the abiding presence and persuasion of the Soul of souls.' We find Professor Hoffding, the Danish 'radical empiricist', declaring that 'the religious problem proper only begins where Comte's religion ends, viz., at the question as to how the development of the world is related to that of the human race and to that of the human ideal,' or again (and most instructively) that 'the relation between value and reality is the sphere in which religion finds its home, in distinction from other experiences which are concerned only with values or only with reality.' We find F.H. Bradley, The Hegelian idealist, informing us that 'on examining what we find in the religious consciousness, we discover that it is the ideal self considered as realised and real. The ideal self, which is morality is to be, is here the real ideal which truly is.' And lastly we find Dean Inge, the Platonist, defining faith as a 'confidence in the reality of things hoped for and the hopefulness of things real,' and declaring that 'the ultimate identity of existence and value is the venture of faith to which mysticism and speculative idealism' - and surely then (as we ourselves would prefer to have it) something deeper and more elemental than either, namely, religion - 'are committed'".

"At so crucial a point in his reflections the solitary thinker is glad to have a cloud of witnesses very close about him." pp. 319 & 20.

"But if room is to be made for religion, goodness must be more than merely possible in the world - it must be intrinsic to it, of one piece with it, at home within it. If the spirit of worship is to have any place at all, then conscience must be no mere sojourner and resident alien in the universe, existing only on sufferance, but must rather be its own native burgess, exercising all the functions and enjoying all the privileges of citizenship." p. 325.

"Indeed it is with this attempt to make fully explicit faith's own implicit logic that theological science reaches the core of its problem. Its duty is to exhibit, with the sharpest possible detail and under the greatest possible degree of magnification, the nature of the passage which religion makes from value to reality, from a moral obligation to a moral cosmos." p. 351.

"We can do without the reward, we can do without the glory, perhaps we can do without the spur and without the crutch, but we cannot do without the assurance that the struggle on which we are engaged is a real fight and a fight that counts." p. 357.

"It is plain enough, then, that it was not as the result of an argument that faith first arose in the world and that it is not as the result of an argument that it

normally arises in men's minds to this day." p. 360.

"The psychological order of events is not that we first, by purely intellectual paths of discovery, reach the certainty of God's existence and worthiness to be trusted, and then put our trust in Him and live our lives accordingly. Rather is it that out of a certain kind of living, and a certain attentiveness to the deeper significance of such living, there grows up in our hearts a loyal and steadfast trust in that Reality within which our lives are set, and then we see that within such trust is latently and germinally contained an acceptance of the propositions (let us say) that God exists and that He is good." p. 377.

"Our human experience of value, in short, cannot be understood in the light of anything that lies behind us, secured in the storehouse of the past; but only by a forward reference to something that lies ahead of us and beckons to us from above. We have here to do, fundamentally not with an edifice built up from earthy foundations by human skill and creativity, but much rather with the progressive disclosure to our obedient minds of a higher order of reality. In the experience of moral obligation there is contained and given the knowledge, not only of a Beyond, but of a Beyond that is in some sort actively striving to make itself known to us and to claim us for its own. This conclusion is not a mere guess, nor a leap in the dark, nor a poetic hyperbole, but an honest drawing-out of what we find to be implied in the felt

imperativeness of duty." p. 462.

Appendix E. Further Quotations From Professor Wieman.

The following matter is taken from Wieman's section of "Contemporary American Theology" as edited by Vergilius Ferm, pp. 346ff.

"What I am chiefly trying to do in the field of religion is to promote a theocentric religion as over against the prevalent anthropocentric. The first requirement of a theocentric religion is that we make the actuality of God himself, and not our ideas about God, the object of our love and devotion. The second requirement is another side of the same thing. It is that we do not allow our wishes and needs to shape our idea of God, but shall shape it solely in the light of objective evidence. If we cherish our particular idea of God, rather than the mysterious and unexplored actuality of God, we are loving and worshipping ourselves, not God. If we allow our idea of God to be shaped by our desires and needs, we are cuddling ourselves, not serving God."

"There is only one method known to man by which he can subordinate his own wishes and needs to objective reality and shape his ideas in the light of authentic evidence rather than hug his own subjectivity. That method is sometimes called scientific method. But it is not limited merely to the techniques of physics and chemistry. If those techniques are the only ones to which the term can be applied, then we do not here mean scientific method."

We mean that method which is made up of a combination of observation and reason. By checking the constructs of reason by observation and directing our observation by the constructs of reason, we gradually acquire an idea of objective reality, and circumvent the thronging urgency of our desires which so persistently hide from us the real nature of objective existence. Only as I hold my ideas in loving and devoted tentativeness, subject to criticism and discarding as corrective evidence is brought to light, can I make God, and not my pet ideas about God, the object of all my living. Only thus is a theocentric religion possible."

"My sole concern is to find some way of escaping from the miasma of subjectivism and making contact with sacred reality."

