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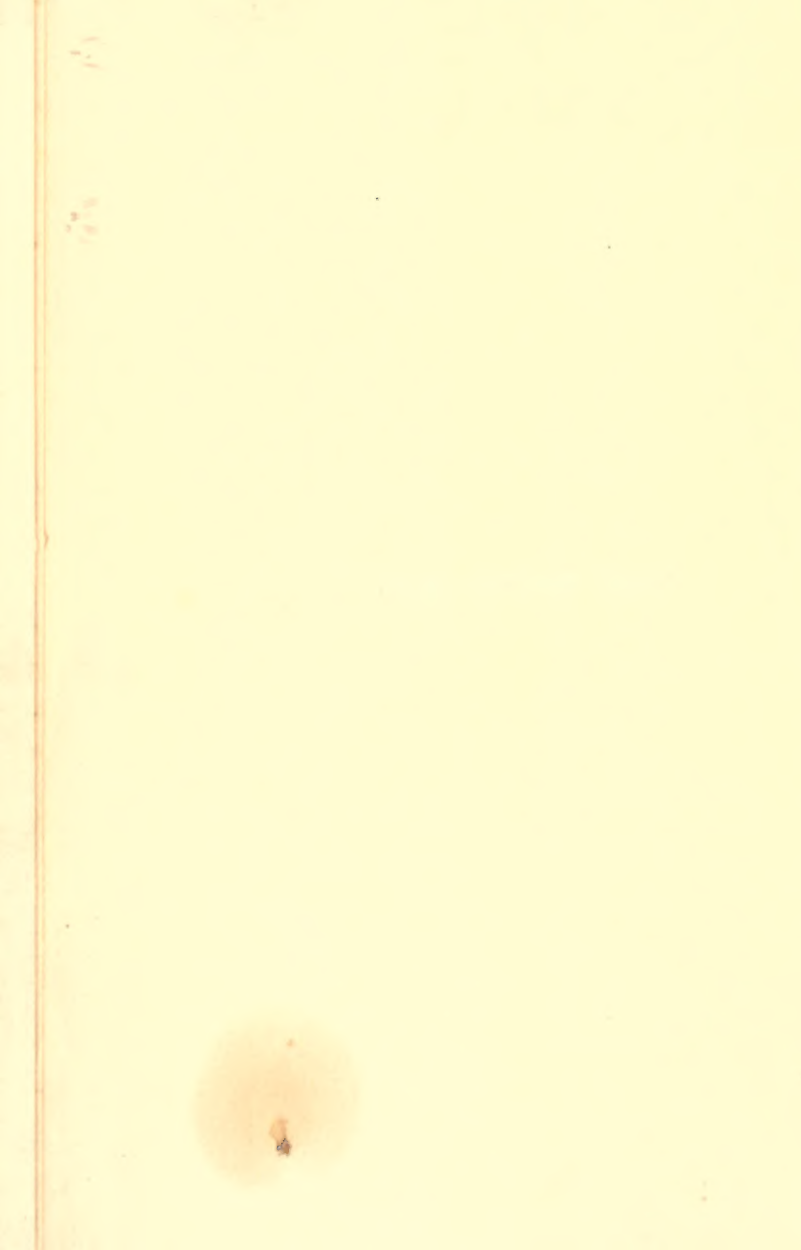
DAY UNTO DAY

By LOUIS HOWLAND

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DAY UNTO DAY



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By LOUIS HOWLAND

"Day unto day uttereth speech"—PSALMS

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TO THE THREE OTHER MEMBERS OF THAT
CASUAL CLUB WHICH HAS SO OFTEN AND SO HAPPILY
DINED AND DISCOURSED OF HIGH THINGS
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED

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These papers were printed from week to week in the Indianapolis *News* under the title *Case and Comment*. For permission to use them in the present form the author is under obligation to the *News*, an obligation which he very cheerfully acknowledges. If long prefaces were permitted much might fittingly be said by way of deprecation or apology. But it is enough to express the hope that old friends will be glad to renew their acquaintance with the author, an acquaintance which he values highly, and that through the mediatorship of this book other friendships may be formed.

Indianapolis, March, 1911.

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THE ADVENT MESSAGE

THE thought of the Advent season, a thought which is fundamental to Christianity, is one of preparation. The closer one gets to the simple realities of religion the more is one impressed by the necessity of fitting oneself for what is to come. There are thus a real Christian prudence and foresight which, so far from being worldly in character, are of the essence of the faith. Life itself is a preparation for something to come, precisely as a man's school days are a preparation designed to fit him for the performance of the duties that devolve on him when he reaches the years of maturity. Properly considered, there is no conflict here between the worldly and the religious life. The business man who simply lives from day to day, who never works and plans for the future, and who fails to train

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and develop himself so that he may be fit to deal with all emergencies as they arise, can not expect to succeed. It is his hope to be better qualified each day for the work that he is called on to do. The same thing is true in religion. The only difference is in the things for which the preparation is made. In both cases there must be faith in things which in a sense do not exist, and hope of advantage to be realized in the future. No matter to what task a man gives himself, there must be this looking forward, this constant and persistent effort to improve oneself along the lines of one's activity. Christ commended this prudence when He said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." And in very truth if men would show in their religious life the same energy, devotion, zeal and wise foresight that they show in their worldly affairs, the kingdom of God would soon be supreme throughout the earth. If there were the same shrewd adaptation of means to end in the church as in the world, the undisputed reign of righteousness would soon be a reality, instead of, as now, a beautiful dream. What is the difference? Why is it that men are so

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relentless in pursuit of worldly advantage and so careless in their religious life?

The answer to the question makes clear the need for such a season as Advent. It is that material things seem real to us, while spiritual things—which are the only real ones—seem very shadowy and far away. If we prized the latter as we do the former, we should strive at least as hard to realize them. So we have this effort to give us a true sense of relative values, and to impress on us the fact that character is the one thing worth struggling for, the one thing on which all else depends. After all, what are the realities of life? They all have to do with conduct, all bear directly on the most practical life that the most practical man can live. There is no Christian virtue that will not help a man to win even worldly success, if the success is worthy at all. Isaiah throws a flood of light on this subject. He tells us that the realities, even in religion, are not sacrifices or burnt offerings, not vain oblations or incense, not new moons or Sabbaths or feasts. All these may be worse than nothing, may be altogether vanity. Here is the sum of the whole matter:

“Wash ye, make you clean; put away the

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evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

That is life, and the only true life—and it is only with life that religion has to do. The problem now, as always, is to make life what it ought to be. And there is no church or institution that has any value except as it contributes to that end. This is the reality which religion, if it is true, must always hold up before the world. When it fails to do that it ceases to be true, ceases to be real. And a religion that is unreal is worse than no religion at all. Advent, therefore, is specially designed to impress on men the danger of dealing in an unreal way with so real and vital a thing as religion.

But a religion may be real, and yet be unreal to many of those who profess it. We grow familiar with the great truths which we have been taught to believe, so familiar indeed, that they make no appeal to us. Religion tends to become conventional and mechanical, to develop into a mere system. Indeed, this seems to be an almost natural tendency. The sense of reverence is easily dulled. We continue to use

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a great language long after it has ceased to have any meaning to us. Many Christian phrases have suffered this fate. Whatever else Christ may have had in mind, He certainly did try to bring home to His people the spiritual significance of their religion. We read in the gospel :

“Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer ; but ye have made it a den of thieves.”

Here is a recurrence to the thought of the older and nobler days of the nation's history, a dramatic preaching of the old gospel of reverence for holy and sacred places as peculiarly the habitation of Jehovah. It is some such duty as this that religious reformers have always tried to perform—to make deeply and vitally true the truths which men have ceased to hold as parts of their spiritual life. So the great summons is to the church and its members, to all those who profess to believe at all in the life of the spirit. Unless that life is in

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the soul of a man it can do him nothing but harm to pretend to have any faith in it. Honesty and sincerity in religion there must be if religion is to be in any sense spiritual.

But religion, to be of value, must not only be real in itself, but it must be vitally related to life. We are much given to thinking of the spiritual life as something separate and distinct from the life that we live in the world—as belonging to another sphere and governed by different laws. There could hardly be a greater mistake, or one more disastrous in its consequences. For the main function of religion is to influence the daily conduct of men, to make them better and nobler in all that they think and do. We are, as Isaiah said, to subject ourselves to spiritual influences in order that we may as individuals cease to do evil and learn to do well. The fruits of the Spirit, of which the apostle writes, are virtues that are to be manifested in business and society—in all the relations that we have with our fellow-men. To take any other view is to make religion a mere matter of church-going and of Sunday observance, and to eliminate from life the religious element. It is, therefore, neces-

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sary that men should be constantly reminded of the closeness of the relationship between religion and life. "Owe no man anything," writes St. Paul, "but to love one another." A very practical duty, surely. The apostle then proceeds to show that the whole moral law is involved in this loving of one's brethren. After summarizing the commandments, he says: "If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Love," we are told, "worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." It all goes back to the spiritual motive, that motive which is the only sure prompter to righteous action. This, of course, is a very old doctrine. There is nothing new or sensational about it. We need no modern prophet, with mutterings about "mortal mind" and "malicious animal magnetism," to reveal it to us. It is simply the gospel of Jesus Christ as preached by Him and the devoted men who interpreted His message.

But that is just the trouble. We have heard the old message so often, it is so much a part of our intellectual inheritance, that it has lost

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its freshness. St. John understood this when he said that the commandment which he delivered, namely, that men love one another, was not a new commandment, but one that they had had from the beginning. His aim was to put life into it, to clothe it once more with the freshness that it had lost. So it is that in this season of preparation and expectation we are bidden to think, not of new things, but of very old things, are to try to draw from them that power and inspiration of which they are indeed the source. And why? Simply that we may live the right sort of lives. The idea is brought out very clearly in the Epistle to the Romans:

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

So it is that men are called, not to two lives, but to one life—the life of the spirit, which, if it is not lived in this world, will not be lived anywhere. We often forget this, often seem

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to think that men can not, as we say, be "spiritual" while they tabernacle in the flesh. Out of this schism in thought grows very naturally a schism in life. And as a result we lose all sense of the reality of the connection between religion and life, between faith and conduct. Religious teachers have done much to encourage this error, as when they talk as though the spiritual life were a thing of the future, to be lived only in that blissful state which we call heaven. But man is a spirit now—the spiritual life is to be lived now. The question is simply one of being faithful to the Christian ideals to which we profess our devotion, and which are to lead us on to the conquest of all that is wicked in our own natures. Those who have forgotten this will be surprised to note how the thought is emphasized by all the New Testament writers.

So we are reminded that spirituality is really a very practical thing, and not at all that mystical, world-disregarding thing which it is sometimes supposed to be. We are to "cast off the works of darkness," and "put on the armor of light" at once, and not after death. We are to "walk honestly as in the day" all the while,

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and not merely on Sunday. Even these commandments we have "had from the beginning." But so weak is human nature that we need constantly to be reminded of them. We need not only to be reminded of them, but also to realize them as very practical admonitions. And so men are bidden, not only to prepare themselves for a reverent celebration of the great festival of the Incarnation, but to get themselves into such a teachable frame of mind that they may profit by the lessons which it inculcates. We know that the perfect life was the product of the spiritual influences to which it was always kept in subjection, and that it was lived among difficulties and distractions such as we have never known, and never can know. We see the beauty of it, and marvel at its power. We ought to try to see that it was what it was because it was always true to the highest and noblest ideals, that it was one life of a piece throughout, and that its perfection was manifested in this world and in the performance of the humblest duties. It is all very real—so real that men have never been able to get away from it. There is a discipline to be had from the struggle against the world influence which

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is invaluable. It is worth much to realize that "the night is far spent, the day is at hand," the day of victory over all the trials, tribulations and temptations to which human nature is subject. The Advent message comes to all. It will be well to heed it, as thoughtful men should.

A CHRISTMAS TALK

ON Christmas day it is difficult for a man who has any of the spirit of the gracious season in him to think of anything else than Christmas. And if he thinks to any purpose, he must see that the festival is based on something more than a mere beautiful sentiment. The world has kept it in reverent remembrance for centuries, not because men have always been kind-hearted, gentle, loving and generous, but rather because they were deeply convinced that something of transcendent importance happened in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. So far is Christmas from being the product of the good qualities of human nature, that the fact is that those qualities are themselves very largely the result of the great event which is commemorated on Christmas day. Men did not create the feast because they had its spirit in them—it was the feast that created the spirit in which it is kept. If that is so, it is well for

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us all to try to realize as far as we can the significance of the coming into the world of the Founder of our religion. For the day is fundamentally a religious day—a holy day. To strip it of that significance is to rob it of all its power and beauty—to put it, indeed, in process of extinction. As a day of mere secular rejoicing it can not survive, for such rejoicing is certain, sooner or later, to become selfish, and when selfishness reigns, Christmas will be gone. Our Fourth of July has largely ceased to mean anything, for the reason that we have lost the sense of what it stands for. It has suffered as a great and dignified national festival by our very method of celebrating it. This is largely true also of Thanksgiving day and Memorial day. The same fate will befall Christmas unless we are careful to keep in mind all that the great festival means. It can not outlive the overthrow of the sacred principle on which it rests. A secular Christmas would be no Christmas at all.

If it be true, as is held by some, that it is difficult to-day to get this thought into the minds of men, the fact only proves that we have already lost the true Christmas

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idea. That this is so to some extent can hardly be doubted. Many of us have been captivated by the material aspect of the festival, and it means little to us except a season of eating and drinking. Since the days of Dickens the social element—which is, however, vastly important—has been exaggerated. Or rather this is true of one side of the social element. For the day is social—social because religious—in the deep as well as in the superficial sense. The Christmas spirit is a social spirit. We can not, for instance, be kind, unless we are kind to some one else, kindness being a matter of relationships. We are, therefore, not wrong in emphasizing the social element. But we are wrong in making so much of the purely secular side of the festival. As has been said, if men do not see this it is because they are blind to the deeper truth, the truth on which everything else rests. Christmas means Christ, and the question for us all to ask is, what does Christ mean? For on the answer to that age-old question depends, as is believed, the fate of the feast. To this conclusion logic seems inevitably to lead. We are not honoring a sentiment, not merely giving play to our emotions,

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but celebrating a birthday, the birthday of a Being who has meant more to the world than any other being who was ever born into it. That is why the day is Christmas, and that is why it is a great church feast—one of the greatest of her feasts. If the birth had never taken place there would have been no Christmas. It is a holy day because it is the birthday of a King, of One who gave a new impetus and a new direction to human life. No man can keep the feast properly unless his soul is filled with reverence and bowed with humility. Joy, of course, there must be—but a solemn and a Christian joy.

Of course, it is true that the narrowly orthodox often make very large claims—claims that can not fairly be allowed. For many, if not most, of what are known as the great Christian virtues, existed in the world long before Christianity was born. Nothing is gained by ignoring that very obvious truth. God was always in man, and so of the godlike qualities. The light of which St. John writes always lightened men—never was wholly obscured. Even the golden rule is, we are told, found in earlier religions. Sacrifice has been the law ever since

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the conscious life of man began on earth. Men have under all religions sacrificed themselves for their families, their country and their God—or their gods. The capacity for sacrifice is, therefore, native to all men. Gentleness, kindness and love are much more than two thousand years old. They are human traits—human precisely because they are divine. All this must be frankly conceded. What would have happened had Christ not been born, we can not know. It is certain that what was then known as civilization was on the eve of a great breakdown. The old religions—except the Jewish—had failed, and were passing away. Reference is now made only to the Western world. Something, perhaps much, might have been saved. The Jewish religion at least would not have perished, and there is in that much that might have helped humanity to rise. But what would have taken the place of the religions of Greece and Rome? Even with them gone it is possible that humanity, which in one way or another would have been guided, controlled and inspired by God, would have pulled itself together and gone forward on its conquering march. As to that we can not say. All that

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we can say is that Christianity came at a time when it was greatly needed, and that it met the need with an almost ideal completeness. Large concessions are made here, at least by implication. Yet it amounts simply to saying that God would and could have saved the race in some way. Of that we must be sure, if we believe in God at all.

What, then, is left? It has been said that Christmas means Christ. It remains to try to see what Christ meant to the world into which He was born, and what He means to us to-day. This is no place for the exploitation of theological differences, but surely all Christians will agree that the birth of Christ meant and means a closer contact between God and man—meant and means “God with us,” as we have been taught to believe. We learn that sacrifice is not simply a duty imposed by God on men, but that it is, if we may put it that way, a duty of God Himself. For there is the thought of sacrifice, not only in the cross, but in the birth and the whole life of Christ. We are taught to look on God, not as a remote king, not as an arbitrary sovereign, but as a fellow-worker and fellow-sufferer with us.

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This is the deeper meaning of the Incarnation and the Atonement—a suffering God. We learn that suffering is not necessarily the consequence of sin—that it may, indeed, be the very badge of innocence. Here we have a rebuke administered by God Himself to those mistaken souls who would eliminate pain, and sorrow, and sacrifice as always and necessarily evil, as indeed having no substantial existence. Christmas thus means joy, but—and this is the mystery of it—it means pain, too. Our very gifts, if they are worth anything, testify to that great truth, for they ought to involve sacrifice in behalf of those who need our help and sympathy. “Who did sin,” asked His disciples once, “this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” Here is the answer: “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” In other words, man’s need is God’s opportunity—and as God works through men, it is man’s opportunity, too. Here, then, is one basis for the Christmas idea. In all our giving we should regard ourselves as the ministers of the divine power, and should use that power for

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the benefit of those who most need to be helped and cheered by it.

So there was, and is, a new birth of that divine power into the world. We ought to be sure that we understand something of the method of its operation. This involves a consideration of Christian ideals, to which we are, for the most part, so faithless. It has been said that many of the so-called Christian virtues existed long before Christianity. But there are others which, if not new, were nevertheless revived, put into operation, and clothed with a new significance. The world into which Christ was born was an old world. For centuries men had been fighting one another for the right to live, and, as a result, strength had been raised almost to the supreme place among the virtues. This whole method of getting ahead, as we say, was repudiated by Christ. He glorified weakness and defeat, blessed the mourners and the persecuted, and called men to the conquest, not of others, but of themselves. Men were taught to be indifferent to the prizes for which they had for ages been struggling so fiercely—a wonderful message to the Roman civilization of His day. There was involved in it an utter

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reversal of the old standards. A new spirit was born into the world. The idea of preaching meekness and humility to the proud Romans or the haughty Greek philosophers of the first century seems, even now, from the merely human point of view, preposterous. We are told that it is the duty of Christian teachers to adapt their message to the people who are to hear it—by which we mean that it should be softened down. That was not the way of Christ. On the contrary, He sharply challenged the world's ideals at every point. Gentleness, kindness, brotherly love, poverty, humility, meekness, weakness, the worship of sorrow, love of children, helpfulness—these are something of what Christ means, of what Christmas should mean, to Christian people. The man to whom it does not mean this fails to get out of the season the joy that is in it. To think of it apart from its religious significance is to miss the whole idea.

These new standards, so revolutionary are they, involve the conception of a new life, which we are bidden to believe is the life of God. When, for instance, Christ said, "I am the resurrection and the life," He meant the

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divine life, the life which He taught us both by precept and example it was our duty to live. So we have the birth, not of a new set of virtues, but of a new life. And with it came, and comes, the power to live it. So the final note is one of victory, victory over ourselves, over all that is selfish and base and dwarfing. The idea may thus be expanded into the thought of the birth of a new race, with new ideas and ambitions and hopes and powers, a race that shall one day measure up to those Christian ideals which now seem so faint and far off, a race with the capacity to live the very life of God, to think God's thoughts after Him. This is the true victory of that faith which is to overcome the world, overcome it, not by fighting it, but by loving it; not by the assertion of self, but by the surrender of self. Such is the goal, distant though it may be, toward which the Christmas birth points. We talk much about reform, but what do our petty reforms amount to when compared with this divine process of regeneration that is going on all the while in the hearts of men? But to conclude: If we wish to have a really merry Christmas we must see if we can not get some of the di-

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vine spirit, of which it is the manifestation, in our souls. We must try to be kinder and gentler and less selfish, try to cultivate the divinely childish attitude toward life, try to see the spiritual significance of the great truths about which we talk so much, and which apparently influence us so little. Christmas without the spirit of Christmas is not worth saving. And the spirit of Christmas is the spirit of Him whose birth the day commemorates. A merry Christmas can be experienced only by humble, devout and thankful hearts.

PLEASURE FROM CONTRAST

IT would not be difficult to construct a very ingenious argument to prove that there could be no joy in the world if there were not sorrow, no virtue if there were not sin. There have been those who held that there could be nothing in the universe to perceive were there not some one to perceive it, and on the other hand, that there could be no perceiver if there were nothing to be perceived. But there is no ambition on the part of the present writer to aspire to such heights—or plunge into such depths. We may admit or not as we choose that evil is simply the obverse of good, but we can not deny that much of our pleasure comes from contrast. By this it is not meant that we are happier in our warm and comfortable houses because we are conscious that some poor beggar is shivering outside. That is not the thought. What is meant is that present joy is heightened when we contrast it

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with our own past sorrow. Men are happiest when they are conscious of having escaped from some great evil or affliction. We may enjoy our warm houses—to recur to the illustration—better by thinking of the days when we ourselves suffered with cold, enjoy the well-fed state more keenly when it follows a condition of hunger. In other words, the background of unpleasant experiences makes our delight in pleasant ones all the more acute. Life is really very largely a matter of backgrounds—that is, it is a play or picture, and what would a play or picture be without background and setting? Beauty shines when contrasted with plain and severe attire, and not when smothered in gaudy raiment—a law which may be commended to the ladies, but of which many of them seem to be disregarding. Men show themselves the truer artists when they prefer a combination of black and white. But this is dangerous ground, and it were well to pass over it quickly. The point need not be pressed, especially as it has no vital relation to the theme which it is proposed to elaborate. It may be added, however, that the good taste of the lilies of the field has not yet been successfully impeached.

PLEASURE FROM CONTRAST

Many of us must have wondered how it was that the early English poets could write so charmingly and enthusiastically of spring—could write, too, with such manifest sincerity. We have our spring poets to-day, of course, and many of them give us beautiful verse. But often their worship of the goddess of spring is a mere pose, and in the work of even the best of them we seem to see a sort of attitudinizing. This is never the case with the old-timers—with such a poet as Chaucer, for instance. They revel in the new birth of the year. Each recurrence of the old phenomena seems to be to them a new creation, and they look on budding green and bursting bud almost as Adam looked on the world when his eyes first opened on it. Those who are familiar with the life of the English in those distant days ought to know the reason for this. But it may be that all have not drawn the very obvious inference from the well-known facts. To such the words of Mr. Quiller-Couch will be full of interest. They may be found in an article written by him entitled, *The Secret of Oxford*, and printed in one of the publications issued in connection

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with the late pageant held in that ancient seat of learning:

“Sunny Bologna glazed the windows of its university lecture rooms with paper; but the lack of light in an Oxford lecture room, or, for that matter, in every English house, from September to May, must have been terrible; and it is only by bearing this and other winter discomforts in mind that we can understand in Chaucer and every early poet the ever-present sense of springtime as an exchange of hell for heaven.”

Spring was to these men a new life in a sense that it can not be to us in these days of electric lights and modern methods of heating. For it meant for them an escape from a life that was a sort of death. Winter was a time of darkness and coldness, not only out of doors but in the house. Spring brought deliverance to men and women as well as to nature, and hence the rapture that must have been enjoyed by all, as it was sung by many. It was not simply the beauty, but the comfort, and brightness, and joy and life of the season that thrilled their souls. The dreadfulness of winter emphasized the delights of spring—by contrast.

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Not only were the houses dark and cold, but it was almost impossible to escape from them in bad weather. The roads were wretched almost past our imagining, as every one knows who has read his Macaulay. It took days to make a journey which can now be made in hours, even with the horse as motive power. We have the record of one journey—and that by royalty—of six miles which it required nine hours to accomplish. Thus again we see what a paralyzing effect winter had on the activities of the people, how it stopped their work, interfered with their pleasures and destroyed their comfort. Our poets, no matter how poor they may be, can know no such contrast, and so they can not sing of spring with the lustiness that marked the work of their great predecessors. One of the elements of exuberant joy is lacking. To the modern songster, who may chance to be a member of a comfortable or luxurious club, spring can not come as the reviver—as a resurrection, not only of nature, but of his own soul and body. His experience lacks the old and bitter edge. He is pleased, and happy, and may even be impressed with a sense of awakening when spring comes to the

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parks of his city, but the old rapture he can hardly know. That was the result of the antecedent cold and darkness and gloom, of the shut-in life. Our winters have joys of which our ancestors knew nothing; so true is this that some people actually prefer winter. They would not have preferred such a winter as that which provoked Chaucer and the others to an almost spontaneous outburst of song—would have looked on it as something to be escaped from. So close, thus, is the relation between literature and life, and so direct is the influence of material civilization even on the work of our spiritual masters, the poets. With the lessening contrast has come diminished intensity in the song. Spring is still lovely, no doubt, but it is not the escape, not the deliverance that it used to be.

The application of the principle to conditions that prevail in the moral and religious world is so obvious that it hardly seems necessary to make it. One can not read the touching story of the prodigal son without being deeply impressed by the fact that joy is, to no small extent, a reaction from past sorrow. Perhaps this is not the highest sort of joy, for there is

PLEASURE FROM CONTRAST

much to be said for the elder brother who never transgressed his father's commandment, but it is certainly the keenest sort. Here again there is a sense of escape or deliverance. The shipwrecked sailor feels it in the moment of his rescue, and the humble and penitent sinner feels it as no other man can. The recollection of past hardships heightens, as the Latin poet has pointed out, present enjoyment. We are happy, not simply because our present condition is all that we could ask, but also because it is no longer wretched—as it used to be. We are almost thankful for what we have escaped from, so greatly does the rescue contribute to our pleasure. The consciousness of a man that he has realized in his life any of that virtue which seemed to him so lovely, and at the same time so far off, while he was yet in his sins, must fill him with something of that ecstatic delight experienced by the poets after their winter's imprisonment had ended in the emancipation that spring brought with it. There is a salvation in both cases, and there can be no salvation unless there is something to be saved from. We can imagine perhaps something of the feeling of the sore beset garrison of Luck-

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now when the pipes of the Highlanders, on the way to its relief, were heard in the distance. It is precisely so with the man who has climbed out of the degradation of life into some degree of purity and nobility of character. He, too, is saved from an enemy, and one of the most deadly character. This is the joy of the prodigal, the joy of every one that repents. Probably it is the highest that human nature can experience.

But analogies are ever deceitful, so it will not do to push them too far. A man may endure any amount of hardship and discomfort if these are felt by him to be necessary to the writing of great poetry. Nor is there anything wrong in this hardship and discomfort when they are forced on him. But in the domain of religion and morals a different rule prevails. St. Paul makes this quite clear. "But," says he to the Romans, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound : that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." That is, it is the function of grace to overcome sin, to save men from sin, and to give them that intense joy of which mention

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has been made. But, lest he should be misunderstood, the apostle at once goes on to say: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" It is better to live clean and honest lives every day than to know the joy which the desperately wicked soul feels when it has been, as we say, converted. We all need salvation in one way or another. But the point is that if we did not need it, it would be wrong to put ourselves in a condition from which we should need to be saved in order that we might feel the joy that flows from the consciousness of being saved. Chaucer might live from September to May each year in a cold and dark house without inflicting any wrong on his spiritual nature. But a man can not live in sin without paying the penalty. He richly earns the joy that comes to him. He has paid for it in years of shame and bitterness, and even when he is back once more in the Father's house he must at times be haunted by recollections from which he would be glad to escape, especially the recollections of horrible wrong done to others. That man, after all, is happi-

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est who is truest to duty, most faithful to high ideals, most careful of his honor, and of that of the divine family to which he belongs.

But there is a reaction in the spiritual world that is similar to that known by the great poets of old, and is, at the same time, innocuous. It is the reaction from sorrow to gladness. There are many who will deny that there is any relation between sorrow and pain on the one hand, and joy on the other. Yet the connection is of the closest character. Indeed there is a sort of anguish in the highest pleasure—men may almost suffer pain because of it. “Ye shall be sorrowful,” it was said to the disciples, “but your sorrow shall be turned into joy,” and it was to be a joy that no man could take from them. Pleasure is, therefore, not the mere antithesis of pain, for it may grow out of it, precisely as the lilting, jubilant poetry in honor of spring grew out of the winter’s night and cold. Scores and hundreds of illustrations might be given, but they are hardly necessary. The truly thoughtful man knows in his soul that genuine joy has its roots in the deepest experiences of life, that it is not a superficial thing, not mere mirth and laughter. There is a certain sober-

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ness, solemnity and reverence in it which differentiates it sharply from what religious writers call the joy of the world, what the writer of the Book of Ecclesiastes spoke of as "the crackling of thorns under a pot." There is no Christian joy, no joy such as has been felt by the great sorrowful men of the world, in the forced and advertised cheerfulness, in the false optimism, in the smirk of content, with which we so often meet, and which we are bidden to emulate. No more joyful being ever lived on earth than the Founder of our religion, and yet He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." It is well that we should have a philosophy of pain and sorrow that is true. We must look for it, not in any religion of the future, but in the religion of the past, the religion that teaches us to look on them as ministers to human perfection, as very elements in joy itself.

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LENT brings with it the thought of sin, and that is something of which people do not nowadays care to be reminded. Indeed, there are those who refuse to admit that there is any such thing. Religious systems are based on the theory that this world is altogether happy and joyous—that men are developed far beyond the old Christian idea. Nevertheless there are certain things connected with this subject that are at least interesting. Possibly a consideration of a few of them may be profitable. No man can read the Bible without being impressed with what at first seems to be the strange fact that so-called bad people are often more sensitive to the divine call than are so-called good people. By bad people is meant not mere sinners in the sense in which we are all sinners, but wicked men, men who are altogether out of the way. It behooves us to study such cases, especially during the season which

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is set apart for such study. For it was sin that tempted Christ in the wilderness, sin that made His sacrifice necessary, and sin that has spoiled and is to-day spoiling human nature. Thinking of this subject we must be surprised to see how people who had violated every law of God and man have nevertheless been quick to respond to the promptings of conscience, and eager to hear the truth about their spiritual condition. Let us take two illustrations. God sent the prophet Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh—"Go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." The message was delivered, immediate repentance followed, and the city was not destroyed. That the sin of the people was great we know. That their repentance was sincere is proved by the fact that forgiveness followed. Never was there a prompter response to the voice of God speaking through one of His servants. The other case is suggested by the words: "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him." Why did they come? What was it in Him that drew these men to Him? And why was He so kind and forgiving to them, and so gentle with them? A

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city that was so wicked as to have brought on itself the threat of doom was saved because of its humble hearing of God's word. And the publicans and sinners rejoiced to hear the message delivered by Him who was infinitely pure.

Possibly we need to revise our judgments, possibly we should look for the hardened natures, for the careless and indifferent souls, rather in the churches than outside of them. Quite possibly there are in the world to-day millions on millions of humble and contrite hearts that have no relation whatever to organized Christianity. It was so of old, and it may be so now. The subject must of course be studied from two points of view, that of the preacher and that of the listener. In neither of the cases mentioned can there be any doubt that the voice of the preacher was the voice of God. The word of the Lord and nothing else was proclaimed by Jonah. There was no shrinking from the utter truth. Nothing was kept back or trimmed down. The personality of the preacher was lost in God, whose mouth-piece the prophet was. His mission was to bring infinite goodness and human wickedness face to face, and he performed it to the letter.

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There was no speculation in his preaching, no guessing, no explaining. The great facts of life were dealt with. The prophet had no doubt of the truth of His word. He took his stand on the fundamental truths of his time and of ours, and the city heard him. Our own Emerson has said: "If the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him." That was what the prophet did. His instincts were sound, they were his—planted in him by God. Of course, Christ's words were the word of God. In all kindness it must be said that a great deal of the preaching of our time is without this deep earnestness, without the power of conviction. Men do not heed it because the preacher seems to be promulgating a message of his own rather than the eternal message of God. We get elaborate and often scholarly essays, pious meditations, reviews of new books, discussions of current politics, but almost never the great cry from heart to heart, or rather from the heart of God to the heart of man. We have preachers rather than prophets, and even the preachers do not get hold of life. This is one reason why the divine voice is not heard

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and obeyed—men are not sure that they hear it. Nothing can take the place of the prophet. The work of God's messengers is not done in the world. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown"—how the words ring through the centuries!

But the preachers are so much criticized that it seems fairer to look for the trouble in another direction. However, before coming to that, it must be said that there is too much reliance on external things, such as government and law—and not enough on the inner spirit of man. Men are told, not that they shall lose their souls if they do wrong, but that the state and the church will combine to prevent them from doing what the church may think to be wrong. All the while the man may be a sinner at heart, no matter how correct (through compulsion) his conduct may be. There are many who believe that the church has greatly lost in spiritual influence by its active participation in the work of legislation. Indeed, it is a confession of weakness when appeal is made to the state to compel Christian people to perform their Christian duties. The world may well wonder why it is that the Christian motive—

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which is the inward persuasion of the divine spirit—no longer seems to operate. More and more we are building up a system of law morality, thus weakening the soul's capacity for virtue. The result is that the voice of God seems to speak, not through the Christian minister, but through the civil lawmaker. It may be that this explains in part the loss of power and influence which the pulpit has undoubtedly suffered. Often it does not seem sure of its message; still oftener it does not seem sure of the saving grace and power of Christianity as an influence on the life of the soul. Christ never asked Cæsar to help Him. On the contrary, when dominion over the kingdoms of the world was offered to Him He refused it.

But the other phase of the question may well claim our chief consideration. There was something in the people themselves that made them listen, made them anxious to know the truth about themselves. No one is so far removed in character from even the most depraved of mankind as not to be able to enter into the feelings of those condemned by the world as wicked—such people as those of Nineveh and the publicans and sinners who

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thronged Christ's footsteps. There is in these a sense of alienation and loneliness which is not felt very keenly by those who are righteous according to the law, righteous even according to the external standards of the church. Most Christians think that they are pretty good people, that they have obeyed the law, are more or less faithful in the performance of their religious duties, in short, are in the covenant. They know that they are children of the kingdom, and have been taught from infancy to believe that this operates to bring them close to God, who is their Father, and into sympathetic relations with their brethren. On the other hand the publicans and sinners, the evil livers, must at times be overwhelmed with a sense of orphanage and loneliness. The promises are not to them. They are unacknowledged by their brethren. Bitterly conscious of their failures, they must long for another chance, and, in their best moments, crave fellowship with God. The man who once becomes conscious of his sin at that moment becomes conscious of his alienation from God—as in the case of the Prodigal Son—and then he longs for restoration. When the way to that lies open before him he treads

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it with a joy which must be akin to rapture. Such a man, when he comes to himself, is, to go a step further, an honest man. Those to whom much has been forgiven are not deceived about themselves. The great words of religion mean much to them. In these cases there is a need of which merely respectable people can know nothing. The man comes to hate and despise both himself and his sin. So when he learns that there is still time for repentance he joyfully embraces the opportunity. The publicans and sinners were not thrown into despair by the contrast between their wickedness and the purity of their Master. When they got the revelation of a possible pardon they strove to mend their lives. Perfectness was not something to be shunned, but to be desired. Making no excuses for themselves they did not wish any one else to do so. This painful feeling of isolation, this desire for God, this obedience to His word, and this sincerity and honesty, all grew—and they grow to-day—out of the consciousness of sin.

So when the word came to the people of Nineveh and to the publicans and sinners it was heard and heeded. The message was de-

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livered in its purity and it went straight to the hearts of those who were prepared to receive it. And it is this consciousness of sin that Lent is meant to impress on men. They can not get it by comparing themselves with others—for that is but adding sin to sin—but they can get it by examining their lives in the light of the truth, by measuring themselves by the divine pattern. No man can face his own life honestly and bravely without seeing in it many indictments of himself. Men may be in the church, members of the household and yet far from God. The prodigal was the son of his father even when he was in the "far country." He had not lost his sonship. Yet how far from that father he was! It is so with every son of man. The far country lies all about us and we are not conscious of our exile.

The fact that we are all tempted ought to make us more gentle in our attitude toward those who seem to be tempted beyond their strength. A knowledge of the world is a great help here. For it will teach us that in whatever guise temptation comes it is always the same thing—namely an appeal to the baser side of our nature. Instead of thinking of good

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and bad people it is truer and better to think of good and bad in the same individual. The business of man on earth is to starve the evil that is in him and to strengthen the good. And this involves discipline. Men must be trained for any task that they essay. The problem always is one of developing that faculty which is to be used in the performance of the task—whether it be to run a Marathon race, to write an epic or to paint a masterpiece. In this case it is the spiritual faculty that is to be developed. The question is one of weakening what is worst in us, and of bringing to supremacy all that belongs to our spiritual nature. That is the idea of Lent. For the whole of man's life, and at all times, must be governed by the principle of subordinating the lower to the higher. It applies during the whole year. The theory is not that we should "mortify our evil and corrupt affections" during Lent and give them free rein the rest of the year, but rather that the teaching and training of Lent may affect the whole course of our lives and give us a discipline and a set of habits which will steady us at all times. Especially is it important that men should, as was said at the beginning, get

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into their minds a true conception of sin, for without that they can not understand their relations to God, to their fellowmen, or to the world in which they live. Thomas Carlyle said: "Name it as we choose: with or without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral Desert of selfishness and baseness,—to such Temptation we are all called. Unhappy if we are not! Unhappy if we are but Half-men, in whom that divine handwriting has never blazed forth, all-subduing, in true sun-splendor; but quivers dubiously amid meaner lights: or smoulders, in dull pain, in darkness, under earthly vapors! Our Wilderness is the wide World in an Atheistic Century; our Forty Days are long years of suffering and fasting: nevertheless to these also comes an end. Yes, to me also was given, if not Victory, yet the consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty is left."

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I N an interesting discussion of the incompleteness of the gospels, the *London Spectator* truthfully says that "it is often with a sense of deep sadness that many minds reflect that upon many questions we have no decree of Christ." We are reminded that He had little or nothing to say of the home or home life, of the status of women, of the relations of men to the state, of international relations, of work, or even of the nature of God. All of which is perfectly true. It is natural, too, that we should wish to know the "views" of great teachers. But in that very thought is one of the explanations of the supposed incompleteness of the gospels. Christ had nothing to do with "views," but only with underlying principles. His purpose was not to formulate a scheme of life that should cover the whole field of human activities, but to lay down principles which should control life in all its departments, and

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to breathe into men a Spirit which should "lead them into all truth"—truth which, under the divine guidance, they were to discover for themselves. Truth was to be the product, not of a complete revelation in all its details, but of a life lived in the fear of God. Men were to learn it through doing the will of God, learn it through obedience to the spiritual laws which Christ proclaimed. The education of the race did not cease with His departure from earth. On the contrary, it has been going on ever since. What He sought was to develop in human beings the capacity to be educated. The first step was to put them into right relations with God, the source of all truth. That all truth was not revealed even by Christ is proved quite conclusively by His own declaration that there was still further truth into which men were to be led by the Spirit of God. Christ gave men the truth, but He also gave them power—which was to be used—to discover more truth.

Here we have at least an implied condemnation of the creedmakers, of those who regard the faith as what they call a "deposit," rather than a living thing which grows, and adapts it-

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self to the growing intelligence of the race. There must be dogma, no doubt, but it ought to have to do with only the most elementary things in religion. For in the gospels is a very clear acknowledgment of the fact that revelation is progressive. Truth is being continually unveiled. Even those who hold the old creeds—and the old creeds are far better, because simpler, than the newer ones—do not hold them in the sense in which they were held even fifty years ago. Even though a certain statement of the faith continues to be accepted, men, as we know, reinterpret it for themselves. There are thus growth, change, development, and progress in the apprehension of religious truth. So it was that Christ endowed His followers with the widest liberty, so it was that He created a system—if it can be called a system—which is quite as adaptable to the conditions of our time as it was to those of His own time. Speaking of this phase of the subject the *Spectator* says:

“Is it not possible that these very lacunæ, these aching voids, as they sometimes appear in the teaching of our Lord, do make the elasticity of the gospel and fit it for all time? The

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outward conditions of man's life and the orbit of his reason change with his circumstances and with the generation. The home may be the everlasting foundation of society, but the art of living in it must change. Work takes a different place in the lives of different individuals, ages and classes. One age literally can not put its mind to the theology which absorbs another. The hope of the hereafter must be expressed in changing imagery. The religion of Christ was clearly not designed to suit scholastic or subjected minds. Christ preached to the ordinary man, and appealed to the eternal authority of his better self. He did not undertake to unravel the whole tangle of human life, or to explain its discordant woes. But He spoke of a Spirit of Comfort who was also a Spirit of Truth, to whose influence He left His friends, sure that even the death which He dreaded was best for them and for Him."

And this suggests the other side of the question. It has been seen that it might have been fatal to attempt to impose on men detailed statements of the truth for all time, as that would have been to deprive men of the discipline resulting from the search for truth. Now

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it seems that it might have been as disastrous to try to regulate their lives.

In both these particulars Christ manifested a very obvious reserve. His work was not for the people of His own generation, but for all time. The principles which He laid down are eternal principles, applying as directly to the men of our day as to the men of His day. People were to grow into faith as well as into rules of action. It was a living faith, a living conduct and a living world with which He concerned Himself. The church has been less wise than her Master, less wise in dealing both with faith and with conduct. The *Spectator* puts the case well:

“ ‘All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you,’ He said. It is useless to ask for more light than is vouchsafed. The church, however, was not satisfied. She made haste to fill up these obvious lacunæ. There were questions, we are told, which even the Pharisees durst not ask; there is none which the church dares not answer. Questions of politics presented no difficulty to ecclesiastics. They offered to keep every man’s conscience, to make him a good Christian and

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a good citizen by virtue of obedience alone. They defined the nature of the Creator of the universe with as much precision as one would analyze the atmosphere. They knew the glories of heaven, the terrors of hell, and the ransom system of purgatory. They had passports ready for each. What has been the result? The heaven and the earth which they taught are passing away. The ecclesiastical heaven has ceased to attract or the ecclesiastical hell to fright. The moth and rust of time and the mildew of ridicule have destroyed them. Still, the hope of more abundant life which Christ promised keeps men's reasons firm in the face of death and bereavement."

And the remarkable fact is that many men who have drifted away from the churches altogether, and some who are even hostile to the churches, profess the utmost devotion to Christ. This indicates that there is something eternal in Him which is not to be found in the churches as they ordinarily present themselves to the world. Perhaps this is because He declared truths for all time in language applicable to all time, while the churches have often sought to imprison the truth in the current

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philosophies of the day, Nicene, scholastic or reformation. Christ's doctrine has been interpreted in the thought of an era, and not in the universal thought.

Christ had hardly left the world before this passion for defining seized upon His followers. They found these apparent gaps in His teaching, and sought to make clear and definite what He had, undoubtedly for a good reason, left indefinite. Finding that there was no specific authority for a certain doctrine, they promptly inferred it from something that He did say. Sometimes the inference was fair, and sometimes it was strained, but was there need to make any inference? "There were questions," we are told, "which even the Pharisees durst not ask; but there was none which the churches dare not answer." The difference in method is startling. And yet it must be remembered that public opinion often forced the church to define when she would have preferred not to do so. We have the same sort of public opinion to-day, the same demand that religion be clear, and easily comprehensible; that it be reduced to a system. Like Nicodemus of old, we say, "How can these things be?" And the

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question is but the prelude to a demand for definiteness. All through the centuries there has been this pressure on the church. It was never stronger than at the present moment. Men, whether theologians or not, have always been unwilling to admit that a thing could be at the same time indefinite and shadowy, and yet true. Christ felt the same pressure, but He refused to yield to it. As pointed out in the article under discussion, "only once, and that once is recorded by St. John alone, does He make any definition of the nature of God. God is a Spirit, He says, and must be worshipped in spirit." Here is a question that the churches have never hesitated to answer, as one may learn by consulting the Athanasian creed, for example, or the confessions of the reformers. "God is a Spirit," says Christ. But in the thirty-nine articles He is thus defined:

"There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions: of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power

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and eternity ; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Can we not see the wisdom of Christ in thus refusing to "make things clear"? And have not most attempts to make religion clear had the effect of muddling it? The gaps in the gospel may have been accidental, or they may have been designed. It may be that St. John gives the true reason for them, namely, that it was utterly impossible to record all that Christ said and did. "And there are also many other things," the apostle says, "which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Whatever the explanation of the gaps, it is clear that we have quite enough, have indeed the root of the whole matter. A word, however, should be said of the question of conduct. The churches, especially since the Reformation, have made the same mistake in prescribing rules for conduct that was made in seeking to frame accurate and exhaustive definitions of the faith. Here again it might have been better to follow Christ's method of reserve. Even yet we are laying down trivial rules of conduct,

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rules to which few Christians pay the slightest attention. We want, not an inspiration, not a deep principle, not an appeal "to the eternal authority of" a man's "better self," but a sort of schedule of duties. And here again there has been much inferring. We decide that a certain thing is wrong—though Christ may not have condemned it at all—and then infer that it is condemned in His condemnation of wrong. There is always this attempt to control men in their thinking and acting, not by the truth, but by man-made rules. And so we deny to human souls that liberty which was to come to them through that truth which was to make them free. And further, we weaken the natural impulse to virtue which it was the purpose of Christ to create and strengthen in the souls of men. The man who really loved God and loved his neighbor, and did to others what he would have them do to him, would never go far wrong. And that is about the sum and substance of Christ's moral teaching.

The conclusion seems to be that reserve in religion is a good thing in itself. It is a quality which is very greatly needed at the present time. For the old passion for definition and

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exposition is still strong within us. Christ said, "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Are our modern doctors quite sure that all that they make known unto us is of the Father? Christ taught all what He was commissioned to teach, and yet we wonder why we do not get more from Him. There is a certain vulgarity in the free and easy and confident way in which many of us deal with the sacred things of religion. The very assumption that men can define God as though they had actually seen Him is offensive to the reverent soul. And this is quite as true of those who are so sure that in forbidding what is displeasing to them they are forbidding what is displeasing to God. In all these matters there is a certain restraint that ought to be observed. The very handling of things of eternal import and consequence ought to make men humble and self-distrustful. As Arnold's favorite, Bishop Wilson says: "First, never go against the best light you have; secondly, take care that your light be not darkness." Perhaps we do not sufficiently heed the second part of the admonition. It is certain that from the earliest days of Christianity a

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good deal of what has passed for light has been darkness. And the darkness has come, not from reserve, not from gaps in the revelation that we have had, but from our bold attempts to interpret the divine mind, both in the sphere of conduct and the sphere of faith. The appeal of the gospels is, therefore, all the more powerful by reason of the very "lacunæ" that the *Spectator* finds in them, and that obviously are in them.

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MANY people discuss Christianity as though it were an utterly new thing, quite without roots in the past. Their conception of revelation leaves no room for the progressive element, which is perhaps one of the most important elements in revelation. Only as we keep this in mind can we understand the religious life of the race. To fail to keep it in mind is to justify wholly the attacks made by skeptics on the Bible as an immoral book. We ought surely by this time to understand that truth is not revealed as a lightning flash, suddenly illuminating the souls of men. The revelation is progressive. Men have to learn how to appropriate the truth, have to grow into it and up to it, and live in it. When, for instance, men tell us that God ordered the butchery of women and children; that He approved and even commanded treachery and bad faith to an enemy, we should realize that this is only

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what imperfectly educated and comparatively unspiritual men believed was the will of God. With further training men changed their views. Take one instance. In the sixth chapter of Genesis we read: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

So man's destruction was decreed. Man was evil, and, therefore, was to be blotted out. Two chapters later God is represented as saying: "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake." Why? Because "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." In the one case he was to be destroyed because he was wicked, and in the other he was to be spared, and cared for, and pitied for precisely the same reason. Here, then, is an entire change, not in God, but in man's idea of Him. It would seem as though an interval of many years must separate these two passages. At any rate, there had been progress, and the progress had led to a nobler idea of God. In the later verse we have a foreshadowing of the Messianic conception—for the weak and sinful, we are told,

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are not to be destroyed, but strengthened and saved.