"The only reason I insist on scientific method in religion, is because I want to deal with the objective, existential God, and not merely ideas."

"Preaching has rendered a great service to religion. But it has imposed one great curse. To be preachable, religion must be dramatic. Therefore professional religionists have insisted that God, and all reality which concerns religion, shall have dramatic form. But the truth is not necessarily dramatic. At any rate, we must first of all have the truth, and then see if it can or cannot be put in dramatic form. But the way institutional religion has functioned, has just reversed this order. We have first insisted on dramatic form, and then tried

to see if we could make the results correspond to the truth."

"The interpretation of religion offered by Karl Barth has made a very wide appeal because it is so preachable. It is dramatic, traditional and, therefore, appeals to the deep rooted sentiments of church people. Also it claims to deal with objective reality, excluding all merely human desires and ideas with greater rigor and thoroughness than any other. But is this last claim true? It is not. Unquestionably Barth and his followers are sincere. Certainly they have made a desperate effort to escape from the entangling mesh of projected human desires. But they have failed completely in their efforts because they have rejected the only method by which this can be done or even approximated. They have rejected the method of observation combined with reason. Yet this is the only method by which we can even so much as approach objective reality. It is the only way in which we can pierce the interposing screen of our own fanciful constructions."

"The idea of God which Barth and his followers finally achieve is simply what tradition hands down to them, but which they claim is the direct revelation of God. How do they know what is revelation and what is not? How do they know that what they accept as revelation is revelation? They do not know and cannot know except by way of observation and reason. What they accept as revelation is mere prejudice unless its truth is sustained by observation and reason. The only possible way to achieve a theocentric religion is to relinquish all claim to knowledge of God save that which can be obtained by way of observation and reason."

The following quotations are from "The Issues of Life."

"God is that one order which sustains and mediates the possibilities of greatest value. This order which is God is partly an order of existence and partly of possibility. Here, then, is the definition of 'ideal' and 'God'. The ideal is some possible existence of greatest value which the human race may achieve either progressively or ultimately. 'God', on the other hand, means that order of existence and possibility in dependence upon which and in conformity to which and in promoting which this ideal is to be achieved. Any structure of possible existence can be a possibility only because there is even now in the present process of existence an order which makes it a possibility. God is that order. But God is not limited to existence. He also includes possibilities. He is not the all-inclusive cosmic order or 'the' order of nature, but he is that one particular order of nature, both existent and possible, which includes and mediates the greatest value that is to be achieved and without which that greatest value would not be a possibility at all and hence could not be a practicable ideal. It could only be a wishful fancy, a purely sentimental ideal." pp. 163 and 164.

"It (the type of religion which leaves God out in fact though not in name) seeks and serves and is devoted not to the order which is God, but only to its own ideas and desires, which it may call intuitions or revelations or inner experience or whatever title seems most glamorous." p. 167.

"It (a worthy religion) will not accept as true any belief lacking evidence, no matter how essential it may seem for human welfare, for it knows that nothing is more harmful to human welfare than error, especially error concerning what is truly the highest possibility of value as distinguished from what is impossible." p. 168.

"Ancient customs, ways of thinking and acting, constituting the unconscious habits of each generation, are transmitted to each new-born infant, and thus he is caught in the mesh of the old life before he is old enough to know anything about it." pp. 171 & 2.

"This order and process of interaction is more or less approximated in actual fact. This approximation, together with whatever degree of complete actualization in the future history of existence it may make possible, is God. Progressive integration may or may not be a satisfactory description of it." p. 178.

"The empirical method, when used in religious circles, has frequently meant the method described and defended by Canon Streeter in his 'Reality' as the way to achieve knowledge of the realm of value and especially of matters that concern religion. But this is something totally different from the fourfold method we have described. It is based on the assumption that the quality of my experience reveals the nature of the thing I am experiencing. This is not correct. The fact that I experience certain quality is no evidence at all that the quality I experience pertains to what I think it pertains to.

Whether the quality I experience is the quality of 'Reality' must be ascertained by the proper method, but the mere fact that I have the experience proves nothing at all. If I experience ecstasy when I hold a gold brick in my hand, the quality of my experience is no evidence at all that the brick is genuine gold. If I have been taught from earliest infancy to react to the figure of Jesus with awe and reverence and even ecstasy, the quality of my experience is no evidence that Jesus reveals the uttermost nature of 'Reality'. p. 189.

"Experience does not yield knowledge at all unless it is subjected to the right method." p. 190.

"There is no 'religious experience' which can give knowledge to the man that has such experience unless he subjects it to this same (the scientific) method." p. 193.

"Of course we cannot construct a God to serve the needs of the common man. God is what He is." p. 226.

"To be blind to the savage cruelty of the world is just as disastrous as to be unresponsive to its hidden values. The practice of religious mysticism has often been used to induce this mood of Pollyanna. That is also a perversion of religion." p. 252.

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