This growth of man in spiritual power and apprehension continues throughout the Old Testament, and it reached a truly sublime height in the prophets. More and more is faith related to conduct. Finally we have the whole thing summed up by Malachi, the last of the prophets:

"I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts."

Truth was in the world always, but men could not see it in its true relations, did not or could not use it aright. God has not only been revealing Himself to men, but He has through the centuries been educating and training men. And as a result of this education and training we have been able to make progress, to march forward. Now, without making any comparisons between the two religions, it must be said that Christianity, though a revelation,

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did, in a very real sense, grow out of Judaism. Humanly speaking, there would have been no Christianity had there been no Judaism. Christ Himself said that He came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it. He looked on Himself as the realization of the true Jewish ideal. He was the long-looked-for Messiah. It was, not to the Gentiles, but to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," that He believed Himself sent. He attended the worship of the synagogue. Even after the establishment of the Christian church we read that the apostles did the same thing. There was a strong Judaising element in the church. The epistle to the Hebrews was written for the purpose of proving that Christianity could easily be grafted on the old system, for the purpose of commending it in this way to the Jews. All who had anything to do with the church in its first days were Jews, and for a time they did not cease to be Jews when they became Christians. Many of the priests, we are told, believed. All this is plainly written in the New Testament, but how little we think of it!

The debt of Christianity to Judaism is, therefore, enormous. But it is not with this that the

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present discussion is concerned further than to say that many Christians entirely fail to appreciate the obligation. To hear some of them talk you would think, not that their religion was revealed to them by God, much less that it was in any way related to Judaism, but almost that they themselves had discovered it—so complete is their satisfaction with themselves. This is the reason—or one of the reasons—why it is so necessary to take the historic view, and to consider the whole question in the light of the history of the thousands of years during which men have been struggling up toward light and truth. Religion, though revealed, has, like everything else, been the subject of development. It is impossible to understand religion unless we get this idea firmly in our minds. Christ claimed to be the Son of David as well as the Son of God. And the old law was, we are assured by St. Paul, the apostle who set himself most strongly against the Judaising tendency, “our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.” Only, he added, “after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” But the schoolmaster did his work, and we ought not to forget that we owe him a

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great deal. And, more important than this, we should realize that we can not understand our religion, any more than we can any other institution, unless we know something of the influences which went to its making, and a good deal of the conditions out of which it, at least in part, grew. We are fond of saying that the Bible is one, so close is the relation between the two Testaments. And yet we regard—though we know better—the two religions with which the Bible has to do, as entirely separate and apart, if not actually hostile to each other. But there is a unity here, just as there is a unity in the structure of the Bible. We ought to bear this in mind. Unless we do we shall make many mistakes, shall fail to understand the real nature of the religion which we profess.

All this has an important bearing on the efforts that are now being made to reform and recast Christianity. For one of the first qualifications that a reformer should possess is a knowledge of the thing that he proposes to reform—a knowledge of its history. In some particulars the spirit of Christianity is identical with the spirit of Judaism. We are told that in order to make religion useful to men,

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and helpful to them, we must get rid utterly of the idea of sacrifice. Now, of course, the fact that sacrifice has from the earliest glimmer of the dawn of history been a fundamental principle of all religions does not necessarily mean that it is to continue for ever to be a fundamental principle. But when we remember that the Jewish religion is based on the idea of sacrifice, that this idea was emphasized strongly by Christ, that it passed over into Christianity, and that Christ spoke of Himself as the great sacrifice for the sins of the world, it does seem—and it is meant to speak respectfully—a little impertinent to suggest that we should strive to build up a Christianity in which sacrifice shall have no part. The verdict of history is entitled to some respect. The universal experience of men is entitled to even more. It seems fair that, in considering this question, we should ask ourselves whether, in view of the age-long struggle of men to realize God as the forgiving and pardoning Father, we ought not, even in our work for reform, to be guided and influenced somewhat by the spirit of all the religions that have ever existed on earth. Judaism was not a religion of mere ritual. Indeed,

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ritual was repudiated by the great men of that religion except in so far as it symbolized a humble and contrite heart. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." This appeal to the past can not be disallowed. On this matter of sacrifice, the two greatest religions that the world has known are in complete accord. And the need for sacrifice was not done away with, but rather intensified by Christianity.

And the sacrifice was supposed to be a sacrifice for sin—this being the principle on which Judaism and Christianity are both based. For thousands of years the religions that have controlled and still control the thought of the world have taught that man is weak, helpless and sinful. In that, they have been consistent with the inner feelings of all men who are not puffed up with spiritual pride, or lost in the mazes of the so-called new theology. Christianity and Judaism both felt the need for sacrifice. Both were almost overwhelmed with the sense of sin in man. Arnold's statement of this is most impressive. Hebraism is supposed to say that "it is all very well to talk of

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getting rid of one's ignorance, of seeing things in their reality, seeing them in their beauty." "But how is this," it is supposed to ask, "to be done when there is something which thwarts and spoils all our efforts?" Here is the Arnold comment:

"This something is sin; and the space which sin fills in Hebraism, as compared with Hellenism, is indeed prodigious. This obstacle to perfection fills the whole scene, and perfection appears remote and rising away from earth in the background. Under the name of sin, the difficulties of knowing oneself and conquering oneself which impede men's passage to perfection, become, for Hebraism, a positive, active entity hostile to man, a mysterious power which I heard Doctor Pusey the other day, in one of his impressive sermons, compare to a hideous hunchback seated on our shoulders, and which it is the main business of our lives to hate and oppose. The discipline of the Old Testament may be summed up as a discipline teaching us to abhor and flee from sin; the discipline of the New Testament, as a discipline teaching us to die to it."

In both there is this overmastering sense of

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sin; in both the realization of the need for sacrifice as perhaps the deepest need of the human soul. So we find that the things which our modern doctors would eliminate have existed in the world for thousands of years and that they have always marked the religions of those people who are admitted by all to have had the greatest genius for religion. Such facts as these our reformers would do well to take into account.

But they almost never do take them into account. They begin with the attempt to reform religion and end by attempting to make a new religion. For a religion from which the old Hebraic notions of sin and sacrifice, of God as a pardoner and of man as a being needing and craving pardon, are eliminated, can not with any truth whatever be spoken of as Christianity as Christ understood it. The man who does not adore the perfection of God and at the same time feel an awful sense of his own unworthiness is hardly qualified to say what Christianity should be. Centuries before Christianity was born into the world we hear men crying out for help from the depths of their own felt sinfulness. And Christian history tells

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us of good and great and noble men who have held precisely the same attitude. It really does seem foolish to seek to identify Christianity with mere cheerfulness or happiness, or to think of it as simply a moral code. It is to the Christian precisely what the religion which it succeeded was to the great and holy men of the old dispensation. From Genesis through to Revelation this thought of the need for reconciliation to God runs. Both religions at their best taught and still teach, not that God has turned away from men, but that men have turned away from God. The underlying spirit is the same in both, the only difference being in the application. Possibly a closer study of the thing to be reformed would lead us to see that reform is perhaps not so necessary as we sometimes think. The difficulty is, not so much with the principles of our religion, as with the failure of men to live up to them, their failure to apply the principles to their own lives. At any rate, five thousand years of Judaism and two thousand years of Christianity are not to be so easily disposed of. They are the greatest facts in the life of the world and they seem to grow greater as the years pass. Instead of de-

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voting so much time to making them over to meet the intellectual demands of our own day we should rather strive to make our lives conform to their high and spiritual standards.

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PROBABLY no one would be surprised to learn that the early Christians rather resented the growing popularity of their faith, and regretted that so many pagans had come into the church. Indeed, they might have done so without being guilty of the sins of narrowness or exclusiveness. It was not that they did not wish the whole world to be saved, not that they did not realize something of the brotherhood of man, but that they saw what seemed to be a decline of spirituality, and a loss of that sense of unity and fellowship which is always found in an organization that is the subject of persecution. When Christianity became fashionable, became the religion of the empire, it was inevitable that men should be led into the church by various motives, not all of them sincere. So we can imagine an old and broken servant of Jesus Christ, one who had endured the most exquisite torture rather than deny his Master,

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wondering what was to become of the faith when he saw persecutors turn Christian only after Christianity had grown too strong to be persecuted. There was none of the binding force of adversity, none of that terrible sifting which makes so strongly for sincerity. This feeling has always been in the minds of men associated in the advocacy of noble causes. Those who fought the battle when there was a real foe to face never have much respect for those who join the army after the battle is over. Those who fight for truth "ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just," can not in their hearts have much love for those who withhold their allegiance till truth is firmly established on her throne. No one admires the "multitude" that "make virtue of the faith they had denied." Many of the early Christians must have felt in just this way about the new converts of a more prosperous and less perilous time.

It is so with the celebration of Easter. We have carried our rejoicings to such a pitch, and have given them so materialistic and fashionable a form that it is hard to convince oneself that the people who take part in the Easter pa-

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rade, or who blossom out in Easter bonnets, can have any idea at all of the fundamental truth that lies at the bottom of the whole Easter thought. That idea is newness of life, the idea of a life so new and sweet and powerful and transforming as to be different even in kind from that with which we are so familiar. Leaving the miraculous element altogether to one side—for these little sermons are intended for men of all faiths or no faith—it must nevertheless be said that no religion is worthy of the name except in so far as it gets this new life into the human soul. This is the great aim and object of Christianity. We are to die to sin and to rise to righteousness, to set our affections on things above, to live to the Spirit, and ever to walk in newness of life. Christ came to the earth to give men this new life, and to give it to them more abundantly. He was the life of men. It is in Him that Christians must live if they are to rise to the possibilities that He put before humanity. The life of the kingdom is set in absolute opposition to the life of the world. The life of which He spoke, and which He longs to impart, is more than meat, and is far greater than that life of which we

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are bidden to take no thought. It was in this superb faith that the first Christians lived, and fought, and suffered, and died. It is to this faith that every true man, whether he calls himself Christian or not, is pledged by the divinity of his own nature. And yet when we say—and this has been intimated here—that “it had been easier once than now” to believe, we get our answer from St. John speaking through the lips of Browning. He said:

“Ye know what things I saw; then came a test,
My first, befitting me who so had seen:

‘Forsake the Christ thou sawest transfigured,
Him

Who trod the sea and brought the dead to life?
What should wring this from thee?’—ye laugh
and ask.

What wrung it? Even a torchlight and a noise,
The sudden Roman faces, violent hands,
And fear of what the Jews might do! Just
that,

And it is written, ‘I forsook and fled.’
There was my trial, and it ended thus.”

So there are tests that meet men at every stage of their religious experience. And yet St. John could truly say, considering his treason long

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years after it had taken place, "Ay, but my soul had gained its truth, could grow." And that raises the question which is so puzzling to men to-day. Do people desire the new life? They can not desire it unless they feel the need for it. On that point hangs the doubt. We can feel conscious of no such need unless we can say that our "soul had gained its truth, could grow." For the inability of the soul to grow proves that it is not in contact with the new life. Men whose religion is of this type can not be said to have gained the truth, and as it is that truth which creates the divine hunger in the soul of man for the new and higher life there can be no such life in a soul untouched by that truth. We know that the risen life of Christ utterly changed the character of the apostles, and that it was in the strength and power of that life that they set about the conquest of the world. They were, indeed, renewed and strengthened, filled with courage, inflamed with zeal, and urged on to victory by a faith that nothing could shake. Thus there is never any difficulty in recognizing the fruits of the life which Christ promised to His disciples. It is in the world to-day, but it is not

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found—and this is the point—in all Christians. Easter is celebrated by many Christians who are weak, faithless, cold, and spiritually dead. Of the new life they are almost wholly devoid.

Whatever else Easter stands for, it certainly stands for the spiritual in human life. And that element is one that always needs emphasizing. We talk of this age as an age of materialism, and so it is. But what age was not? The difficulty is not with our time, but with ourselves. Men are very much what they always were. So there is the constant and ever-pressing need to dwell strongly on the really important facts in life, to make men see what is their true glory, what their high destiny. The spiritual writers are the ones that ought always to claim our chief attention. Men immersed in the cares and anxieties of life can get an inspiration from such a writer as Thomas Carlyle which will, if they interpret him aright, lift them out of themselves. Here is a man who fought a lifelong battle with the unrealities of life, and who never, no matter how much beset by pain, and sickness, and poverty—and fashion—once lowered his flag. He has been called a destructive critic, but he never at-

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tempted to destroy anything that ought not to have been destroyed. Shams were not to him the only unrealities—they were but symbols of that deeper unreality in which we all, even the honestest, live. He is valuable, not so much for what he said—though that is helpful and inspiring—as for his whole attitude toward life, with its mummeries and “respectabilities.” He was the valiant servant of truth as he saw it, and he strove with all the might of his strong nature to see truth as it was. To him nothing was of much value apart from the soul of man. Even man’s unhappiness he traced to his greatness, to a soul-hunger in him that nothing but God could satisfy. The possession of the whole visible universe would not, he said, make one shoeblack “happy.”

Harshly as he often spoke of men, no one who ever wrote esteemed humanity so highly, no one has more truly appreciated its infinite capacities and yearnings. The whole burden of his message is grief at seeing such a divine being as man so much concerned about things that have no relation of any kind to his true nature, that is, to his spiritual nature. That his preaching was better than his performance

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is a thing concerning which we had best keep silent. For what man's preaching is not, if it is worth anything at all? And yet Carlyle was a noble figure in the life of his time. He made no concessions, was willing to be poor and lonely and neglected, scorned fame, and wrote only what he thought the world needed to hear, regardless of whether it sold or not. Life pressed heavily upon him, and he was gloomy and pessimistic. But prophets have not, as a rule, dealt in optimism. And life always presses heavily on those who try to play the part of a man in the world, on those who wage war on life's hollownesses and insincerities. The question is not whether we like him or not, but whether we need him. Those who, in such a time as this, put his message from them as though it were of no value or significance, make a very great mistake. For he is one of the few men of the last century to whom it is worth while to listen. We need to ponder long this man's glorification of the common man, of the worn and broken worker. To him there was eternal warfare between the mandates, "work thou in well doing," and "eat thou and be filled." He bids us heed the former. And

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so he is the greatest spiritual force among the prose writers of our time.

It seems well to honor the heroes of the faith, and Thomas Carlyle was—and is—one of them. If ever man believed in the Eternal God, in the perfectibility of human nature, in the moral order of the universe, in the supremacy of the spiritual, it was the old man whose long residence in Chelsea made that part of London glorious. He was always “on the side of the angels,” always true to his convictions—which were sound. Always he faced the beasts of materialism with a dauntless heart. Our life—what is it, unless dominated and permeated by the spiritual influence? Surely it is only a “vapor” that passeth away. This is the knowledge, and the only knowledge that is divine. There is no way to get it into men except by making them profoundly and divinely discontented with things as they are. We can not get this message from the easy, cheerful optimists who refuse to see the plainest facts of life. We can get it only from those who, like Dante, have had the vision of hell. So we may conclude that if our religion does not body forth to us the realities of life it is worth noth-

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ing to us. To go to church, to give a little money to keep up the services, to profess Christianity with our lips, and all the while to live in bondage to the flesh, slaves to that life which Christ came into the world to destroy—this is to blaspheme the most sacred things. "I am the resurrection and the life," said Christ. Unless his followers partake of that resurrection and share in that life, unless they humbly endeavor to live up to the truth as it has been revealed to them, they have no life in them. So the Easter message is a call to reality, to that utter truth which we all ought to desire and to seek, to that noble life which the true servants of God have always lived.

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WHITSUNDAY, or Pentecost, is the festival kept in commemoration of the birth of the Christian church. True to the scientific method, the men who are trying to relate the church more directly to life, are going back to the very beginning of things—are studying origins. The so-called progressives who object to this method forget that the best way to find out what the church ought to be is to find out what its Founder meant it to be, and to learn, as far as possible, how He was understood by those to whom He spoke. For the more closely the church conforms to the original pattern, the nearer will it come to being the true church of Jesus Christ. No one, not even the most extreme radical, proposes to depart from that pattern; no one professes to do anything more than to conform wholly to the mind of Christ. Now it is not proposed to go into any question of organization, important as that is.

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For, though there is a great longing for church unity, it is not believed that men are prepared, as yet, to deal with this question in an unprejudiced way. So much has happened in nineteen Christian centuries, and so many systems have been built up which engage the affection and loyalty of men, that it seems hopeless to look in the near future for organic unity, greatly as it is to be desired. But some things stand out so clearly on the face of the record as to challenge the attention of the most careless reader of the account of the Pentecostal baptism. For instance, there was unity of the closest kind. For they "were all with one accord in one place." They were also expecting and looking for one and the same thing, namely, the outpouring of the divine influence. That the message was for all, that the church was to be catholic, is also clear.

> But the immediately important thing, and the practical thing, is that the first gift to the church, the thing, indeed, which made it the church, was the gift of spiritual power. And this gift, as St. Peter reminded the people, was in direct fulfillment of the words of the prophet Joel:

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“It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

The church was to be a prophesying and a teaching church, and that first of all. It was to be the storehouse of divine power, the transmitter of that power, and the applier of that power to the life of the world. But more important yet, those who were admitted to the church were promised but one thing—that is that they should “receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” The spiritual power in both cases came first. The church was to be, not rich or fashionable, not primarily a dispenser of charity, but the abode of the Spirit of God. And those who were admitted into its fellowship were not told that they should have earthly blessings, but they were told that if they repented and were baptized “for the remission of sins,” they should receive that same divine power. A greater gift it would have been impossible for any of them to conceive of. When they had that, they had all. It was this that they coveted, this that they longed for. And

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what commended the church to them was the proved fact that it had the power to confer this great gift. "For the promise," the apostle said, "is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And the promise was forgiveness of sins and the outpouring of the divine Spirit. So "they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Thus was the beginning made, thus did the Christian church come into being.

The very great importance of the features referred to in what has been said will be appreciated by all who are familiar with the demands made on the church at the present time. People insist that it is not enough for it to preach, prophesy, proclaim forgiveness of sins, and bestow the gift of the Spirit—nor are they content with these blessings which were once so highly valued. Christianity and the church must, as they say, "do something" for them. Men will not, we are told, go to church, unless it is made worth their while, unless they can "get something." And the things which the church does for men, the things which it gives

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them, are not enough. It must keep them well, make them prosperous, entertain them—in other words, must meet a demand which has in it nothing of a spiritual nature. Thus the trouble is, not so much with the church, as with the popular attitude toward the church—or with the church as it has been influenced by its desire to conform to that attitude. We demand anything and everything of the church except the one thing which it was divinely commissioned to do—namely, to regenerate men through the influence of the Spirit, and to bestow on them that Spirit as a purifier, and a guide into all truth. It is vastly important, therefore, that in our schemes for the reconstitution of religion we should keep this supreme function of the church in the first place. It is supreme. The account of the founding of the church makes it very clear that it was founded primarily for the purpose of bringing men into direct and vital relation with God—that it might strengthen, console, inspire and help them by His Spirit. Its business, to take one case, is not to reconcile capital and labor, but so to enlighten the consciences and to sway the hearts of individual employers and em-

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ployees that they will be able to compose their own differences—if, indeed, any arise. Its message to both might well be that of its Master to the young man who asked Him to settle a property question for him—"Beware of covetousness." Always its appeal must be to the individual soul, always its effort must be to spiritualize life.

But there is, of course, the question as to the effect of the great influence which the church was designed to exert. Suppose the life to be imparted, we have still to inquire as to the working out of that life, as to its fruits. Recurring to the case of the first converts, we find that after they had received the gift "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Here we have faith, corporate union, the eucharist, and prayer, all of which seem to have been regarded as products of the spiritual life, as well as nourishers of it. But out of it all grew a spirit of helpfulness, this, too, being the result of the operation of the influence exerted by and through the church. Finally there come the spirit of mutual helpfulness, and the social sense, for we read:

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“And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”

What every man sought was, not something for himself, but rather some power and ability and opportunity to help others. That was what the new life meant—a sacrifice of self for others. The question with these first Christians was, not what they could get, but what they could give. All that they wanted to get was the spirit which would prompt them to give. So it was that the new and divine life flowered into faith, union, worship, prayer, and a spirit of loving beneficence. This is the divine order, an order which can not be reversed—though many reformers are seeking to reverse it—without making the church altogether different from what it was in the beginning, from what it was intended to be. The theory is that God’s work in the world must be done through men, and that therefore the first thing to do is to get and fit men to do it. This is the work of the church preëminently.

The trouble with many men is that they are not satisfied with what St. Paul calls the “fruit

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of the Spirit," that same Spirit which the church imparts. "The fruit of the Spirit," we read, is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." A life which is adorned with these graces is a true Christian life, the only sort of life which the church pretends to develop in men. Going thus back to those far-off times, it ought to be possible for us to see that what many are demanding is, not the church as it originally was, but a new church, molded to their own desires. And generally it must be said that a great many people, as they would not be satisfied with that wonderful gift which so thrilled the souls of those who first received it, so they would not be content with "the fruit of the Spirit." Our point of view has changed, and our ideals have suffered some impairment. We miss the whole idea of the Christian religion when we think of it as merely an agent for the relief of physical wants. Those who think of the church as an institution designed to give them anything else than that which it gave on the day of Pentecost, and who condemn it because it does not keep them in health

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and prosperity, does not insure them an earthly reward for spiritual excellence, are, indeed, far out of the way. And not a little of the philosophizing on religious subjects at the present time is vitiated by this error. The church is weak in so far as it has yielded to the modern demand, just in so far as it has neglected "the word of God" that it might "serve tables." If the church has been overorganized at all, it is on the side of social service. It has developed in men the feeling that it is a mere dispenser of bounty—that its members ought to receive everything and give nothing.

So the first days have many important lessons for Christian people. By studying them we can see, at least to some extent, both what the church is and what it is not. The fact that so many of us have come to think of it as the mere insurer and guarantor of earthly happiness of itself proves that we have forgotten first principles altogether. It is important that we should go back to them in our work for reform and readjustment. And before we decide on any radical changes it would be well to consider two points, and to consider them with

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some care. The first is that we should judge the church of to-day, not on the basis of its failure to meet modern views, but wholly on the basis of its departure from the original standard. We must do this, if what we seek is the strengthening of the church as a Christian institution. And the second point is, that we ought very carefully to ask ourselves how far the people have themselves been responsible for the supposed failure of the church—responsible because they have endeavored to turn it from its real purpose, to make it, not the bestower of divine gifts, but the imparter of earthly blessings. Having thus lowered the institution, we can not be surprised if, in its weakened state, it operates to strengthen still further the false ideas which the people have. Finally we should try to have clear notions of what we want. If we want the church which Christ put into the world, the church which was born on Pentecost, the church that conferred on people the Spirit of God, and which made them fruitful, not in property, but in good works, we can get it. But the first step in this direction is a reverent study of the simple account of the found-

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ing of the church, of its work and influence, and of the relation of the people to it. If men want something else, they ought not to deceive themselves into thinking that they want the Christian church.

DOCTOR ELIOT'S RELIGION

NO criticism of *The Religion of the Future*, as expounded by Doctor Charles W. Eliot, can be at all adequate which does not frankly admit that the whole tendency of the race for ages has been in the direction of many of the positions assumed by him. We have seen a gradual narrowing of the realm of the supernatural; a weakening of authority as the sufficient foundation for faith; a partial substitution of character for creed, of life for dogma, so that even the orthodox are quite as ready to say that one's creed depends on one's life as that one's life is the product of one's creed. The change has come slowly—as was proper—so that many of us do not realize that there has been any change. Yet it is marked. The influence of science on religion has been profound. The study of the Bible has done much to alter the views that men once held concerning the sacred writings. And the study

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of the history of society and religion has made it plain that many things that used to be accounted for on supernatural grounds are now known to be capable of a rationalistic explanation—and thus, as has been said, the supernatural element in religion has dwindled. Once everything was supernatural. Gods and demons filled the air. Omens were the most powerful influence in the life of man. Up to a time which is within the memory of men yet living something of this old savagery—often much of it—colored the religious thought of even civilized people. To-day only those who are most ignorant, those who have studied nothing—not even their Bibles—are held by the old theories. Doctor Eliot is, therefore, very obviously in line with a tendency that has been operating for countless ages—and never more powerfully than in the last fifty years—and all over the world. Many will no doubt deny this, but it is believed that the statement is true. The appeal is to conditions as they actually exist. It is also to the soul of every man who has kept track of what has been going on in his own inner life. We know that we do not

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view religion as our fathers did. We know that supernaturalism has been on the decline.

Thus much must be frankly conceded. And yet at least two questions remain which can not be so easily disposed of. We have to consider what will be the effect of education in the future and what line it will take, and whether the supernatural element will, as Doctor Eliot thinks, entirely disappear. It is easy to say that because things have been moving in a certain direction over a long period of time they will continue so to move. But of that we can have no assurance. The movement may reach its limit, and so stop—or it may be diverted. On the whole, it seems reasonable to believe that there is something in religion which can not be accounted for, which reason can not explain, and that in this direction there will be limits to the effects of enlightenment. We are not likely to get much more light on what are called the mysteries of religion, but there is the chance that the intellectual temper of men may be so profoundly affected as greatly to modify their attitude toward religious truth. There are people—and we all know them—who, when they learn that many of the old truths which

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they once held are no longer truths, at once conclude that nothing is true. The skeptical spirit is, therefore, likely to become stronger, especially in the minds of those who, for some strange reason, think that doubt is a proof of intellectual strength. Education is thus likely to change our opinions, not so much by adding to our knowledge, as by altering our point of view. And in substituting skepticism for faith it is likely to alter our point of view for the worse. But is the narrowing of the supernatural realm to continue till supernaturalism is wholly extruded from religion? Those of us who have been trained in the old religion may be pardoned for believing that even after education has been pushed to its uttermost length, there will be something beyond it and above it, something comprehensible only to the eye of faith. What have disappeared are crude conceptions of the supernatural rather than the supernatural itself.

Because, for instance, men no longer believe that thunder is the voice of God, shall they be asked to believe that God does not speak to their souls? If He does, are men greatly to be blamed for believing that there is something

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supernatural, or at least supranatural, about the communication? As for God Himself, what is He if not supernatural? The high priest of the new religion tells us that we must not look on God as "an enlarged and glorified man," must abandon entirely the old anthropomorphic view. What, then, is He? He is not man, and yet He lives. Doctor Eliot speaks of an Eternal Deity, so great and high that we must not identify Him "with any human being, however majestic in character." Plainly, if He exists at all, He is above man—far above him. We can not know Him by any of the ordinary processes. And yet Doctor Eliot writes of Him quite calmly, and in doing so takes, as many will think, the most stupendous miracle of all miracles for granted. There is reason to think that though the new religion may slough off some of the superstitions of the old—and so be simply the old religion purified and reinterpreted—it will not be without its supernatural element. There is a vast gulf between the mind that believes that everything is supernatural and the mind that believes that nothing is supernatural. Probably one belief is quite as false as the other. Primitive men have merely

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exaggerated and misapplied a great truth, namely, that God is an infinite spirit, and that there is a spiritual world, and a spiritual nature in man. This truth is quite likely to persist in the minds of even the most highly educated men. There may be limits to rationalism, as there are limits to supernaturalism, and one can conceive that the work of the future is to define the frontier between them. At any rate it is rash to predict that the new religion will be without the supernatural element. Many will think that such a religion would not be a religion at all, but simply a code of morals, beautiful, perhaps, but quite untouched by emotion.

Many of the things objected to by Doctor Eliot are no longer believed by intelligent people. On the other hand, many of the things on which he insists are plainly taught in all the churches of the land. Into these details it is not now proposed to go. For even if they could all be satisfactorily adjusted the new scheme would be objectionable because of the philosophy on which it is based. Here the new religion is utterly revolutionary, for it repudiates the old idea of sin entirely, an idea that

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is fundamental in the old religion, and in every religion that ever existed. We have been taught that revelation came to men—or that they made religions, whichever you please—because they were weak, were conscious of their weakness, and conscious also of their need of help. It was—at any rate this has been the theory—the sense of sin that drove men to God. But it now seems that man is not a fallen being. Perhaps not, but we know—for the social scientists have made this quite plain—that man has climbed out of depths of degradation that are simply unimaginable to us. And it may be that the fall, or the breakdown, or the catastrophe came when intelligence first dawned in him, when the moral sense was first awakened, and that thus his very rise in the scale of being was a fall. It is certain that men have, for countless ages, always felt the pressure of what they called sin, have always longed and prayed for help in their fight with the evil of which they were conscious in their own natures. So they have longed for God, for a Saviour, a Redeemer, an Avenger. >It may be doubted whether a man who has never experienced these feelings in his own soul, who

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has never realized how strong is the pull to wrong, is qualified to formulate a new religion. Men wanted God, not because they were good and pure and strong, but because they were bad and stained and pitifully weak. So God came to them. So religion was born into the world, born out of the agony of souls oppressed with their own sins. To such the extremely pleasant and polite religion now offered will not make much of an appeal. ❹

It is curious that Doctor Eliot should, as he clearly does, think of pain as chiefly physical, for he discusses it in connection with anæsthetics. Pain to him is something to be got rid of as always and necessarily evil. It is to be hoped that those who are led astray by his reasoning on this subject—which is, be it said with all humility, sadly superficial—will read the essay entitled *The Problem of Pain*, by the Reverend J. R. Illingworth, which is to be found in the volume *Lux Mundi*. It is true, of course, that men have been led into a wicked and shameful submission to distressing conditions by the promise of joy hereafter. But, nevertheless, pain, be it physical, mental, moral or spiritual, plays a mighty part in the development of character.

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The great Christian virtue, love, involves pain in the very thought of it. The poets have made this clear.

Pain, discipline, self-sacrifice, adversity—to think of getting along without these is to banish Christ, whose teachings Doctor Eliot accepts. For it was He who blessed the mourners, the afflicted, the persecuted. Nothing worth while was ever done except at the cost of great pain to the doer. "Our freedom," says Mr. Illingworth, "our laws, our literature, our spiritual sustenance, have been won for us at the cost of broken hearts, and wearied brains, and noble lives laid down." Pain lies at the very heart of love, it is the promoter of the spiritual life, is—it may almost be said—the price paid for excellence as it is the path to perfection. That surely is the Christian view. Pain—unless we mean purely physical pain, as Doctor Eliot seems to mean—can no more be got out of the world than joy can. If we can not get rid of it, we must have a religion that will teach us to endure it, to get benefit out of it, to transform it into character. Christianity has given us the wonderful idea of a suffering God. In the crises of life men will turn to such

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a God rather than to the God of the new religion.

Finally, there is no suggestion in the new religion of the re-creation, the regeneration of character through the transmission of a new life to the world. Men are to be good and happy, but apparently there is no power to come to them from God, no life to be transmitted through Christ and the church. In other words, the historic, institutional, organic side of Christianity is entirely eliminated. Here again the new religion is revolutionary. Possibly it is time for a revolution, but it is going fast and far to ask men to accept a religion in which there is no recognition of sin, no power to use pain for beneficent ends, no sacramental relation between God and man, and apparently no kingdom of grace. Now Christianity may assume this form within the next hundred years—as to that no one can say. But admirable as the scheme is in many ways, it is not Christianity to-day. Taking the account which Christianity gives of itself, we must believe that it is a supernatural religion, that Christ is its center and source, that its main purpose is to reconcile men to a Father from whom they

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have been separated by sin, that it almost seems to glorify pain and to exalt it into a sort of sacrament, and that it seeks to strengthen and purify the life of man by getting into his soul the life of the Eternal God. It may be false, may be passing away. It has been through many storms, has suffered many changes, but its essential features are what they were in the beginning. In a world from which, as Doctor Eliot admits, sin and sorrow and pain have not yet been banished, the old religion will make a wider appeal than will the new. When we get rid of the things which seem to make Christianity necessary to men and women who have tasted the bitterness of life—and who has not?—we may all be prepared for a religion based on the theory that the world is a pleasant place enough and that there are no “miserable sinners” in it. An essay might be written on the need for faith—which is practically excluded from Doctor Eliot’s religion—but it is enough now to suggest that to demand that everything be plain and rational is to “stumble at truth’s very test.” The new religion seems very transcendental and far away.

THE LUST FOR FAME

THE world is always full of men whose chief anxiety seems to be to have others know how great they are; to have others know that certain great words were spoken and certain great deeds done by them. They are exceedingly fearful lest they shall not be understood, lest their "records" and achievements be not appreciated. The mere thought that others may, as they say, get credit for the work which they themselves have done is a constant torture to them. The image of self fills the entire field of vision. They are hungry for recognition, greedy for praise. If they are reformers they are consumed with the desire to be known as the authors and only sincere champions of the reforms in which they have been interested, and for which indeed they may have fought valiantly. Others may have done much, may, indeed, have started the agitation out of which the reform grew, but the claims that these men

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may make are never admitted by those who want all the glory for themselves. For it is glory that they yearn for and must have. The work is nothing. The getting credit therefor is everything. This weakness, which it would be foolish to pretend is not very common, is distinct from egotism, for egotism—at least at its worst—is love of self for self's sake. In this case the aim is to reflect credit and honor on self through the medium of great work well done. There is egotism in it, to be sure, but it is not all egotism. And yet this craving for glory is proof of a weakness in the character of the man who feels it, at any rate, of the man who gives way to it and seeks to gratify it. The world has not been wrong in contrasting devotion to duty with love of glory. To do the work, let it go, and cease to think about it—such should be man's attitude toward life. Good work, as well as alms, should be done in secret—as far as possible. To wish to label all our achievements with our own names is not much nobler than to desire to write or carve our names in public places. Most men get all the credit they deserve, so why be disturbed? It is better to let the work speak for

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itself. If it is valuable it will live of its own vitality.

This feeling is not to be too severely condemned, for it is very natural. Most men have it. And all are glad when the world praises them for a noble action. This desire for the commendation of men is also a stimulus to endeavor, though not the best or the most trustworthy stimulus. But many a great service would not have been rendered had the man performing it known that his name would never have been heard of in connection with it. There is thus a wholly natural and human dread of obscurity, and this probably has as great an influence on people as the craving for reward or love of fame. This is the negative side of the question, for not only do we wish to be known, but we hate to be not known. Honesty, therefore, compels the admission that, though the feeling is an evidence of weakness, it is nevertheless one in which most men share. Honesty also compels the admission that the feeling may sometimes work out into beneficent results. But it is nevertheless true that a great service performed in response to such prompting, though it may be a great service, is not greatly

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performed. For no act can be said to be greatly done unless we can feel that it would have been done even had no one known anything about it, even though it might—as great acts have often done—have brought shame rather than honor. What this world needs, and always has needed, is the man who can be trusted in the dark, who will do his work as well when he knows that he will get no credit for it at all as when he knows that it will redound to his honor. Such faithfulness as this can hardly be looked for in those who are inspired solely, or even largely, by the motive under discussion. And that is the reason why it is not a sufficient motive. The men who can be depended on are those who are inspired by a sense of duty rather than by a desire for glory. Unless there is this feeling of responsibility to the work itself it is not likely to be well done except for reward—money, fame, or the praise of men.

There are some very practical consequences involved, only one of which, however, need now be referred to. The wage motive to action—no matter what the wage be—is wholly inadequate, as every one knows. For it is a

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difficult matter to get men to give a fair return for the wages they receive. And the more they think of wages the less satisfactory does their work become. The reason is plain. It is that they measure the work by the reward, and not at all by the standard of perfection. The question with men too often is, not one of doing the very best possible, but of not giving more than they are paid for. Such a worker not only fails to give a fair return for his wages, but he fails to take any pride in his work, or to get any joy out of it. In his essay entitled, *The Religion of the Future*, Doctor Eliot says:

“One of the worst chronic human evils is working for daily bread without any interest in the work, and with ill will toward the institution or person that provides the work. The work of the world must be done; and the great question is, shall it be done happily or unhappily? Much of it is to-day done unhappily. The new religion will contribute powerfully toward the reduction of this mass of unnecessary misery, and will do so chiefly by promoting good will among men.”

It will contribute nothing to this end un-

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less it breeds in men a real pride in their work for its own sake, develops in them a character that will make them satisfied with the approval of their own conscience, and unhappy when that approval is withheld. A good man is one who would be good even though there were no public opinion to sustain or coerce him. The judgment of the world is very fallible, as is proved by its frequent enthusiasm for shams, and its crucifixions of true heroes. But a man's own conscience, provided he has done nothing to blunt or stifle it, is a safe guide. As long as the master of the vineyard approves, what does it matter what the other workers think? The man who devotes his whole time to cultivating their good opinion is almost certain to do his task poorly, and to lose the approval of his own conscience. It is not well to be greedy for fame, or to think overmuch of the impression one makes on the world.

In St. John's gospel we read that Christ's brethren once said to Him: "Depart hence, and go into Judea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest. For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If Thou do

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these things, shew Thyself to the world." Very human it is. We read further that "neither did His brethren believe in Him." "Shew Thyself to the world"—it is the old cry. Here was a case in which one might have thought that this would be done. For it was important that men should know and accept Christ for all that He claimed to be—to accept Him as the revelation of God in a very high sense. He, Himself, though He had been reluctant to perform miracles, and had instructed those on whom they had been wrought to keep them secret, had nevertheless on one occasion said, and the words are reported in this same gospel of St. John: "Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake." His credentials were His acts, as well as His words. It was important that the world should believe in Him. To do a thing, and then to let it be known that He had done it, might contribute very powerfully to the establishing of His claims. So it will be seen that great issues were involved. His unwillingness to blazon Himself and His achievements to the world had resulted in a lack of faith in His brethren. And yet Christ put it

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all from Him. His works were not His, but the Father's. His doctrine was not His, but "His that sent Me." So great had been His shrinking from publicity that even His brethren almost taunted Him. And they did refuse to believe in Him. "Go into Judea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest"—"if Thou doest these things, shew Thyself to the world." He did show Himself to the world, but it was as a despised victim, and not at all as a conqueror. And the amazing thing is that out of His apparent defeat sprang the triumph of a great cause—His cause. The work lived, and He lives also. Careless of what the world might think, unwilling to sacrifice His ideal even for the sake of converting the world, He was true to His divine nature.

Much of the work of this wonderful Being is wholly unreported. For the same evangelist, St. John, says: "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Here, then, is the Christian ideal. It teaches the duty—and it is a hard duty, none harder—of utter self-

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forgetfulness. Considering His life, we ought to see what a power there is in this gift—or grace. Even mere men, when they were truly great, have had some measure of it. Inventors have thrown their discoveries on the world without a thought of their own fame, much more without a thought of money. The world has known great statesmen who have toiled for nations throughout the course of a long life wholly careless of the impression they were making on humanity. It is so even of distinguished soldiers. So it seems quite fair to say that the greater the man the less subject is he to this vice of self-glorification. And this is as true of good men as of great men. They have not thought much of what they were to get, but a great deal of what they ought to do. And what they did, they did because they felt that it ought to be done, and not because they felt that it would reflect creditably on them or bring them fame. The standard is high, for it is the Christian standard, but men can approximate to it. There is, of course, the old temptation to claim power and excellence in order to win the confidence, allegiance and support of the world. Men seem at times almost

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driven by the demands of the multitude into a publicity which may be hateful to them, and thus may strive for it even from a good motive. But even this is a mistake. The temptation, whether it comes from our own inner nature or from those who insist that we shall prove our right to rule, ought to be resisted. And we shall be stronger and our work better because of the resistance.

Such a disposition would contribute very greatly to our peace of mind, as well as to the peace of the world. For the strife for fame causes as much bitterness as any other kind of strife. St. Paul relates kindness and self-forgetfulness to each other when he says: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." And the relation is close and obvious. This quality of self-forgetfulness is not easy to acquire in a democracy where men are peculiarly dependent on the good will of others. It seems almost necessary, for instance, that there should be a good deal of self-advertising in our campaigns. If we are to get votes, we must show that we are worthy of them, and how can we show this except by showing what we

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have done? So the old appeal, "shew thyself to the world," comes to us all every day of our lives, and never more powerfully than now. And yet men should not respond to it. The people themselves soon weary of men who are all the while telling them of what they have done, of their good qualities, of their courage, of their devotion to the masses. And wise men—and there are many of them—begin to suspect that claims which must all the while be thus bolstered up have little that is substantial to rest on. On the contrary, when they find out for themselves that a man is a true man, that he has done many things of which he never told any one—much less boasted of—they at once conclude that he is to be trusted, and ought to be honored. There is great human wisdom in Christ's words:

"When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee com-

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eth, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Our virtues and our benefactions should be left for others to discover.

CONSCIENCE AND INTELLIGENCE

A FRIEND whose handwriting reveals nothing as to his identity sends an unsigned note in which he suggests certain considerations touching conscience, intelligence and will. "Man's ideas about God," he says, "vary just as do man's ideas about anything he may apply his thoughts to. It is therefore necessary that we hear or read the thoughts of the best minds humanity has produced. And that is why good literature is such an important factor in this world. That is why the Bible has held its own through the centuries." Without going into metaphysics it may be said that conscience does not teach us what is right and wrong, but rather that we must do what is right and avoid what is wrong. We are happy when we have done what we believe to be right and unhappy when we have done what we know or fear to be wrong. And it is conscience that makes us happy or unhappy as the case

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may be. But our ideas on the subject come from our intelligence. We know what is right, but we know it through our intelligence. Intelligence tells us what is right, and conscience tells us that we ought to do what we know or have found to be right. This is a distinction which the best writers on this subject have always made, but it is one that is not often observed. As a consequence there is much confusion of thought. By cultivation, exercise and education conscience can be made more sensitive, not as to what is right and wrong, but as to man's duty with reference to them. But the power to decide what is right and what is wrong resides in the intelligence which, fortunately, is the most easily educated of our faculties. A few illustrations will perhaps serve to make the case clear. The matter is important, because on a right understanding of it depends the soundness of all our educational methods and processes. The theory is that we get our moral ideas through our intelligence, and our determination to apply those ideas in our life from our conscience. Conscience is a spur or a restraint, and not a revealer.

It is probable that men's consciences were

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never keener, more sensitive or more imperious than in the old persecuting days when men and women were burned for heresy. These punishments were believed by the people to be necessary for many reasons—to save the sinner from the wrath to come, to protect society against the vengeance of God, who would be angered by toleration of infidelity, and to prove the faith of the persecutors. The case was perfectly clear. But we no longer burn men to-day—at least not for heresy. What is the difference? It lies wholly in the fact that our intelligences have been educated so that we now believe that to be wrong which we once believed to be right. We know more about God, more about the truth, more about right and wrong. Our minds make a different report to our consciences, and as a result we know that we are now right in having ceased to persecute. So the conscience is not offended by the refusal to persecute. It would be shocked by such things as were once done by men as mere matters of course. Conscience has not been educated, but the mind has been. We do the right now, but we have different ideas as to what the right is. And ideas are not the chil-

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dren of the conscience, but of the intellect. This is why it is such a sin to limit intellectual freedom; to attempt to set bounds to knowledge. For without intellectual freedom there can be no progress, and had there been no progress we should still be persecuting people for opinion's sake. Not only that, but we should think that we were doing right when, as a matter of fact, we should be doing grievous wrong. God indeed speaks to us through our conscience when He tells us that we must do the right and eschew the wrong, but He speaks through our minds when He tells us that this is right and that is wrong, this is true, and that false. "Let every man," says the apostle, "be fully persuaded in his own mind." The appeal was to the mind. Conscience tells us to do the right. The mind, under God, tells us what is right.

We have an admirable illustration of all this in the gospel. A doctor of the law asked Christ what he should do to inherit eternal life. The appeal was to the law: "What is written in the law? How readest Thou?" The answer was precisely what it should have been: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength,

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and with all thy mind ; and thy neighbor as thyself." "Thou hast," such was the reply, "answered right ; this do, and thou shalt live." Then followed the query, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer we know. It is contained in the parable of the man who fell among thieves, and was relieved by the Samaritan, a man who was an entire stranger to the sufferer, and so not, in the usual sense, a neighbor to him at all. The exposition was purely intellectual, and it was addressed to the mind of the inquirer. It was not enough for him to know the law, not enough to have lived by it as he had interpreted it. For he had interpreted it wrongly, and it was the interpretation that was corrected. "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" The answer was an inference or conclusion, an intellectual thing—"He that shewed mercy on him." The man was convinced by reason and logic. His whole vision was expanded—assuming him to have been an honest inquirer. His mind was enlightened with "the light of the everlasting gospel." If he was converted, his conscience worked in the light of the fuller revelation which had poured in on him. He

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was told that he was neighbor to any one on whom he had the chance to show mercy. It was for him to say whether his conscience should keep him true to this new and expanded conception of duty. We know our duty through our minds. We are driven or goaded or allured into performing it by our conscience. We must know the divine law before we can do it. The man in the gospel story knew the law, but he did not know it in its fullness or in all its necessary implications. So he was enlightened.

The very fruitful and suggestive remarks, which are the theme for these wandering reflections, offer an excellent chance for the use of the Socratic method. For instance, the writer says that conscience is "God in us." Then follows this: "There is a conflict, says Richard Wagner, between 'the will and the intelligence' making us dual beings. Intelligence is of God; 'the will' is human. But duality causes conflict—unity, peace. Is it too much to say that the higher intelligence must win in the end?" So conscience is "God in us," and intelligence is of God. If intelligence is of God in a sense in which will is not, it must more nearly approach the godlike. Does it come as

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close to it as does conscience, which is "God in us?" If so, they are both of God, both God in us, and so are the same thing. They must, on this theory, be the same thing, unless God differs from Himself. However, there is another conclusion, as there often is a way of escape from the conclusion to which Socrates would force you—for he was not above playing with words in a humorous way. It is that God reveals Himself in many ways to men and through many channels. And perhaps it is safer to say that intelligence, will, and conscience are all of God. Intelligence may be as defective and unenlightened as the will is. But when the will is brought into subjection to the will of God, and when the intelligence is enlightened by the truth of God, both are alike divine. And so is conscience. In a sense it is true that there is a conflict between the intelligence and the will, but that is not the real conflict. A vitiated intelligence and a rebellious will may work in perfect harmony, as may also a divinely illuminated intelligence and a submissive will. There may be a conflict between these two human capacities, and there may not be. It is not necessary or inevitable. True harmony is to be

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found, not so much in the reconciliation of the will and the intelligence, as in the reconciliation of both to the will and intelligence of God.

Of course, when we speak of rebellion against God we usually think of the will as the rebel. That may be the case, but still it must be insisted that the will is no more human than the intelligence is—and no more divine. Both are implanted in us by God, and both may be made ministers of the divine will. We share both with God. It is true that the conflict is in our own souls, but it is not wholly one between intelligence and will, but rather one between our knowledge of what is right, and our determination—in which the intelligence shares—to do wrong. It is not easy to find a better explanation of the phenomenon than that given by St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans :

“For that which I do, I allow not : for what I would, that do I not ; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing : for to will is

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present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Here it seems that the will is not blameworthy, as the apostle says, "to will is present with me;" he willed to do what was right or good. But so deplorable was his failure, so great was the war within him, that he was forced to conclude that there was an alien influence at work poisoning intelligence, conscience and will all alike—namely, sin. The conflict was due to the fact, not that there was a conflict between intelligence and will, but one between the human and divine in his own nature. The harmony in that nature was broken because the harmony between that nature—all of it—and God was broken. The lack of harmony within is the result of the lack of harmony between God and man. We may know the best and will the best, and yet not do the best. Will, conscience and intelligence may all be godlike. Or they may be so perverted, misused and debased as to become devilish. This

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is true of the man as a whole and not simply of any part of him. It is not well to break up our nature into parts any more than it is sound to think of the mind as made up of different faculties.

Considered in another way, and from another viewpoint, we may get some light on the subject from a remark of Carlyle. He says that man's unhappiness comes from his greatness and as he puts the matter we can hardly quarrel with his conclusion. The theory is that there is a continual conflict between what we are or have, and what we would be, or desire. There is this craving in us all for perfection, and when we fall short we seem to miss the only mark that is worth hitting. The sense of defeat discourages and disheartens us. This was the case of the apostle precisely. He knew what he ought to be, what he was capable of being, what God meant him to be, and yet he counted himself not to have attained. So he asked, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But his greatness was that he could conceive perfection, desire it, and press forward to it. And that is the greatness of man—the greatness out of which his unhappi-

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ness grows. Here, then, is the source of the discord which so greatly distresses and disturbs even the humblest and weakest of those who are honestly trying to do their duty in this world. It is no mere war between intelligence and will, but rather war between the lower and higher parts of their own nature—between the sin which would master them and the God in them who would vanquish the sin. The struggle is between man as he is and man as he would be, and might be. Most great men, great even in earthly affairs, have been sad men, and for precisely the same reason—namely that they have had this sense of being balked in their purposes. No matter what they do their goal seems far ahead of them. The same thing is true in the spiritual life. And the higher the man's aspiration the more conscious is he of failure. But one can fight the fight and keep the faith, and so enjoy something of peace and harmony.

THE PROBLEM OF PRAYER

THERE can, of course, be no doubt that the change which science has wrought in the view that men have of the universe has greatly modified their theories of prayer, and perhaps weakened the instinct which once led men to pray. We now know that the world is a world of law, that nothing happens by chance, and so people no longer believe, as they once did, that all prayer is answered in the sense that whatever is prayed for is granted. We no longer look on the ill that may happen to those we think of as our enemies as punishment inflicted on them by God in response to our prayers. Nor do we feel—at least it is to be hoped we do not—that whatever blessing comes to us comes because we deserve it—because we are favored by God above our brothers. In these ways, and in many others, our attitude has suffered a very marked change. So it is that some men have ceased to feel that there is

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any value in prayer, while others have refined it into a mere indefinite communion with "whatever gods there be"—into a sort of merging of ourselves into the divine nature. Yet it seems fair to say that if, as is true, the discoveries of science have not overthrown religion, neither have they made prayer, even in the sense of asking for something, a futile and foolish thing. The trouble is, not so much with science and its effects, as with the false idea that religious people have had of prayer. The subject is important, and so a brief discussion of it may be helpful. Nothing whatever is to be said against prayer considered as communion with God, except that that is not all there is of it. Probably that is the highest form. The best prayers are those that are general, those in which there is the minimum of request and the maximum of the pouring out of the heart and soul to God. Prayer which is an approach to the divine is better than prayer which is a vehicle for the transmission of gifts. It is manifest that, thus considered, prayer can never be done away with as long as we are permitted to believe in the existence of a divine being.

Doubtless this is the theory which appeals

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most strongly to noble souls. The man who has the root of the matter in him thinks much more of what he ought to do and to be than of what he would like to get. His longing is to establish and maintain close relations with the infinite perfection, and to draw help and strength and inspiration from that inexhaustible source. He looks for an answer to prayer, not so much in what he receives, as in the divine influence on his own life. This was what Sir Henry Wotton meant when he wrote of the man :

“Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend.”

It was what Tennyson meant when he makes King Arthur say :

“Pray for my soul. More things are wrought
by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy
voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

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Both for themselves and those who call them
friend?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

In other words, prayer is here regarded as something to which men are pledged by the divinity of their own nature, as the link which binds the soul and the world to the Almighty God. Than that there can be no higher conception. The appeal is thus to what is believed to be the deepest human instinct. Men are bidden to pray, not that they may get something from God, much less that they may give something to Him, but that they may be one with Him. It is a step toward that unity which must be maintained and strengthened if the moral universe is not to be wrecked. It is, of course, obvious that this position can never be overthrown unless God Himself is overthrown. The man who feels that there is a God above him can not be affected by any scientific discoveries, can not be made to feel that prayer in this sense—the highest sense of all—is a mere superstitious thing.

As it seems quite impossible for men—with

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comparatively few exceptions, and these of doubtful authenticity—to get away from the idea of God, it is hard to see how they can rid themselves of this longing for communion with Him, this craving for those higher things which are part of the life of man, and the very best part. And this longing and craving are prayer. Unless infidelity is true, prayer—of this sort at least—is an absolute necessity; is something indeed that can hardly be avoided. It is almost like the unconscious exercise of a faculty. “While I breathe I pray,” we sing in the hymn, and indeed it is as natural to do one as the other, unless the nature has been so perverted as to be unnatural. Thus there is a sound basis for the theory of Tennyson, who, by the way, was probably more affected in his work by the modern scientific spirit than any of his contemporaries in poetry. It is true that by prayer

“ * * * the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

Men’s acts may be, and often are prayers, as their thoughts and hopes and aspirations are. And a life filled with such acts is a prayer—

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and of the noblest kind. This is a subject that is wholly outside the domain of science—something with which science has, and can have, nothing to do. We are in another realm altogether, the realm of the spirit. So there are no scientific arguments that can be advanced against the philosophy of Tennyson. He may be wrong, but he can not be proved wrong unless God can be proved not to exist. In reading his beautiful lines we instinctively feel that they are deeply true, so true as to be beyond the utmost reach of materialistic reasoning. If we grant God and man, we must grant prayer, for it is through that that the relationship between God and man is maintained. A breaking of that relationship is as a rule followed by moral and spiritual chaos. When the “gold chains” part, man is likely to fall below the level even of his own nature. And this, as history has many times shown, is true of races and nations.

But many a man able to go thus far will still refuse to admit the value of direct petitions to the Almighty Power except as these have to do with the spiritual blessings. Here it seems to him the scientific logic does apply and very

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directly. There is a most interesting discussion of this phase of the subject in Browning's poem, *The Family*. A man had prayed for the recovery of a friend, who seemed fatally ill. Objection was raised by another friend on the ground that the prayer was an attempt to change the will of the Almighty. "I judge," said the praying man, "there will be respite, for I prayed." The objector continues thus:

"Sir, let me understand, of charity!
Yestereve, what was thine admonishment?
'All-wise, all-good, all-mighty—God is such!
How then should man, the all-unworthy, dare
Propose to set aside a thing ordained?
To pray means—substitute man's will for
God's:
Two best wills can not be: by consequence,
What is man bound to but—assent, say I?
Rather to rapture of thanksgiving; since
That which seems worst to man to God is best,
So, because God ordains it, best to man.
Yet man—the foolish, weak, and wicked—
prays!
Urges 'My best were better, didst Thou
know!'"

The argument is familiar, but the statement of it here is very strong. The answer of the

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poet is contained in a parable, which can only be outlined. A woman was poisoned by a serpent bite. The physician declared that the leg must be amputated. The husband with a sigh accepted the decision. The eldest son urged further consideration and that every effort be made to save the limb. The second son demanded that there be no operation. "Save the limb," he said, "thou must and shalt." The voice of science spoke through the third son, who said:

"The leech knows all things, we are ignorant ;
What he proposes, gratefully accept !
For me, had I some unguent bound to heal
Hurts in a twinkling, hardly would I dare
Essay its virtue and so cross the sage
By cure his skill pronounces folly. Quick !
No waiting longer ! There the patient lies :
Out then with implements and operate."

What we have is reliance on the orderly course of nature, and on the expert counsel of the wise physician. There was nothing else to do, so the argument runs. And yet—was there nothing else? The praying man who is supposed to tell the story characterizes the husband's attitude as one of "ready acquiescence,

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aptitude angelic, understanding swift and sure." The first son stands for "a wise humanity, slow to conceive, but duteous to adopt." In the second son there is still humanity, but it is "wrong-headed," though "right-hearted," and "rash but kind." The youngest son is "the cackler of the brood, who, aping wisdom all beyond his years, thinks to discard humanity itself." And the conclusion is as follows:

"No, be a man and nothing more—
Man who, as man conceiving, hopes and fears,
And craves and deprecates, and loves, and
loathes,
And bids God help him, till death touch his
eyes
And show God granted most, denying all."

It is poetry, of course, but is there not sound sense in it? Does not this form of prayer develop naturally out of that first discussed—is it not necessarily involved in it? Men admit the value of such prayer as a subjective influence, and point to the fact that some of the strongest men that the world has known have been praying men. And yet prayer could have no such effect unless there was faith back of it, and belief that the prayer would in some way

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be answered. If man's attitude toward God is that first discussed, he can hardly help making his "requests known unto God." Men naturally cry to God in their anguish, and the deeper the anguish and the more improbable the chance of relief, the more passionate is the cry, "God help us." We pray even when we know that there is, humanly speaking, no hope of help. So here, too, there seems to be a principle of human nature involved. In one case we are prompted by a desire for communion with God. In the other by a sense of dependence on Him and trust in Him.

What troubles most men is that prayers do not seem to be answered. There is to be sure a great chance for juggling here and religious teachers do not always resist the temptation. But really what do we mean by answer to prayer? Surely one who knows anything of the world, or has any idea of God's greatness and man's littleness, would not be so impiously rash as to wish to dictate the answer to his prayers. Such a man will almost shrink from asking for any specific thing, because he must realize that he can not know whether it would be good for him or not. There must be trust

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in the divine beneficence, for without it there can be no true prayer. The law of the case is well put in an ancient prayer :

“Let Thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy humble servants; and, that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please Thee.”

If there is any truth in our religion at all we should not wish anything that is not pleasing to God, and should realize that what is pleasing to Him is best for us. Pope speaks of one “cursed with every granted prayer.” People do not think of this, and so they usually pray simply for what they want without any thought of whether it would be right for them to have it—whether what they ask would really be a blessing. One should not thus trifle with so serious a matter. And to be offended, or to lose our faith because our idle requests are not granted is surely most foolish. The pagan philosophers knew better than this, for they placed their happiness in realities—virtue, courage, integrity, calmness in the face of danger, faith in God—and not in mere life, much less in wealth, prosperity or earthly happiness. Spiritual blessings are never withheld from a man.

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On the contrary, they are often conferred through a withholding of the earthly blessings which we so earnestly—and often so foolishly—desire. We all know of cases of this sort, either in our own lives or in the lives of others. The true prayer should, as has been said, be rather for “grace” than for “gifts.”

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ONE has only to read an article entitled *The Untilled Field of Chemistry*, written by Arthur D. Little, and printed in *Science*, to realize that there are practically no limits set by certain chemists to the possibilities of their science. The statements made in this article—only a few of which will be considered—will greatly surprise any one who has looked on chemistry as a mere affair of gases and elements, looked on it as men used to do a generation ago when the atom was the irreducible minimum. Some of the statements will surprise even those who have tried to keep pace with the developments of the science, and who know something of its achievements. Let us begin with this:

“Chemistry concerns itself with the changes which matter undergoes in varying relations to certain forms of energy and yet we do not

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know what matter is nor have we any conception of the real nature of energy. One has only to state in their ultimate terms the problems confronting us to bring a realization of how far from their solution we still stand. They are, for instance, thus summarized by Karl Pearson: 'What is it that moves? Why does it move? How does it move?' Where yet, I ask you, is their answer to be found in chemistry?"

Plainly, it is not now to be found in chemistry. But the great question is, will it ever be found there? Mr. Little evidently believes so. At least he thinks it somewhat of a reproach that greater progress in this direction has not been made. Now he would be a foolish man who should seek to oppose any obstacle to the progress of science, or try to limit it in any way. Rather ought its devotees to be stimulated to the highest endeavor by the large demands which the world should make on them. If they can explain the mystery of the universe there is no one who would not rejoice. Nor will it do to make too much of the distinction between the spiritual and the physical, for many things in the past have been accounted

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for by attributing them to spiritual causes which were later found to be wholly within the physical realm. The world of ghosts for instance has faded out of existence. So we should begin our inquiry with the admission that the scientists must have a free hand.

But the scientist—and we should not forget this—is always in danger of thinking that he has explained a thing by naming it. No one, for instance, knows much more than was known before the days of Newton about the force of gravitation. We have found out how it acts, but it can hardly be said that we know what it is. This is true of most physical forces. We might analyze matter, and discover all its constituent parts without being much nearer than we are now to answering the questions propounded by Mr. Little. When we get into the domain of energy or force we seem to be in the presence of phenomena that we can not explain. It is known that bodies move because they are acted on by a force or power, either external or internal. We may be able to produce this energy, as when we transform coal into steam. We then know what the force comes from and in what it abides, but the force

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itself still seems to be beyond us. This then appears to be the problem which the chemists are now trying to answer. It is hard to believe that they can ever do it. Nor can the fact that the chemists are or may be confident of success do much to convince men that there is a basis for their hope. If the possibility be admitted, there can be no doubt that the puzzle of the universe will be solved. For this must follow from the successful answering of the questions. Mr. Little says:

“The subject-matter of such speculations lies so far outside our present-day chemistry as to almost require apology for their presentation, but they are well within the subject-matter of the chemistry of the future, for, to again quote the words of Pearson: ‘The goal of science is clear; it is nothing short of the complete interpretation of the universe.’”

Even limiting the word “universe” to its material manifestations, the task which these men have set before themselves is one that seems to be beyond finite powers. It may turn out to be otherwise. And yet many will feel that after science has explained to the utmost there will be depths of knowledge which it can not sound.

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Tennyson had something of this in mind when he wrote:

“Only That which made us, meant us to be
mightier by and by,
Set the sphere of all the boundless Heavens
within the human eye,

Sent the shadow of Himself, the boundless,
thro' the human soul;
Boundless inward, in the atom, boundless out-
ward, in the whole.”

This “shadow of Himself,” which the poets and philosophers and religious teachers have always felt, if there is such a thing, is likely to elude the most exhaustive inquiry into the origins of things. After we have found out— if we ever do—what it is “that moves,” we shall still have to ask where it came from. It is not enough to ask “why does it move” or “how does it move”—we must also ask who or what moves it. Thus we come back again to the question of force, and force is something that no man ever saw, something that no man ever will see with human eye. It does seem, therefore, as though the ambitions of the chemists are rather unreasonable and excessive.

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Much has been done, and vastly more is yet to be done. But it is hard to get it out of the mind of men that there is a spiritual side to the universe, a spiritual element in it, that lies wholly outside the domain of physical science, and this after reducing the spiritual to the minimum. We may all find ourselves to be mistaken. The process that is now going on may be merely a continuation of that process which has eliminated ghosts and hobgoblins and angry gods from the world as causes of phenomena. But after everything else has been driven out, there will remain the mind of man, which is certainly not the product of mere chemical reactions. There is no reason why investigators should not push their inquiry to the extremest limits, no reason why they should not attempt what now seems to be impossible. For the greater the effort and the higher the hope, the more splendid will be the result, even if it be less than was looked for. Even if we do not reach "the goal of science," which is said to be "nothing short of the complete interpretation of the universe," we may nevertheless learn much from the effort to reach that goal.

What is aimed at is, indeed, a sort of crea-

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tion. For in this same article we have the account of a great German chemical plant employing thousands of chemists, engineers, officers and workmen, a plant which "represents the highest development which industrial chemistry has reached." And yet we are told, as though it were a matter of reproach, that "it can not produce an ounce of starch which a potato, growing in the ground, fabricates from water and carbonic acid gas under the influence of sunshine." This great aggregation of machinery can, indeed, "produce certain natural products in condition so available and pure as even to improve upon nature." Then follows this:

"But by what monstrous effort is it accomplished! In the spring the tender grass and the delicate unfolding leaves cover the whole earth with the green of chlorophyll. There is no noise, no smoke, no stench. The grass is cool and grateful to the touch, and clean."

And this is the ideal which it is hoped to approximate. In other words, chemistry is reproached, not simply because it can not do what nature does, but because it can not do it in the same great and easy way. Was there ever such

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an ambition as this? Is it to be realized? Did the Almighty ever intend that it should be realized? Are we to believe that man can ever make a world, with its grass and trees and leaves? Here again we may easily believe that we are on the eve of vast discoveries, that we are to learn how to use natural forces that are not now used at all—but is there to be no limit? It is not meant to imply that there should be a limit, or that there is anything impious in the effort to push the conquests of science to the furthest possible point. The only question is whether or not man is again to become as the gods? If nature is to be reproduced in our laboratories, which is manifestly the idea at the bottom of all these speculations, we shall, indeed, have reached “the complete interpretation of the universe.” The research now being prosecuted is not limited to the external universe, for the nature of man and the operations of his mind are being subjected to the same inquiry.

In the first chapter of Genesis we have this: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis is not held in much reverence by the scientists, or, indeed, by the pro-

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gressive theologians, and, of course, there have been many foolish attempts to reconcile it with science. But after all, it does not seem possible to go very much back of that first great utterance—"in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." At least we know that man did not do it. Will he ever be able to do it? That is the problem now before us. We have seen how easily and quietly nature works through her ordinary processes, and how poorly man imitates her. She is at any rate still the model and ideal, as much so as in the beginning. And yet one poet may be quoted as authority on this subject by the scientists, and strangely enough it is Matthew Arnold. His sonnet entitled *In Harmony With Nature* is as follows:

" 'In harmony with Nature?' Restless fool,
Who with such heat dost preach what were to
thee,
When true, the last impossibility—
To be like Nature strong, like Nature cool!

"Know, man hath all which Nature hath, and
more,
And in that *more* lie all his hopes for good.

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Nature is cruel, man is sick of blood ;
Nature is stubborn, man would fain adore ;

“Nature is fickle, man hath need of rest ;
Nature forgives no debt, and fears no grave ;
Man would be mild, and with safe conscience
 blest.

Man must begin, know this, where Nature
 ends ;
Nature and man can never be fast friends.
Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave !”

But even so we may argue that if man is to excel nature it must be, not by doing what she does as well as or better than she does it, but by doing other things which she can not do. If we are to begin “where nature ends” it may be that our work is not to supplement hers, but work of our own, and in quite a different sphere. And the more we prove that nature is a master workman in world-building, the more may we prove that man’s work is something else.

But still there is in this sonnet an exaltation of man over nature out of which the scientists who are seeking at least to equal nature may derive no small degree of consolation and en-

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couragement. If we are so much greater than nature it may be that, if we choose to abandon our higher sphere, and enter the lists against her, we may be able to beat her. But it still remains to inquire what nature is, whether it is an ultimate. Suppose that there is a being working both in nature and in the soul of man, can we hope to excel Him in either field? Is not the best we can do to hope to profit by His teaching, and to approximate to His excellence? And if that excellence rises to the heights of perfection, are we not forced to be somewhat skeptical as to the claims of the modern scientists? At least we find ourselves in a field that is widely different from that which is tilled by the chemists. For we are in the domain of motive, and consciousness, and conscience, and faith, and have to do with things that are utterly unrelated to physical science—unless indeed it be established first that there is nothing in the universe that is not physical. So it is extremely doubtful whether even the new chemistry can ever answer the questions: "What is it that moves? Why does it move? How does it move?" There is little likelihood that it will ever be able, even with

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the vastest and best equipped laboratories, to create trees and grass, or to give "the complete interpretation of the universe." We are just now passing through a sort of superstition in regard to the physical sciences. They have done so much that we expect them to do everything, even to make men good and virtuous by making them healthy and comfortable. The superstition does little positive harm, but it is a superstition none the less. Chemistry undoubtedly has many victories before it. Probably more is looked for from it than from any other of the sciences. But it is even yet a long way from the secret of the universe.

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NO one can believe in God except in so far as He is admitted to be a natural being. Supernatural as He is in power and wisdom and love, He is natural as being a part of the universe, as being logically and necessarily related to it. The farther we push the argument from design and the more we insist that the universe implies a Creator, the more inevitably are we driven to the conclusion that it is natural to believe in God. But if this is so, it must follow that God Himself is natural in the sense that we can not think of either man or nature apart from Him. These reflections are suggested by an extract from the writings of George Meredith printed in the weekly of T. P. O'Connor. It is as follows:

"Doctors and parsons are doing a lot of harm by increasing the fear of death and making the English less manly. No one should consider death or think of it as worse than going from

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one room into another. The greatest of political writers has said, 'Despise your life, and you are master of the lives of others.' Philosophy would say, 'Conquer the fear of death, and you are put into possession of your life.' I was a very timid and sensitive boy. I was frightened of everything; I could not endure to be left alone. But when I came to be eighteen I looked round the world (as far as a youth of eighteen can look) and determined not to be afraid again. Since then I have had no fear of death. Every night when I go to bed I know I may not rise from it. That is nothing to me. I hope I shall die with a good laugh, like the old French woman. The curé came wailing to her about salvation and things like that, and she told him her best improper story and died. The God of nature and human nature does not dislike humor, you may be sure, and would rather hear it in extremity than the formless official drone. Let us believe in a hearty God—one to love more than to fear."

It is true that we have conventionalized God as we have conventionalized death—have made death a horrible thing, and have rather shuddered at the thought of God as the

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author or permitter of death. As we, many of us, never think of God except when we are in deadly peril, or of death till it knocks at our door, it is perhaps not surprising that our state of mind should be what it is. But it is, nevertheless, a wrong, and, as it is believed, an un-Christian state of mind. If God is, as we are taught to think, the author of joy and happiness, there must be joy and happiness in His own nature. Surely it is not wrong to think of Him as "a hearty God."

No doubt our idea of God as a solemn and gloomy ruler—if not, as in the old days, a bloodthirsty tyrant—is the natural result of our thinking of virtue as a forbidding and austere quality, quite unrelated to the natural man. This is the view of a great many people, and, of course, of all those who seek to curtail the innocent pleasures of men, who look on pleasure itself as a sort of sin. It may be that some are unconscious that they hold any such opinions. But they do hold them, nevertheless. When we talk of having "a good time" we often mean a wicked time, our theory being that goodness, and happiness or pleasure stand directly opposed to each other. As it is natural

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for men to wish to be happy, and as they (many of them) regard goodness as opposed to happiness, they feel that goodness itself is unnatural, and thus they are landed by a perfectly natural process in a position that is grossly immoral. Religious people are even more responsible than irreligious people for the existence of this fallacy. For the feeling of the irreligious people is due directly to the attitude of many Christians toward life, to their attitude toward religion itself. If Christianity seems gloomy, morose, weak and unvirile, it is because it has been presented to the world in a false light. Men are repelled by it, not because it makes large demands on them, not because it calls them to noble living, but because it seems to concern itself with petty things, seems somehow to make men less men. It has come to such a pass that even the word "good" has a sinister significance. When we can say nothing else of a man, we say that he is good, and every one feels that what should be the highest praise is in reality severe criticism. The world understands this. But it is extremely difficult to make Christians understand it. They know that they do certain things,

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and do not do certain other things, and think that this is all that is necessary. Yet they may keep the so-called law from their youth up and yet not be really religious at all. But the world takes their view of religion as the only one—and rejects it.

The Protestant Reformation, in emphasizing conduct—which greatly needed to be emphasized—fell into the mistake of making conduct a mere matter of rules and outward restraint. Codes of morality were built up which, in time, became exceedingly complex and artificial. It grew to be almost sinful to indulge the natural affections—indeed, everything that was natural was thought to be wicked. Even laughter was held to be godless. Pleasure, even of the most innocent sort, was put under the ban. Man's only business in this world was to prepare himself for life in the next world—and that next world was so unlike this one, so utterly unhuman or non-human, that men felt that they must lead unhuman or non-human lives here in order to prepare for it. Men thought rather of being saved from punishment than of being saved from sin, and in order to escape the terrible and material hell of the old

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theology they felt that no sacrifice of their natural instincts—however innocent—was too great or dreadful. "My Saviour banished joy," they sang—and so, joy was banished from their world. Now the worst of it all was that this system or philosophy was wholly unnatural and artificial. Religion became an unnatural thing, as did goodness. The old idea of righteousness as a free, natural and spontaneous thing, righteousness as itself the fulness of God, was lost, and for it was substituted a sort of schedule of conduct, which was often framed without any reference whatever to fundamental right and wrong. In asserting and vindicating intellectual freedom—which was itself lost later—the ultra Protestantism brought men into bondage to those very ordinances that were condemned by St. Paul. And to-day we are still debating whether men ought to smoke or dance or go to the theater, apparently not realizing that in all this regulation there is no spirit of Christianity, but only that of a dark puritanism. "Wherefore," says the apostle, "if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?"

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Now it would manifestly be most unfair to charge all this to Protestantism. And it would be quite as unfair to say that this attitude toward life has not its basis in Christianity, no matter by whom or in what form it is held. In his contrast between Hellenism and Hebraism Matthew Arnold makes it perfectly clear—and we needed no apostle of culture to tell us this—that there is something in Christianity that is at war with the natural man, something which is antagonistic to unrestrained worldly joy.

This is, not puritanism, but Christianity. And men looking at life from this viewpoint could hardly help going to extremes. But there is a great truth in Herbert's line, "My Saviour banished joy." Life to one nourished in the noble school of Hebraism is a very serious and solemn thing. Sin is a reality, and man is prone to evil, is "born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." We may make the picture as dark as we please without going much beyond the thought of the greatest—and the most happy—saints. Nothing is gained by trying to soften down our religion into a mere pleasant philosophy.

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But, even so, goodness is natural to man, in spite of his sin, not because he has attained to it, but because he aspires to it, and desires it. Perfection may appear "remote and rising away from earth, in the background," but it is none the less the goal toward which we strive, and we can understand it, know what it is, and long for it. There is something in our nature that corresponds to it. If man is—as he is—weak and sinful, he is nevertheless the child of God, endowed with the divine nature, made in the image of God. This being true, it would seem to follow that the teachers of religion should bend all their energies to making the good and religious life natural to man, should make man see that he can fulfil his own nature only by being a good man. This was what George Herbert did, and one can not read his pious counsel without feeling that it is not only highly spiritual, but inspired by plain, old-fashioned common sense. He was right when he said "My Saviour banished joy"—and yet Herbert lived a joyous life. But the joy that he knew—and this should be true of every Christian man—was the result of living up to the very best that was in his own nature. His

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constant assumption was, not that men were good, but that they wanted to be good, that there was in them a capacity for goodness. He also taught that there was in man a need for and a longing for God—that this, too, was natural. God is supposed to say:

“If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.”

Thus out of the humanest of all qualities was forged a chain that might bind the soul to God. At any rate the relationship was recognized, and it was felt to be of the closest sort. Possibly a little of this kind of preaching would be found helpful to-day. It is certain that we need something to bridge the gap that now yawns between religion and life, something to make men realize that they are at their best only when they are most truly and sincerely religious.

Finally, as bearing on the theory that religion is a gloomy and weak thing, is the thought of battle and conquest. This flows from that other thought of sin. So out of what would otherwise be the very depths of gloom issues the highest sort of joy, the joy of self-

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conquest. If sin is the dreadful thing we are taught to think it, there can be nothing but joy in the determination to vanquish it, joy indeed in the very war against it, the joy of the struggle. And this, too, is wholly natural, as is also the passion for victory. Men are so constituted that they take pleasure in overcoming their enemies, and Christianity sets before us an enemy that we ought to wish to overcome. There is in it a direct appeal to the fighting instinct. St. Paul puts the matter thus :

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds :) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

And again we have this battle-cry from the same militant apostle :

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against

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principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

If there were no sin in the world, and no temptation, there would be no possibility of this deep Christian joy, and no opportunity for the exercise of these high and strong qualities. Though we may not pray that we may "continue in sin that grace may abound," we may be thankful that we live in a world in which all our highest powers are called into play, and know something of a religion that makes such imperious demands of the best that is in us. Those who think of Christianity as something weak, gloomy, petty, artificial and unnatural, simply do not know what it is. They have mistaken something else—some man-made system—for it.

THE GOSPEL OF SHIRKING

THERE is a growing disposition to attribute sin and weakness to everything but their right cause—which is almost invariably an enfeebled will. And the will is feeble because its possessor has utterly failed to train and discipline it. The man who excuses himself for his lapses on the ground that he has a weak will is, in nine cases out of ten, himself to blame therefor. He has failed to discipline himself, has trifled and coquetted with sin and temptation, has taken the easy way, and has neglected what the theologians call the means of grace. Beginning with the theory that he was in some way an exception to all ordinary rules, and holding to the idea that he was entitled to everything while he owed nothing to society, it is not surprising that he should soon cease to have any sense of responsibility. The truth is that in thinking of ourselves and of others we have got into a pagan frame of mind,

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although the great pagans were men of exalted and strict virtue. People who never set their foot inside of the church, never study the Bible, never read the philosophers, and never make the slightest pretense of denying themselves anything, find it hard to see how any one can be to blame for his outrageous conduct. It is always the result of temperament, environment, heredity—of everything, in short, except the man's own sinful nature. Of course, some people are diseased morally as others are diseased physically. For such there should be the utmost pity. Whatever can be done to help them ought to be done. They are not to be condemned by human judgment. Perhaps they did the best they could. For them and for all others there must be infinite charity. But for the normal man, who is the average man, and who represents the great majority of the race, no such pitiful plea can be made. He must be judged by his life. If he has failed to improve his opportunities he alone is to blame. And in considering this question we must deal with ordinary people, with society as a whole. Considering the matter thus, it ought not to be difficult to see the danger involved in the free and

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easy theory of life that is now so popular. Men can be good and honest and true, no matter what their temperament, heredity, or environment.

Of course, if they will not submit to discipline, if they will not use the means provided for the development of their spiritual natures, they can not expect to be able to meet the foe with any hope of triumph. If they live easy, selfish, non-religious lives; if they are content solely with the joys of this world; if they put from them everything that is unpleasant or hard, they ought not to be surprised if they fail when the test comes. You are not sorry for the half-back who collapses and loses the game for his team because he has failed to train—failed to keep himself in condition. You do not attribute his breakdown to temperament or environment or heredity, but to his unwillingness to endure hardship. It is precisely so in the battle of life. We may—indeed, we must—be sympathetic toward the poor, broken human beings, even if they have failed through their own fault. But to justify them, to say that they might not have won even had they lived the right sort of life, and above all to base any so-

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cial theory on their failures—this is the wildest sort of folly.

Those who have studied this question of sin in even a half-scientific way know perfectly well that men are neither good nor bad all at once. It was one of the pagans—possibly the most cynical of them—who said that “no man ever became extremely wicked all at once.” Men and women coddle sin, trifle and play with temptation, accustom themselves to the thought of wickedness, imagine what would happen to them should they yield, all the while refusing to put themselves in contact with the thoughts of the great masters—and yet they cry out for pity when they reach the goal which they must have known they would reach. As Shakespeare said long ago, they tread “the primrose path of dalliance.” To paraphrase another’s thought, they deck with garlands the downward path and then murmur because they reach the fatal goal. The process of deterioration is gradual in almost all cases. Men not only fail to resist, but they deliberately coöperate with the forces of evil. It is necessary to put the matter strongly because people nowadays are transferring

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their sympathies from the sinner to the sin. How could he have helped doing this or that thing, we ask ourselves, and before we know it we are forced to the conclusion that the thing the man could not help doing is in itself right, or at least not sinful and base. Human responsibility is the greatest thing in the world. Without it society would be dissolved. But for it morality would cease to exist. A good deal too much is made of so-called temperament. It is easier for some to do right than it is for others, and vastly harder for some than for others to resist temptation. But there is in all at least the capacity for struggle and effort. We need not surrender the citadel at the first assault, need not assume that we are under no obligation to defend it. We can not play the traitor to our God, to the moral law, to religion and the church, or to society, and hope to be excused as geniuses who are in some way above the law. The church has always recognized that "we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves." It is for that reason that she bids us ask God to "keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls ; that we may be defended

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from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul."

We need to take the heroic view of life, need to think of it as a warfare in which our adversaries are innumerable temptations. What should we think of a soldier who, no matter how cowardly he was by nature and "temperament," should fail to stand by the colors in time of war? Such a man would be court-martialed and shot. All about us are humble and obscure men, quite guiltless of having any philosophy of life, who do their work from day to day with the most conscientious faithfulness, who make sacrifices of which the world never hears, and who are always true to duty. It is of these that we should learn. Temptations are a part of life. As the wrestler with whom we strive strengthens and exercises us, so do temptations exercise and strengthen the spiritual nature. Without them there could, as far as we now see, be no such thing as character. People who have been misled by their sympathies, or by their supposed broadness and toleration, should read the great poets, and the writers who describe noble deeds rather than

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thoughts and speculations. Much good can be got out of such a piece of literature as Augustine Birrell's essay on *Truth-Hunting*. Charles Lamb was weak in many ways, and he had more than his due share of temperament, but he asked for no charity. "O my friend," he wrote to Coleridge, "cultivate the filial feelings! and let no man think himself released from the kind charities of relationship; these shall give him peace at the last; these are the best foundation for every species of benevolence." Instead of thinking of his own "development" he "played cribbage every night with his imbecile father."

And this suggests a word about this theory of development which is so often advanced in behalf of those who are recreant to the duties that lie all about them. No man can attain any development worthy of the name by playing traitor to his duties. The best development is that of character, of the spiritual nature, and it comes directly from sacrifice. It is a curious thing, too, that those who run away from husband or wife to seek it, who desert their children, and affront society, almost invariably degenerate along the very lines on which they

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hope to advance. Human nature is one, and this being so, the normal man can not advance intellectually when he deteriorates morally. Even if he could, the prize would be too dearly bought. The trouble with most of us who take this easy view of life is that we have failed to educate ourselves—or are the victims of a false education. It is the first duty of men and women to be clean and brave and true and self-sacrificing and subject to their own higher nature. They are not, except in the rarest cases, under any compulsion to lie or steal or to be impure. Perverts and degenerates are, as insane people, under another law. But the thought is not of these. It is of the overwhelming preponderance of normal people, and not of the rebels against society. And the argument is that we can not construct a social theory based on the abnormal types.

In conclusion, a word must be said of temptation as a moral force. When we look into our own hearts we know that we are all, in the Christian sense, weak creatures,—“miserable sinners,” as the Prayer Book puts it. What we need, therefore, is strength, and this can be got by a proper use of temptation. The great writ-

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ers, especially the great poets, have always held this theory. It is beyond question true. There are several passages in Browning in which this is made very clear. There is no temptation stronger than that toward unbelief. Probably it is the master temptation of our time. Yet the poet shows how it is at bottom faith itself. For he says, speaking for the bishop:

“With me, faith means perpetual unbelief
Kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michael's foot
Who stands calm just because he feels it
writhe.

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No, when the fight begins within himself,
A man's worth something. God stoops o'er his
head,
Satan looks up between his feet—both tug—
He's left, himself, i' the middle: the soul wakes
And grows.”

The same great poet makes the Pope judge the young priest thus:

“Was the trial sore?
Temptation sharp? Thank God a second time!
Why comes temptation but for man to meet
And master and make crouch beneath his foot,

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And so be pedestalled in triumph? Pray
‘Lead us into no such temptations, Lord!’
Yea, but, O Thou whose servants are the bold,
Lead such temptations by the head and hair,
Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,
That so he may do battle and have praise!”

And finally we have this from the same militant poet:

“And so I live, you see,
Go through the world, try, prove, reject,
Prefer, still struggling to effect
My warfare; happy that I can
Be crossed and thwarted as a man.
Not left in God’s contempt apart,
With ghastly smooth life, dead at heart.”

So speak the great souls of literature. And the Bible gives us the whole story of God’s dealing with mankind on precisely this basis. We need to get something of this heroism, of this tonic into our blood. The old doctrine of perfection through suffering is as true to-day as it ever was, and is more needed to-day than perhaps ever before. We may, nay should be kind and tolerant and gentle and sympathetic and charitable, but we can not afford to put evil

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for good and good for evil, or light for darkness and darkness for light. The moral distinctions must be insisted on. And instead of trying to comfort and console the weak by telling them that they are the victims of temperament or environment or heredity, we should strive to get some strength into them, try to nerve them for the struggle, to make them ashamed of themselves, and to bring them into direct relations to Almighty God, who is the source of all spiritual strength. The world can not be saved by any such flabby gospel as that which is now so popular.

THE CANDOR OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I N an extremely interesting discussion of this subject, the *Spectator* advances a theory that is capable of a wide application. Every one knows that the writers of the Gospels and Epistles told the truth exactly as they understood it, no matter how seriously it reflected on them and their cause. Their weakness and cowardice, their lack of faith, their dullness and blindness, their petty quarrels with one another—all these are given to the world with perfect frankness. When their Master spoke to them of high and holy things, they admit that they took what He said in the natural and materialistic sense, as when He spoke of having meat that they knew not of—His meat being to do the will of God. Again, when He told them that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood, they asked how He could give them His flesh to eat. Even when He told them that “it is the Spirit that quickeneth,”

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and that "the flesh profiteth nothing," they still failed to enter into His thought. It may be said in passing that many Christians, after all the centuries that have passed, still adhere to the old materialistic conception held by the disciples before they received the fuller revelation. But the point is that here, as in everything else, the evangelists freely put themselves in the wrong, and do not hesitate to show themselves to the worst advantage. When we think how prone men are to conceal such things in themselves, how often the participators in great events strive to glorify themselves, this uncompromising truth on the part of the New Testament writers seems all the more remarkable. It will not do to explain the phenomenon by saying that these men were inspired. That is true, but they were not controlled. Had they been, there would have been no inconsistencies in the record. Even the slightest mistake in regard to the most trivial thing is enough to overthrow such a theory of inspiration. Indeed, these very inconsistencies have been used by Christian apologists to prove, not the exactness of the record, but the utter honesty of the men who wrote the record.

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So these men told the truth about themselves and their brethren, not because they were compelled to do so, but because it never occurred to them to do anything else. Their object was to give the facts as they saw and understood them, and in doing that they spared neither themselves nor their cause. "Some of the incidents recorded by the evangelist would," the writer of the article under discussion says, "have ruined any cause but Christianity." The case of Judas is specially referred to. This man was chosen by One claiming to be divine, and yet how great, humanly speaking, was the error! The ordinary historian might easily have thought that to record the facts concerning Judas would be to discredit the claims which the Master made for Himself, and which were to be made for Him. "Have not I," said Christ, "chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" The test is crucial, yet it is triumphantly met. For here is an incident that reflects, not solely on the apostolic band, but on the cause, and—it might have been thought—on the Master Himself. The candor in this case rises to the point of sublimity. It is the

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product of an unshakable faith in Christ and His gospel. The *Spectator* puts it thus:

“Facts were the stuff of which this revelation had been formed, therefore, every relevant fact must be material for its upbuilding. It was held inconceivable that the truth about Jesus could be antagonistic to Christianity. The candor of the New Testament was at once the proof and the product of this faith in the minds of the men who wrote it. * * * The writers of the New Testament found it impossible to imagine that any fact about Jesus could be antagonistic to Christianity.”

Such is the theory of which mention has been made, and it is a true theory. So far from a belief tending to falsify historical records it operates to exclude error. Men who are sure of themselves and their doctrine do not feel that it is necessary to be always protecting it, always setting up little defenses about it. On the contrary, being sure of themselves and of their cause, they write freely and naturally—almost with carelessness. If Christ and His gospel were divine, no facts could by any possibility be brought to light which would discredit them.

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This feeling was undoubtedly controlling in the minds of these men. If Christ was the Truth, as they believed, no truth could conflict with Him.

But these writers were illumined, guided and inspired to such an extent that their characters were molded by the divine influence. They were not saved from inaccuracies, but they were saved from dishonesty, and from any desire or purpose to deceive. What inspired them was that very faith which filled the believing mind which has been spoken of. They were simple, natural, utterly sincere, and sensitively responsive to the divine influence. The gospel which they preached to others had first made them what they were. Unless they had been thus educated they would never have accepted or acted on the theory that no "fact about Jesus could be antagonistic to Christianity." On the contrary, they would have shown the same timorousness, the same desire to cover up on the one hand and to embellish on the other, which disfigure so much of the later Christian literature, and so much of our historical writing generally. Their candor grew out of their faith, and their faith was both a

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revelation and an inspiration to them. Father Waggett, in his book entitled *The Scientific Temper in Religion*, has much to say of the believing mind as a requisite to faith, and he, too, insists that, so far from leading men to take biased views, it is the only thing that enables them to appropriate the truth—to make it real and vital. It was certainly so with the New Testament writers. Sure of themselves, sure of their Master, and sure of their message, they naturally threw themselves on the absolute truth, serene in their confidence that no truth could conflict with the Truth to whose service they were solemnly pledged. So it is that these writings have stood every test to which they have been subjected.

All this has a very wide and general application. For one thing, it is clear that the ultra-orthodox are what they are, not because they have more faith, but because they have less faith than others. They are always in a state of alarm. Now it is science that terrifies them, now rationalism and now the higher criticism. Always the citadel seems just on the point of being taken. They would pose as defenders of a faith which they do not think can stand

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of itself or make its own way. They hedge themselves and their churches about with definitions, harden the faith into a system, and struggle valiantly for things which might, every one of them, be given up without in any way weakening the religion which they profess. Their idea is that many facts "about Jesus could be antagonistic to Christianity." And they hold that it is for them to say what those facts are. So, too, such apologists seem quite unwilling to trust themselves to the great and free movement of natural forces, to the orderly processes of the universe of God. Christ trusted to them, and so did those who wrote about Him. Their power was the power of faith. It is a power of which, unfortunately, we have a very imperfect realization. If we had the faith that the apostles had we should know that God can not be thwarted, that there is nothing in the world that can injure or impede His revelation, and that every new truth that is revealed—no matter how "dangerous" it may seem to be—can only have the effect of still further commending that revelation to the world. But few men are able to enter into this larger conception. Truth is classified as Chris-

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tian and non-Christian, whereas all truth—if it be truth at all—is Christian truth.

To proceed a step further. The application of the theory held by the New Testament writers to the conduct of life would result in making men more honest and natural, much more courageous, and vastly more trustful in the divine purposes. Only those are free whom the truth makes free. And only those who are free are able to live lives honestly and bravely. The unwillingness to work and coöperate with the great forces in the midst of which we move is a sort of survival from the savage state, that state in which men were in constant terror. They were the victims of this terror because of their ignorance of the truth. The more truth there was in their lives the less of terror there was. When we realize that goodness can not be defeated, that God is the ruler of His universe, and that a knowledge of His laws is the best equipment we can have, we shall not be greatly disturbed by anything that may happen. The more light there is the more safely we shall walk. The greater our faith the greater will be our freedom, and the greater our freedom the greater will be our faith. So

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it may be that there is a philosophy of life as well as one of belief in the theory which has prompted these remarks. Surely this should be so, as belief and conduct are intimately related. In life and belief both we can prove our faith in God by our courage and freedom in dealing with the great subject of truth.

Finally, there is in it all a lesson for the writers of so-called profane history, for all writers who deal with great causes. In much of the work of these men we see the very defects which are so significantly absent from the New Testament record. The historian with a pet theory or a pet hero always seems to feel that he must suppress or distort everything that appears to reflect on the one or to conflict with the other. He does not realize that when he does this, he weakens the theory and discredits the hero. Yet such is always the case. So, too, the man that essays to defend a great cause becomes so exclusively an advocate as to create the impression that the cause could not make headway, could not even survive except as it is protected by him even from friendly investigation and criticism. So we have our literature of adulation and glorification, and

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the result invariably is that the reader whose opinion is worth anything is almost certain to conclude that the man or the cause thus championed is less worthy than is actually the case. In making the discount for the personal equation we make too large a discount, and so are guilty of injustice. But for that injustice the falsifying advocate—though the falsification may be unconscious—is wholly responsible. Here, again, if the writer really believed in his hero he would allow the world to see him as he actually was. If he were sure of the righteousness of his cause he would tell the exact truth about it. But in both cases he shrinks from the truth because he is far from being sure of his subject. There is in his mind a doubt and an uncertainty which he does not admit even to himself, of which, indeed, he may be quite unconscious. But it is there, and it vitiates all his work. Many a great character of history has suffered profoundly from the use of this historical method. For the facts always come out sooner or later. And even while they are hidden there is still always the suspicion that things may not be as represented. The confident man is, therefore, the candid man. The

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writer whom we trust is he whose whole work is permeated with sincerity—is true in its substance. As things are what they are, and will be what they will be, a great writer once asked why men should be willing to be deceived. When it is a question about being deceived concerning the greatest and most precious things of life there ought to be no doubt about the answer. The world has not been deceived by the writers of the New Testament. They strove to give us that “utter truth” which “the careless angels know.” There was in their minds no other thought—there could be none in the minds of men who so loved their Master, and who so trusted in Him and His great cause. To have treated either on any other basis than that of truth would have been to discredit and insult them.

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PEOPLE are often asked whether they believe a certain thing or not, the assumption being that they can not or ought not to believe it because it is distasteful to the questioner. Of course, the proper answer to such a question is that the thing to be considered is not whether the statement meets one's approval, but whether it is true. If it is true, it must be believed, no matter how much distress may be caused by the acceptance of the doctrine or teaching. Now there is a principle lying back of all this which may well be pressed. It is that every proposition must stand on its own merits, that it is entitled to a trial at the hands of men who are willing to put from them all preconceived opinions, and to accept whatever is proved to them, no matter at what pain to themselves. A half-century ago Doctor Temple, once head master of Rugby, and later Archbishop of Canterbury, said, in *Essays and Reviews*:

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"He is guilty of high treason against the faith who fears the result of any investigation, whether philosophical or scientific or historical. And, therefore, nothing should be more welcome than the extension of knowledge of any and every kind; for every increase in our accumulations of knowledge throws fresh light upon these, the real problems of our day.

* * * Not only in the understanding of religious truth, but in all exercise of the intellectual powers, we have no right to stop short of any limit but that which nature—that is, the decree of the Creator—has imposed on us."

Though we have made much progress, we have not yet lifted ourselves to the level of that noble utterance. We still ask whether a certain discovery consists with what we have been taught to believe is true, whether it fits in with our own opinions, and almost never whether it is true. Yet if it is true, the question is closed. If it is not true, the statement must be rejected for that reason, and not because it is displeasing to us.

It may be that we are on the eve of a struggle between what is supposed to be religious truth and social science, just as men of the preceding

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generation had to face the struggle between religious truth and physical science. If that is so it is hardly likely that we shall meet the issue any more honestly or fearlessly than our fathers did. But we have at least one great advantage, and that lies in the help that we have had from the students of religion, of the Bible, and from the so-called higher critics. We are not tied to any such narrow views as those which were entertained by our fathers. And yet it will be well for us to inform ourselves, that we may be prepared for any possible crisis that lies ahead of us. And we can not do better than begin with Doctor Temple's words: "Not only in the understanding of religious truth," he says, "but in all exercise of the intellectual powers, we have no right to stop short of any limit but that which nature—that is the decree of the Creator—has imposed." In other words, the mind is as divine as the soul or the spiritual nature is. The appeal of Almighty God is very largely to the mind, as when He bids us repent, repentance being simply a change of mind. Our minds are from God, and it was designed that we should use them freely. If anything appears to us, after the

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best investigation we are able to make, to be true, we are bound to accept it no matter what else it may seem to make false. We can not make this application too broadly, for it covers all the truth with which we are called on to deal. Truth can not exist in the world—at least it can have no influence—except in so far as there are men whose minds are open to it, men who are willing to accept it no matter from where it comes, no matter what revolutions it may seem to make in their way of thinking. If any truth is from God, all truth is from Him. If the new truth overthrows the old truth that we thought came from Him, that only proves that it did not come from Him, or that it had been distorted by men unable to appropriate it in its purity.

Let us try to prove the case by contraries, and, to that end, take a very simple example. When we see in our favorite paper an expression of opinion that does not please us, of an opinion that is not ours, we at once conclude that the paper is wrong—possibly that it is corrupt or controlled—and never stop to ask ourselves whether we may not ourselves be in the wrong. We want, not the truth, but what the

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prophet of old called "smooth things." Our standard is set up as infallible, and we try everything by that, and not by the standard of the absolute truth. We think we are offended by the falseness of the statement, when, as a matter of fact, we are offended only by its divergence from our own opinions. And the demand is, not that the paper should tell the truth, but that it should say only what pleases us. We do not inquire whether the views have been well considered or not, do not reflect that other people may approve what we condemn, but we array ourselves against perhaps millions of people who are as convinced of the rightfulness of their opinions as we are of the rightfulness of ours. All this is very human, but it is also very weak. There are all sorts of tests which we impose, none of which has any necessary connection with the truth. Political economy must consist with the platform of our party. Religious teaching must conform to the creed of our church. Even in judging a book we ask, not so much whether it is a sound piece of literature, as whether it pleases us. It is under such limitations as these that the thought of the world is mostly done, that truth is, as a

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rule, sought for. And these limitations and restrictions are insisted on even by men of character and intelligence, who are, apparently, unable to see that they are dishonoring truth, discrediting scholarship and putting a premium on cowardice, dishonesty and indolence. The result is that orthodoxy, which means simply right teaching, has come to represent prejudice and preconceived opinion. If this is to be our frame of mind, we shall have a distressing time when the crisis, to which many are looking forward, actually arrives.

Two considerations in particular suggest themselves. The first is that any such objections as these to new knowledge are utterly futile. They have never accomplished anything. The revelations of science have not been stayed. When these have been proved to be false they have failed of acceptance, but never otherwise. They have been overthrown, not because they conflicted with religion, not because men were unwilling to receive them, but because science has itself shown their falseness. In other words, the old test of truth was applied to them. Failing to stand that, the new teaching has been discarded. We used to be

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told that geology conflicted with the first chapter of Genesis, as it did. But we have learned that the geologists were right, and so we have modified our views as to the first chapter of Genesis. It was precisely so with the doctrine of evolution. That has suffered some reverses of late, and we see that it must, though broadly true, be modified in some particulars. But this is not the spirit in which it was met by the churches. Many of us can remember the bitterness with which it was assailed. Men who should have known better perverted Darwinism in order to make a point against it. It was the same temper as that with which we are familiar. The bitterness was the result, not of the belief of men that the new learning was false—for as to that they could know little or nothing—but of their shocked and angered feelings. Reference was solely to the personal standard. As has been said, nothing whatever was accomplished. As much of the new doctrine as was true survived. What was considered not to be absolutely proved was subjected to further investigation. No influence, political or spiritual, no agency, whether state or church, can stop the march of truth. So, as

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has been said, the attempt to do so is futile—has many times been proved to be so. The church that tries to stop it is, as Archbishop Temple says, itself “guilty of high treason against the faith.”

The other consideration to which reference has been made is that the method is not only futile but not in accordance with the divine will. We sometimes say that revelation is completed, and this may be admitted in spiritual affairs. Though John Robinson, of Leyden, was not far wrong when he said that new light is yet to break forth from Holy Scripture. There may have been no new revelation in the spiritual realm, but men certainly have come through some process to a clearer and more comprehensive knowledge of the truth. The truth was in the Bible and in the church, but men's minds have been broadened, and investigations have thrown much light on the problems that used so greatly to vex us. But however all this may be, there is certainly a revelation in science and history that is going on continuously. And this revelation is as much from God as is that which is contained in the Bible. Here again Doctor Temple is a safe

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guide. After reminding us that "since the days of the apostles, no further revelation has been granted," he says:

"The mature mind of our race is beginning to modify and soften the hardness and severity of the principles which its early manhood had elevated into immutable statements of truth. Men are beginning to take a wider view than they did. Physical science, researches into history, a more thorough knowledge of the world they inhabit, have enlarged our philosophy beyond the limits which bounded that of the church of the Fathers; and all these have an influence, whether we will or no, on our determinations of religious truth. There are found to be more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in the patristic theology. God's creation is a new book, to be read by the side of His revelation, and to be interpreted as coming from Him."

It is not only a new book, but it is a new revelation, as everything coming from God must be. If it be said that men got the truth about nature and society for themselves, while the truth about their own souls and about God was revealed directly, the answer is that even

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in the latter case men had to work and toil for the truth, and that it was necessary to use the mind to which the revealed truth was addressed. So there has been a progressive revelation even in spiritual things.

We must assume that it is as much in accordance with the divine will that we should know about science and history and social development as that we should know what are felt to be the more distinctly religious truths. Man was made, under God, the master of the earth. Subject to finite limitations, it is none the less his divinely appointed mission to conquer his inheritance. For countless ages he has been engaged in that sublime work. Always there have been those who would hinder the forward march, who feared that the pace was too swift, and who insisted that it was impious to endeavor to learn too much. But still the quest for truth has gone on. The battle has been hard, the march painful, and the progress slow. But all were ordained by God and all have been blessed by Him. Beginning with nothing except his body and the spark of a soul, man has done—what he has done. And through all the ages he has coveted and striven

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for the truth, and for the truth about God's creation, which surely was a fair subject for investigation. There could be no more sublime study except that of the spiritual relations between God and man. Every great genius who has flashed a discovery or a new truth on the world has been the channel for the transmission of a divine revelation. We need to remember that all truth comes from God, and that the only question is whether it is really true or not. If it is, we must accept it. And in any event we must give the widest freedom to men engaged in the search for truth, holding them responsible only for an honest and humble use of their powers and faculties. It does not matter whether we are offended or not, but it does matter whether we are or are not willing to be enlightened, whether we open or close our minds to the truth. If there is any truth in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the guide into all truth, if we really believe that God is now, as of old, working through the minds of men, we surely have no reason to be affrighted.

INTERPRETERS OF THE FAITH

THESE are preëminently the days of the new theology, days in which men are—usually with reverence—trying to explain the old truths to themselves and to commend them to a world that undoubtedly thinks in different terms from those used by men hundreds of years ago. All this indicates that there is a greater rather than a less interest in religion—that there are men who, though unable to accept the old faith in the old form, are nevertheless unwilling to let it go. So they are almost driven to a restatement of it. Back of it all there is this undoubted sincerity. Men question, not because they wish to deny, but because they long to find a foundation on which they may securely rest. What they want is something they can hold to, something of which they can feel sure. But while crediting the new theologians with perfect sincerity, and acknowledging the great service that many of

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them have rendered, there are nevertheless certain reservations that must be made, certain cautions that ought to be suggested. No one, for instance, can read the treatises of some of them without feeling that their difficulty is not with Christianity, its Founder, its miracles, or its historic creeds, but with revealed and supernatural religion of any kind. The conception of God—the mightiest of all conceptions—troubles them quite as much as the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ. And in truth it is quite as hard to realize. In reading what they say of God, one can not but feel that some of them have rationalized so much as to make even God Himself impossible. So it is that our interpreters who try so hard to make Christianity reasonable do not help us much in the matter of religion in the broad sense. Nor do they realize that their trouble comes not from their inability to understand certain statements about God, but from their inability to understand, comprehend, or in any sense to realize any God at all. Yet this is the impression which much of their reasoning conveys to unprejudiced minds.

Nor can one fail to note that when Christian

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men engage in this work of recasting our theology, they very often forget two things which they, as Christians, are bound to remember. One of those things is the fact of revelation. If a man is a Christian at all he must accept that. Yet how often do our new theologians seem to leave it altogether out of account! They discuss the very fundamentals of the faith in precisely the same spirit as that shown by those who believe in no revelation at all. Impatient of any authority, they seem to forget that there is—as there must be for them if they are Christians—such a thing as divine authority, that God has spoken to men and that the very documents which they use are, according to their own theory, revealed by God. No point is made here on biblical criticism, for that is not under consideration. It is enough to say that the sacred writings must be subjected to the same tests as those applied to other writings. All that is meant is that too often Christian critics seem to lose sight altogether of the divine element in the problem, accepting on the basis of reason truths which they never could have got except by revelation, and rejecting other truths which came precisely in the same

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way, simply because they do not seem reasonable. Here again the question is not as to results, but as to spirit and method. The results may be correct—may be accepted by all within the next twenty-five years. But if there is such a thing as a relationship between God and man, if God has revealed Himself, these are facts which ought to be considered. To think of religion as a mere rational thing, separate and apart from revelation, is what no Christian can afford to do. It is something which no critic attempting as a Christian to interpret Christianity for other Christians ought to permit himself to do. Yet it is easy to fall into this error.

It is a mistake to consider certain great doctrines with little or no reference to the body of truth of which they are a part, to tradition, to institutions such as the church, and to rites, ceremonies and sacraments. Almost invariably our new teachers are weak on the institutional side. Yet it is most important. The very truth itself took form in these institutions, and they body it forth and manifest it to the world. We ought at least to consider the relation of things. For what we have to deal with is not a few detached truths, but a body of truth,

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each part of which is related to every other part, a body of truth that lives and is capable of imparting life to men. And yet, as a rule, we discuss these great Christian dogmas as though they were mere mathematical formulæ, unrelated to anything else or to one another, and we hope to make them more reasonable by isolating them from the body of which they are a necessary and vital part. We are very prone to forget this, but when we do forget it our reasoning as Christian critics, seeking to strengthen the faith of our brethren, is largely vitiated. To attempt to deal with the nature or the person of Christ apart from the church, the creeds, history and, above all, the sacraments, is to invite certain failure—for all the elements just enumerated, and many more, are legitimate and necessary parts of the problem. We must remember then, that God can be known only through the Spirit, that revelation is a great fact, and that we have to do with a body of truth which is interdependent, and related to many things. That is, we must remember all this if we assume to argue as Christians desirous of preserving the essential faith.

Again, the subject is often discussed as

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though it were entirely apart from history, and had no relation to individual personal experience. Many of our friends consider these great questions almost as they would were they entirely new—presented for the first time. Yet every principle or dogma has a history, and, what is more important, every such dogma is related to the historic development of the race on religious lines. Christianity is, of course, fundamentally a life, but it is also a historic fact, appearing in human life at a certain time in the world's history, preached by men of whose existence there is no possible doubt, and testified to by a great organization which is itself historic. One might as well expect to understand the constitution of the United States without studying its origin, the views of the men who framed it, and the decisions of the courts regarding it, as to expect to understand Christianity solely in the light of present day knowledge. Many of our modern reformers do treat the constitution as something new, as something without a history. But their unfortunate experiences ought to teach us all the folly of trying to understand, interpret and account for Christianity apart from its historic

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life. It is important to know what the first Christians believed and taught, what the apostles held to be the truth, how the creeds came to be made and what they were designed to accomplish; and even the decisions of the councils and the writings of the Fathers—which so many of us rather scorn—are at least part of what the lawyers call the *res gestæ*. Christian truth has been at work in the world and in the lives of men for almost two thousand years, and it has affected history—and been affected by it, for the two have acted and reacted on each other—more powerfully than any other force. We have thus a great body of doctrine which is inextricably intertwined with two thousand years of human history. Nay, one of the fathers, evidently having the doctrine of the Logos in mind, insists that Christianity is as old as creation.

Now the critics no doubt understand all this, but the point that is made is that their writings as a rule show almost no consciousness of it. They are devoid entirely of historic atmosphere, reflecting no light from the past, and none from the historic events of which the Christian truths are a part. The question with

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such writers is usually rather what these truths mean now by themselves than how they came to be, how it was that men ever believed them, or what was their effect on life. Not only is there a historic side to the question, there is also a sociological, and even a biological side. Christianity is in what Professor Sumner calls our "folk-ways"—our "mores" or customs. It has influenced them, and they have influenced it. Probably neither can be understood without some understanding of the other. This phase of the question certainly presents a most curious and interesting study. It is as important as it is curious and interesting. But little attention is paid to it by the new theologians. In spite of the wise reserve and reverence which the more thoughtful and pious of them show, they somehow seem to be dealing with statements made by uninspired men of our own time, statements without a history, and having no very direct bearing on life, statements which it does not much matter whether men accept or not. This impression, of course, is not designed, but it results from the methods employed.

Finally there is the question of the relation

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of Christianity to life, and of its appeal to individual experience. Its truths are not mere scientific truths which have no bearing on the conduct of life, no message for the spiritual nature. Even the doctrine which seems to us most extravagant and unreal and even false, has—or has had—a great influence on the souls of men. It has played a part in the moral development of the world. One can believe in the atomic theory or not without affecting one's moral nature, or crippling one's spiritual life. But when we are told that "the word was made flesh," we feel, whatever we may make of it, that here is a truth—or at least a statement—which is of a very different nature, which may be related to great things, and which quite conceivably bears on life and its conduct. No Christian doctrine can be adequately dealt with by one who does not keep this in mind. And when we reflect a moment we realize that the dogmas of Christianity were not formulated as merely intellectual propositions, to be accepted or rejected as we choose, but were designed to influence life, to mold character, and to nourish the spiritual nature of man. All this they once did. Possibly they have not wholly ceased to

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perform their old functions. At any rate this is one of the most important elements in the problem. Last of all is the individual experience of millions of believers who have lived, and are still living by the old truths, who have found them fruitful, and who are able to point to things which the Christian faith has wrought in their own lives. When we remember that we are considering not simply Christianity, but religion, religion as a revelation, revelation as a body of doctrine which has a history, is related to history and to life, is intertwined with customs and habits, bears directly on life and morals, and is testified to by a very wide and general human experience, we must feel that the problem is far from being the simple one that we sometimes think it. Religion is a matter of the heart as much as of the head. It is necessarily and rightly rooted in the affections, for it is an appeal from Eternal Love to the love in human hearts.

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THERE is a theory of religion that is so mechanical and immoral—though not held with any consciousness of immorality on the part of those who adhere to it—that one can only wonder how it could ever have found entrance into any human mind. The theory is that men are always and of necessity materially rewarded for being good, materially rewarded for accepting and believing the gospel. This view is not only, as has been said, mechanically immoral, but it is entirely unscriptural. For the problem of the ages—the problem that puzzled the great men of the Old Testament—has been to explain why it is that the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. Indeed, one of the strongest arguments in favor of immortality is that another life will be needed to redress the wrongs and injustices which are so obvious here. One of the most mysterious of the parables of Christ deals with

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this theme. Lazarus was a good man, and yet he was tortured in this world. The rich man was a bad man, and yet Abraham is represented as saying to him: "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things." This case is quite conclusive. Lazarus, the good man, received evil things in this life, and the rich man received good things. It is often so—oftener so than not. The weak and helpless and meek—those on whom special spiritual blessings are pronounced—are, almost as a rule, trodden under the feet of the proud and the prosperous. Goodness in itself means, or ought to mean, prosperity. The only goodness that is approved by God is goodness for its own sake, and without the remotest thought of reward. Divine truth is not something in which a man can invest with any hope whatever of drawing dividends that will pay for earth's luxuries. That truth is something through which we grow in character, and not at all in wealth.

No doctrine can be more dangerous than the one under consideration. For those who hold that prosperity is the reward of goodness are almost certain to cease to be good when the

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supposed reward is withdrawn. If there is such a bargain it seems only fair that God shall keep His part of it. And when He does not the man is likely to consider himself absolved from its obligations. At least there is almost certain to be a challenge of the divine justice, and a complaining at what the man thinks undeserved punishment. If what Christ said of riches and of rich men is true, God could hardly do a more cruel thing than to give wealth to a good man, to make material prosperity the reward of virtue. For this would be to expose goodness and virtue to a very corrupting and deadly influence—that is, if Christ was right when He said that it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The real rewards—and the only ones worth striving for—are peace, a sense of being right with God, an undaunted soul, and the very virtue itself which is so great a thing as to be above all earthly reward. A man who has these can not be overthrown nor shaken by the storms of fate.

But the theory is not only mechanical and dangerous, it is grossly immoral as well, and in

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many ways. Only one point can be made in this connection. Men who believe that they are prosperous because they are good, are almost certain to end by believing that they are good because they are prosperous. They look on their worldly state as proof of their high virtue. "God," they feel, if they do not say, "gave me this wealth because I am good, and therefore my possession of the wealth is obviously a proof of my goodness." That is a most immoral view, and for two reasons. In the first place, when a man begins to feel sure that he is good—forgetting that he is fundamentally a sinner, with almost boundless evil possibilities and propensities in him—he has taken the first step on the road to badness. In the second place, the man is certain to pass from thinking wealth a proof of virtue to thinking it a virtue in itself. He compares himself with others, always to his own advantage, and, as he thinks he is virtuous because he is rich, he concludes that those who are poor are wicked. And so we have at last what is really a horrible reversal of the divine law, and a wicked upsetting of the divine standards. The only really good men are those

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who are good even though God slays them, only those who would be good even if they were convinced that there was no God at all, who would tread the hard path of duty even if all light and hope should be withdrawn from them. Perfection proves itself, and virtue is its own evidence. They are to be striven for for their own sake, and to be admired and desired as positive goods in themselves.

It is, of course, true that happiness is attached to virtue. But the trouble is that we do not understand clearly in what happiness consists. We measure it by purely worldly standards, and confuse it with those things which are designed to gratify merely earthly desires. Thinking thus, it is quite impossible for us to see that God may often most truly reward men by taking from them their fortunes. Yet this is clear. Happiness then is a delight in truth and goodness, a joy which comes from endeavoring to make the will of God prevail. It was in such things as these that the Psalmist took pleasure. "My delight is in the law of the Lord." The counsels of the Lord were "dearer to him than thousands of gold and silver." He loved these, not be-

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cause he was paid for loving them, but because he could not help doing so. There is, and can be, no artificial and arbitrary reward for doing things which we ought not to be able to leave undone without being wretched. There can be no higher joy than that of seeing in ourselves or in others some approximation to that divine life which we know to be the only life that has any real value. The reward—to call a high thing by an unworthy name—is in the realization, if only in part, of the ideal which Christianity sets before us. The reward is in the life itself. It is not something attached to the life—it grows directly out of it, and is an inherent element in it. Such happiness as this, as we see it shining forth in such a life as that of St. Paul, can not be affected in the slightest degree by any change in worldly circumstances. If he has the spirit of the thing in him a man will be happy whether he is rich or poor, with rather a better chance for happiness if he is poor. To think of being paid for loving what is good is to confess that we would not love it without being paid, which is to love the wages and not the good thing itself.

But it will be said that rewards are prom-

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ised in the other world—eternal life, the crown of life, etc. And this, of course, is true. But this may be admitted without strengthening in any way the theory of life now being considered. We make mistakes, however, in this matter, too. Men, influenced by the commercial view of religion, and used to the system of rewards and penalties which they see in operation in this world, do not stop to think what the divine rewards are. These are not things given as mere rewards of virtue, though, of course, a narrow interpretation of certain Bible texts does seem to establish this theory. But it is a wrong theory nevertheless. We know perfectly well that even in this world the highest services are never paid for—never can be paid for. You can not pay a man for saving you from drowning, and most assuredly it is impossible to think of anything that could compensate for the sacrifice of another life for your own. Here we rise far above any possible scale of rewards. If this is so even in this world, how much more true it must be in the world that is to be! God does not promise us heaven as a reward for a good life here. What He does promise is that by a good life here we

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shall be so trained and developed that we shall be fit for a perfect environment hereafter. As we grow more and more capable of loving virtue, so shall we grow more and more fit to enjoy that social order in which virtue prevails absolutely. And the reward is, not heaven, but the capacity to enjoy that perfect existence for which the name stands. So there is no "pay" for living virtuous and noble lives. Those lives are their own reward and will be their own crown. Men are to grow into the future life precisely as they grow in grace here. No man would want to be rewarded hereafter for doing things in this world which, if he is a good man, it ought to be his highest pleasure to do. So even the eternal rewards are not really rewards at all—certainly not in the sense in which the word is generally used here.

Finally, it must never be forgotten in a pleasure-loving age, in an age in which even religion is molded so as to minister to man's material enjoyment, that virtue and perfection are the products of hard and painful work, and of self-sacrificing service. This obvious truth, a truth that stands out on almost every page of the Bible, is quite ignored by those who con-

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nect goodness and earthly pleasure. Men can not win happiness, as happiness is understood by a pleasure-loving people, by sacrificing themselves for others, or by dying to sin. Men can only be happy when they get what they desire, and they can only be truly happy when they desire the highest and noblest things, things which can be enjoyed without a taint of selfishness. In the most sacred relations even in this life we know very well that there is no place for the application of the commercial theory. Men do their duty because it is their duty, and not because they are paid for doing it. And there is no duty that a man does that is not a duty to God. Only on this basis can the two lives—that which is now and that which is to come—be reconciled. Indeed, when considered thus, we see that they are the same life. Man is not a hireling, but a son in the divine household, whose highest joy ought to be and is—if he be truly a Christian—in doing the divine will. We are so constituted that we admire a perfect piece of work—a picture or a book—and admire it because it is perfect. And the closer a life or a character approaches perfection the stronger is its appeal to us. This craving for

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perfection lies at the very roots of our nature, and this of itself is enough to disprove and discredit hopelessly the mercantile theory of life, whether applied to this world or to the world to come.

THE QUESTION OF HERESY

THERE is no doubt such a thing as heresy, and yet the very word itself is, as the logicians have pointed out, a question-begging term. It is, too, a term which should have the narrowest application which it is possible to give it. The man who differs from us in religious thought, even though this difference leads him to reject certain generally accepted doctrines, is by no means necessarily a heretic. Considering the matter from the point of view even of an orthodox theology there must be dissent from a divinely revealed body of truth—heresy indeed implies by negation the existence of such a revelation. There is a great body of belief which has grown up about this divine revelation which is generally held, but which a man may refuse to accept without being guilty of the fault of heresy. Many religious teachers, who insist that you shall accept not only the truth, but the truth as they see it and

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interpret it, with all the glosses they may choose to put upon it, will not admit this. But the fact is nevertheless clear. Dissent from your minister may not be heresy in any sense of the word. Heresy has little or nothing to do with the drawing of conclusions, for that is an intellectual process. Two men may hold precisely the same divine truth, and so be in perfect agreement as to the fundamental thing, and yet differ widely in the construction they put on it, or the application they make of it. Neither the one nor the other is necessarily a heretic, though both may be. One is as likely to be as the other. Even when it comes to the broad question of the acceptance of truth the case is not always clear. For here, too, the process is intellectual as well as moral, and men differ in intellectual capacity. Almost never is there any moral question involved. One man finds it easy to believe a certain thing, while another, with the best intention in the world, is unable to do so. If the non-believer is a heretic at all it must be in a sense which involves no moral turpitude, and assuredly no sin. We need to be careful how we judge men in this matter.

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It is surprising how men with the stiffest religious faith glide easily over heresy on the part of those Bible heroes whom they hold up to us, and properly, as examples. We have such a case as this in the life of St. Paul. In his defense before Felix, after denying the charges against him, the apostle went on to say: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Now, who were the "they" from whose interpretation of the Scriptures St. Paul admitted that he dissented? The officers and ministers of the divinely established church of God—these and no others. It was not a question of differing from the Stoics and Epicureans, but from those to whom the oracles of God had been committed. If it be held that the apostle had a new and better revelation, it is still to be said, in the first place, that this is the claim which every heretic makes, and in the second place, that he did not appeal to such

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revelation in this speech before Felix as a justification of his action. On the contrary, he insisted that he worshiped the God of his fathers, and that he believed "all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." He declared that he had precisely the same "hope toward God" that they had, and that he and they agreed in thinking that there was to be a resurrection of the dead. In a word he argued that he was not a heretic in the sense that he rejected the old faith, but only in the sense that he rejected what the inspired teachers of that faith held to be the truth. "After the way which they call heresy," he said, "so worship I the God of my fathers." He believed that he held the truth, but he admitted, not that he did not hold it as his accusers held it, but that they did not think he so held it. He was, in short, a heretic simply because he had been read out of the synagogue by the religious teachers of the day.

Two things are to be remembered in this connection. The first is that the Jews, St. Paul among them, believed that they had a divine revelation; that the Old Testament was the revealed word of God, and that the Jewish church

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was put into the world by God as the interpreter and defender and teacher of that revelation. Dissent was, therefore, undoubtedly heresy. The other thing to be borne in mind is that even St. Paul, the most catholic-minded of the apostles, the apostle to the Gentiles in a special sense, held this view. We forget that in the beginning there was no intention on the part of the Christians to separate themselves from the old church. In one place we read that a multitude of the priests believed, yet they did not cease to be priests. In this very chapter St. Paul tells us that "certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple," thus making it clear that almost up to the close of his Christian ministry he observed the ceremonial law. Christian teachers even of our own day are careful to point out that Christ said that He did not come to destroy, but to fulfil, and that the law was not to pass away till all was fulfilled. This was undoubtedly the attitude of the early Christians who made every effort to graft the new faith on the old, and to show how the new was developed out of the old without changing it in any essential particular. In view of all this, we can see very easily how

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serious, from a theological point of view, was the charge against St. Paul. Yet he was forced to admit its truth in so far as it involved a difference between himself and the official and inspired teachers of the Jewish people, the heads of the church which had been founded by God Himself.

Yet there are many men to-day who can and do say with St. Paul, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets"—the "they" then, as now, being the officers and councils of the church, a church which is no more divine than was the Jewish church, and in no closer relations to God than that church believed itself to be. It would seem as though the lesson ought to be learned—as though the church of our day should avoid falling into the error of the church of St. Paul's day. It is claiming the same right, the right of declaring a man a heretic for dissenting, not from divine truth, but from a supposed divine interpretation or statement of that truth. Yet the very men who are loudest in their denunciations of heretics, who may condemn them

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on the evidence of St. Paul himself, nevertheless accept St. Paul as their inspired guide, a man who admitted himself to be a heretic in the very sense in which men are to-day being condemned as heretics. And the spirit of the modern theologians is painfully like that of Tertullus and the others who accused St. Paul before Felix. We can not read the speech of Tertullus the orator, without thinking of certain things that have been said by other orators with whom, perhaps, we are more familiar. He said:

“We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: who also hath gone about to profane the temple.”

There is certainly the *odium theologicum* which still marks so much of our religious discussion. The heretic was, then as now, a nuisance, a profaner of sacred things, and the mover of sedition. And then as now it was the orators that were mostly disturbed. Yet the purpose of this “pestilent fellow” in coming to Jerusalem was, as he said, “to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.” But he was a

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heretic, and so "Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."

So, too, a movement, even though it be within the church, of which we do not approve, is always "a sect." St. Paul was a leader of "the sect of the Nazarenes," from which we see that the Christian church was simply a hated sect in the eyes of the leaders of the religious thought of that day. We use the same unchristian language, and have much of the same unchristian spirit. St. Paul himself ought to teach us better. When he went to Athens he did not denounce the Athenians as idolators, sectarians or heretics. On the contrary he told them that he had come to declare to them the very same God whom they had always, though in ignorance, worshiped. The Athenians were as much God's children as the Jews or the Christians were, a fact which, as he pointed out, had been made clear by one of the Greek poets, who said, "for we are also his offspring." The whole sermon delivered on Mars hill was based on the doctrine of the brotherhood of man and the solidarity of the human race. They were all adoring a God who "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell

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on all the face of the earth," a God who is "not far from every one of us." That is the sort of preaching that men needed then, that they need to-day, that they always will need. There is not much danger that any of us will be too broad-minded and liberal. The danger is rather the other way. We want all the liberality, all the noble catholicity that we are likely to get, and a good deal more. And surely we need an infinite charity and patience that will at least prevent us from narrowing the boundaries of that kingdom which Almighty God meant to be a universal kingdom. Possibly it would be safer to allow God Himself, speaking through the conscience of those who seek to approach Him through His church, to say who is fit to belong to the church than to trust that power to men who, no matter how much they may think themselves to be inspired, are, nevertheless, fallible, as all mortals are.

Nothing is catholic—and how sadly that great word is misused!—that is not broad, liberal, tolerant and universal. It is easy to sneer at liberality—and yet its opposite is narrowness, smallness, and bigotry. There is nothing in the world more free and liberal than the

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Christian religion as it existed in the mind of Christ. Any one who did God's will was accepted by Christ as His brother. Any one who did God's work was in the way of salvation. For instance, we have the following declaration of a great principle:

"And John answered Him, saying, Master we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

It is the old cry—"he followeth not us." We see how Christ answered it. Unfortunately, the church of Christ has not been true to the principles of its divine leader. It has often been more concerned because men did not seem to follow it than because they did not give the cup of cold water. Nothing, as has been said, could be broader and more liberal than the principles of Jesus Christ. The difficulty is that

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they are so broad and liberal as to be beyond our comprehension. Christians are still in bondage to the old, narrow, legalizing spirit, and so are still in need of baptism into that divine truth which is to make them free. What we have to do with is not a mechanism, but a spirit and influence designed to regenerate the world, which alone can regenerate it. The first thing to do is to put ourselves under the dominion of that spirit to the end that we ourselves may be regenerated. With the new birth we shall be slow to condemn him who "followeth not us," slow to talk about sects, and very slow, indeed, to accuse a brother of heresy. Nor shall we then distrust liberality, liberality even of a type which now seems to us, in our narrowness, to be extreme and dangerous.

HYPOCRISY

NO doubt many have read the parable of the pharisee and the publican without ever having considered at all one of its most important lessons. We have dwelt much on the attitude of the two men toward God, and on that of the pharisee toward the publican. But little has been said of the attitude of the publican toward the pharisee. And yet from a consideration of this phase of the problem we may draw a most helpful moral. It is that in condemning the pharisee we may be in grave danger of falling into precisely his sin. It may be as wrong for us to compare ourselves with him as it was for him to compare himself with the publican. In thanking God that we are not as the pharisee, we may ourselves put ourselves in his class. Hypocrisy, therefore, is the one sin that it may be dangerous to hate, though we must hate it. Therefore, it is important that we should at least try to imagine the feel-

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ings of the publican. They are not revealed to us in the parable, and yet we can hardly doubt that the poor man looked up to and honored his rich and prominent countryman. It would never have occurred to him to compare himself favorably with that splendid figure, one of the nation's leaders. The only thing that filled his mind was a sense of his own unworthiness in the sight of God. He would probably have admitted that the pharisee was justified in his self-righteous prayer. We should not forget that the parable was spoken "unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." The publican was commended because he did not trust in himself or despise others. And yet in reading the parable many people unconsciously adopt precisely the point of view of the pharisee, comparing themselves with him, and thanking God that they are not as he is. So it is that in our very denunciations of hypocrisy we may easily become hypocrites ourselves. There is no other sin toward which this perilous attitude is possible. We do not become murderers by despising murderers or murder. But we may become hypocrites by despising hypocrisy.

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There is thus something peculiar about this sin. It has a sort of self-breeding quality. In our very efforts to escape from it we may easily, and all unconsciously fall into it. Indeed, the line is hard to draw. For men have a right to be proud of a clean and honorable life, a good name, a noble ancestry, and a disposition to be true to lofty ideals. They have a right, too, to be humbly thankful that they are not as those who have none of these things. If virtue is better than vice a virtuous man is better than a vicious man, and his realization of that fact does not make him a hypocrite. A good many years ago it was fashionable to denounce what was supposed to be the phariseism of reform. "If," said George William Curtis, the prince of reformers, "a man proposes the redress of any public wrong, he is asked severely whether he considers himself so much wiser and better than other men, that he must disturb the existing order, and pose as a saint." "If," Mr. Curtis went on, "he denounces an evil, he is exhorted to beware of spiritual pride." Spiritual pride is a bad thing, no doubt, and yet Curtis was right when he summed up the matter thus:

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"To the cant about the phariseeism of reform there is but one short and final answer. The man who tells the truth is holier than the liar. The man who does not steal is better than the thief."

So it seems there may be cant on both sides. In this day, when we are all reformers together, the old sneer against reform has lost its point. Reform is fashionable, and being fashionable it may have taken on a tinge of phariseeism that it did not have in the old days. What is important is that we should realize that an unwillingness to blur moral distinctions is no proof whatever of phariseeism. "Was Abraham Lincoln," said Mr. Curtis, "saying of the American Union, 'a house divided against itself can not stand,' assuming to be holier than other Americans?" Surely not, and yet that is precisely the conclusion to which we are likely to come unless we are careful.

And so, could the publican have known the sin of the pharisee, he would have been wrong not to condemn it, wrong not to be thankful that at least that sin was not his. And the pharisee would not have been condemned, and was not condemned for his thankfulness that

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he had not fallen into the vices that marred the life of the publican. What was denounced was the sin of self-righteousness, which is the essence of hypocrisy. And it is a sin to which those whom we think of as good people are specially prone. Perhaps the error consists in considering men to be of the same texture throughout. If people know that they are good in some respects they are very likely to think that they are good in all respects—good all the way through. And they are almost certain to think that the man who is bad in some respects is bad in all. It is hard to avoid making this mistake, hard because our judgments are necessarily so partial. We almost of necessity judge men by their actions, judge them in entire ignorance of their motives. It is not easy to make allowances or to realize that it is vastly harder for some to be good than it is for others. Temptations that make no appeal to us may appeal to another with an almost irresistible force. If he resists them he is stronger than we are—stronger and better. But this factor is hardly ever taken into consideration. Indeed, it is one about which in the nature of the case we can know little or nothing. Thus it hap-

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pens that many a man is condemned as wholly bad simply because he has done one wrong thing, when, as a matter of fact, he may in his heart be a better man than those who condemn him. And these latter, comparing themselves with him, may arrogate to themselves a virtue which they are very far from possessing. They may even belong among those of whom it was said that they "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." The complexity of the problem thus grows out of the complexity of human nature of which we as a rule take no account in our judgments.

There is in human nature a tendency to condemn those who devote themselves wholly to the preaching of a certain gospel, no matter how good and true it may be. The assumption is that those who denounce a certain sin or praise a certain virtue are holding themselves out as the embodiment of all they praise, as the antithesis of all they condemn. When Carlyle, for instance, thunders against cant, we have a feeling that he believes in his own heart that he is the only man in the world that is free from cant. And that is a most unjust conclusion. For a preacher to be worth anything

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must preach a gospel that is far beyond him—else his preaching will count for little. To assume that he is of the opinion that the ideal which he holds up is realized in his own life is most unreasonable and unfair. Yet the attitude is natural, for we feel that, even though the writer or preacher makes no comparison between himself and others, there is a sort of tacit comparison, and that in his heart he has an undue admiration for himself and his own merits. He seems to except himself from the condemnation that he visits on others, and to be sure that he is at least free from that sin for which he professes such indignant and scornful contempt. But the truer view is that these fiery apostles are really preaching to themselves as much as to others—that they occupy both pulpit and pew. And this, of course, is the attitude that should be taken by all who hope to escape falling into the vice of hypocrisy. The thing to do is, not to compare oneself with others, but rather to measure oneself and others alike by the ideal standard. One who uses that process is not likely to be guilty of the sin of the pharisee. It is no great achievement for one weak and sinful man to excel

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other weak and sinful men. What is great is to approximate in any degree to the divine perfection, and to realize that the power to do this is the gift of God.

The case of St. Paul is instructive. He did not hesitate to compare himself with his fellow apostles, did not doubt that in the amount of work done by him for the new religion he had excelled them all. At least this is what he says. "I labored," he says, "more abundantly than they all." He was the victim of no false shame. To him the value and the magnitude of his work were clear. Nevertheless, he said: "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." In judging himself he took account of all the factors, omitting none. And when he came to appraise his work, he said: "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." He did not thank God that he had outstripped the other apostles in certain directions, but he was humbly grateful that the divine power had worked so successfully through him. "By the grace of God," he says, "I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed

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upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." It was the work that towered above everything else. The workman was nothing. "Therefore," he concludes, "whether it were I or they, so we preach and so ye believed." This was the apostle's attitude throughout his ministry. The whole theory of preaching is summed up in these words:

"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

It was the message and not the messenger that was to convert the world. Men who are influenced by oratory and eloquence rather than by the truth do not get the message. So we see that there can be a sort of appraisalment of oneself by comparison with others which does not issue in hypocrisy. "By the grace of God I am what I am." Happy is the man who can honestly feel that that grace is not bestowed in vain.

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The conclusion, of course, is that men ought, as far as possible, to learn to consider their work apart from themselves, and to try to realize that the main thing is that the work should be done. "Whether it were I or they," one should rejoice that the task is performed, without thinking too much of one's relationship to it or part in it. No man, perhaps, is "meet to be called an apostle," and yet many men are doing an apostle's work. The standard by which such a one should measure himself is the ideal of apostleship, and not at all the achievements or character of another, who also may not be "meet to be called an apostle." Hypocrisy can not grow out of such a state of mind and soul. The man who has this point of view can hate hypocrisy as it deserves to be hated without being in the least danger of himself becoming a hypocrite. Sorrow that we are not what we ought to be, rather than joy because we seem to be better than some one else, should mark the lives of all serious and thoughtful men, should mark the lives, indeed, of all men who know themselves and the weaknesses of their own nature. What we are depends on our advantages, opportunities and powers—

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and these are gifts, things which we did not make for ourselves, and of which we have no right to be proud, except in a thankful and humble way. It was Thackeray who said that he might have played the part of lord mayor very creditably had the chance come to him, and that if he had been schooled in vice, tortured by hunger, kept from books and decent company, he would have been as quick as any highwayman to take a purse had it come in his way. There is much truth in this. Not that men can not resist and fight against evil, but that those who are favored by fortune ought to be charitable to those who are broken by adverse fate. A knowledge of oneself, and of human nature, ought to serve to make one wondrously gentle — except toward hypocrisy, which is the sin of sins.

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MUCH may be learned from the dream of Solomon—that dream in which the Lord appeared unto him and promised him the great gift of wisdom. The wise king prayed thus to God: “O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people, that can not be numbered nor counted for multitude.” And so the king asked for “an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great people?” Few things are more interesting than the study of the effects of power on those who wield it. There is no reason to doubt that Solomon felt all the humility that he expressed, that he did honestly distrust himself and his capacities. No one has ever suggested that the attitude was

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a mere pose. And yet he thought of himself as "a little child," and as such quite unequal to the responsibilities that were laid on him. On the whole, it is probably fair to say that this is not the modern view. Men who seek office in this country assert by their very quest that they are fit for the positions to which they aspire, and therefore they can not have any of that sense of inadequacy which was so strong in this king of Israel. On the contrary, one who felt that he was called by God would almost naturally shrink from the burden of rule, as Moses did, for the mere thought of being the direct agent of the Almighty is enough to stagger any one. So it was easier for Solomon than it is for our modern rulers to appreciate his utter dependence on God. At any rate, it is certain that he did question his fitness to act as an agent for the fulfillment of the divine purposes.

Of course, it was true of many men in the old days, as it is true of men to-day, that they did actively seek high place, and were supremely confident of their ability to fill it. But this seems to be the general feeling at the present time. Men rush madly after power, crowd themselves into office, and take the ground, not

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that they are not qualified, but that they are the only ones who are qualified. And when they are in office they carry themselves with a jaunty confidence that nothing can shake. Even the cares of office, which of themselves would almost crush a man who felt that he was "but a little child," are not enough to absorb their energies. Strangers to humility from the outset, they grow further and further away from it as the seductions of power begin to work in their souls. They look on themselves, not as charged with a trusteeship which they may, through their weakness, fail to perform, but as almost owners of the office which they use to force their views on the people. It is probably fair to say that no man is quite safe to trust with power who has not at least a glimmer of that humble spirit which shines out in the prayer of Solomon. Probably the nearest approach to the old model that we have had is Abraham Lincoln. On his journey to Washington to assume the great office to which he was elected, Mr. Lincoln made an address to the legislature of New York, in which he said:

"It is with feelings of great diffidence, and, I may say, feelings even of awe, perhaps greater

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than I have recently experienced, that I meet you here in this place. The history of this great state, the renown of its great men, who have stood in this chamber, and have spoken their thoughts, all crowd around my fancy, and incline me to shrink from an attempt to address you. * * * It is true that, while I hold myself, without mock modesty, the humblest of all the individuals who have ever been elected President of the United States, I yet have a more difficult task to perform than any one of them has ever encountered."

And no American can ever forget the solemn words that he addressed to his friends and neighbors of Springfield when he was leaving them:

"No one not in my position can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all that I am. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty devolves upon me which is, perhaps, greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never could have succeeded except for aid of

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divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I can not succeed without the same divine aid which sustained him, and in the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support; and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that divine assistance, without which I can not succeed, but with which success is certain. Again, I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

That is altogether in the old vein. "I am," Lincoln once said, "just humble Abe Lincoln." He wielded a power which no other American president ever wielded, and yet how gentle, and self-distrustful he was at all times! Power sobered and restrained him, and added to that deep humility which was an important trait in his character. It brought out all that was best in him and made him greater, and truer and nobler than he was before he came to be the head of this Government. "I am but a little child"—the words are his, too. We can almost hear him say "Who is able to judge this thy so great people?" Power was a burden and responsibility, and never something to be enjoyed or used for its own sake. And so it was that he was greater even than the great office

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which he so splendidly administered. The terrible test to which he was subjected only served to show the high quality of the man. What he shrank from was not the danger, not the threat of civil war, not the work, but the power itself to which he believed himself, "except for the aid of divine Providence," unequal. He looked on office, not as a platform on which to display his ability, but as a call to a duty which he feared that he would not be strong enough to perform. So his trust was not in himself, but in God, and in the people, whose servant he was. Facing the crisis of his own and his country's life, he was almost overwhelmed with the sense of his responsibility. It was so with the prophets of old. It has been so with every great and good man since.

There is nothing that we need in this country more at the present time than a recurrence to this old, and now faraway ideal. No doubt, if we shall ever be called on to face such trials as those through which we passed in Mr. Lincoln's time, we shall again see something of that old spirit. But we need it now, need it all the while. For there are always dangers to be met, always emergencies to be dealt with. And

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only those men can surmount the dangers and meet the emergencies who have the sense of dependence on some power outside of themselves. It is, of course, harder to reach the heights of excellence in ordinary times than in times of stress and peril. But nevertheless some upward progress may be made if we will but remember that office is not reward, but simply opportunity for service. And the quality of service we get depends largely, if not wholly, on the attitude which men maintain toward office and power. A servant, to be sure, ought to feel that he is capable of doing his work, but he ought, also, to feel that he is bound to fail unless he devotes himself with the utmost faithfulness to the task assigned to him, a task which he can not perform except in so far as he forgets himself in his work. The very bearing of the man may, nay must, have an influence on the character and quality of his work, as it certainly will have an influence—and of the profoundest sort—on his own nature. No man has ever greatly succeeded who did not look beyond himself. Even Napoleon, who is always cited as the representa-

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tive of absolute and selfish power, was led by his "star."

Of course, this man is not to be mentioned in the same breath with such a man as Abraham Lincoln. But even in his case it is clear that he relied on something greater than himself—his star, or destiny, or whatever we may choose to call it. He had, too, the idea of serving the people of France. So he is no exception, though one would not choose him as an illustration of those qualities which were so finely exhibited by Lincoln, and which are so essential in one called to a real service to mankind. But we are getting away from the truth about this thing, doubtless because men do not feel that it matters much—except from the narrow partisan point of view—who is elected to office. There are problems, it is true, but they do not, we feel, touch the life of the nation. Yet they may touch it. Certainly they are directly related to the stability of the social order, and to the quality of the work done by men in office. Of course, if men have none of the old feeling, it would be worse than foolish to pretend to have it. Nothing can be

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gained by assuming an attitude of humility that is a mere pose. Men have done this, but it has not helped the situation. The attitude, to be of any value, must grow out of an inward feeling. If the feeling is lacking the attitude is worth nothing. "The pride that apes humility" is altogether hateful.

What is needed, therefore, is a serious consideration of the nature of public office, and of the relation of the citizen to it. Probably men will always seek it. But Lincoln sought it, and sought it actively. So the trouble is not in that, though the effect of office-seeking on small or egotistical men is necessarily bad and demoralizing. But the change must come, if it comes at all, from a change in the whole attitude of the people toward this subject. We must all of us learn—and the lesson will be difficult—that it is still true that "the powers that be are ordained of God," that the state is a divine institution, that the men who bear rule are entitled to our respect, and that it is their highest duty to show themselves worthy of it. Office must be regarded, not as a part of the party machinery of state or nation, but as an integral part of the state itself. The powers

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which it confers must be used solely for the public good. Only so will our rulers be "able to judge this thy so great people." We must exalt the idea of the state, not as the source or the wielder of power, but as the center of a delegated authority to be exercised in the interest of sound morality and of the general welfare. It will do none of us any harm to think on these things. So this appeal has been made to Solomon and to Abraham Lincoln as representing the type, in this regard, that ought to prevail more and more widely. If democratic government is to succeed—and it is yet an experiment—it will be only on the condition that we are wise enough to choose public servants who will dread rather than seek positions of power, and who will realize that when chosen to such positions their first and only duty is to God, and to the people, to the administration of whose affairs they have been called by God. Something more than appointment or popular election is necessary. There must be in spirit, if not in form, the old anointing to a service which is truly divine. The very thought that a man is called to be the servant of God and of His people ought to make him humble.

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THAT there was a large element of humility in the make-up of Thackeray is clear from his writings. His knowledge of human nature, and of his own individual nature, which was always in his mind when he discussed the general subject, made him very humble. Behind his bitterest satire there is always a feeling of pity for man—and for himself—which makes the reader realize that he did not delight in his task, though he refused to shrink from what he believed to be his duty. His work was a burden to him, and in more ways than one. You can almost feel the physical and mental weariness that fell upon him after the completion of one of his great books. But more even than this does one note his doubt of whether it was after all worth while. "It will all be over soon enough," we can hear him say, "Why then all the toil and strife?" This spirit breathes in much of his work, more par-

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ticularly in *The Roundabout Papers*, some of which were penned immediately after the last proofs of one of his great books were sent to the printer. In the little essay entitled *De Finibus* we get much of Thackeray's philosophy of life. There is a sadness in it which one feels can have come only from a sense of his own inadequacy—from which his humility sprang—and from a sort of despair as to the outcome which sometimes overwhelmed him. But it can not be said of many men, as it can be said of him, that there is strength to be derived from this very humility. In one of the papers just mentioned he says: "Industry and humility will help and comfort us." There is a text which will bear a good deal of expounding. Industry, of course, we have thought of as a stay and comfort, but we have hardly thought so of humility. Possibly the two things are more nearly identical than we sometimes suppose them to be. Did any one ever know an honest and true worker, especially if he belonged to the guild of "them that handle the pen," who did not have something of this humility in him? The great engineers and inventors and scientists have almost invariably

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been modest men. They are much given to underestimating their achievements, and with entire sincerity.

It is even truer of the great writers, with those who really treat their vocation as a serious thing, as one that imposes heavy responsibilities on them. They doubt the popular judgment, doubt when it is favorable even more than when it is unfavorable. For their standard is invariably higher than the standard of the public, and they know how easily the public is deceived. And they dread being a party to such deception. There is always, too, the question of how much of their own lives they shall reveal, when to reveal any portion of them seems to them a vulgar thing—and the more sensitive and the more fit for their task they are, the more vulgar does it seem. The writer is all the while consulting with himself, as it were, all the while asking himself whether he has any right to share with the great world even the confidences that he has with himself. And as he goes on the very characters that he creates become so intensely real to him that they almost seem to be members of his family. How can he, such a man must ask himself, hon-

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orably betray their secrets? His raw material is the human soul and that must always be treated with respect and reverence. Facing the great problems with which he must of necessity deal, the novelist must, if he be worthy of his high vocation, be at times oppressed with a sense of his own insignificance. He can not get away from this feeling of humility, that is, if he be really a great man and one who realizes the duty which he owes to one of the most exacting of the professions. The very idea of asking the busy world to stop long enough to read one of his stories seems to him to be on the whole a piece of impertinence. The writer's craft, if it be honorably followed, is no light and easy calling. Of course the pretenders and shams are left out of the account.

Thus industry and humility do seem to go together, and thus to be properly coupled in Thackeray's phrase. But how can it be said that they will "help and comfort us"? This is a question that it is not easy to answer, and possibly the appeal is to each man's experience—if he does not feel that the thing is true in his case, the only thing to be said is that for him it is not true. But is not Thackeray right?

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That industry has this effect will hardly be denied, and we have seen that humility is close of kin to it. But how does this latter trait operate to "help and comfort us"? Well, it may be that, though it does not lighten the man's work, ease his responsibility, or cause him to be hopeful of reaching the highest level of achievement, it does nevertheless make it possible for him to plead his own felt weakness in mitigation of his failure, and to smile at the presumption that led him to undertake a task which he knew was beyond his power. Granted the honest and manly effort, the high purpose, the hard work, and the brave desire to measure fully up to his own aspirations, may not the worker rightly take comfort in the thought that his only sin was in expecting too much of himself—in the high endeavor, and not altogether in the failure, which may be no failure at all in the eyes of the world, or indeed in any eyes but his own? The man may, as Thackeray did, get even a sly satisfaction out of this line of reasoning, and jest with himself over the high opinion in which he is held by the poor, ignorant world that really does not know what a humbug he is! "Succeed!"

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many a man must have asked himself; "of course not, but what right had any one ever to think that I could succeed?" The only proviso is that the humility must be genuine, as it was in the case of Thackeray. If it is assumed, it is not humility, but hypocrisy. There can be no doubt that the great writers would all agree with Thackeray that "industry and humility will comfort us."

But the principle has directly to do with life, for the life of the writer is affected in itself, as well as in its direct relation to his work. All Saints' Day, one of the loveliest feasts in the whole round of the church year, naturally invites to the study of perfection, perfection of character. And this can not be considered apart from the exalted standard to which men are expected to conform—to which, in our best moments, we all desire to conform. Who, then, are the blessed, except those described in the Sermon on the Mount, part of which is appointed for the gospel for the day—the poor in spirit, the meek, the sorrowing, and the merciful? This idea runs through the whole Christian revelation. There is no need to cite texts in proof of so self-evident a proposition. It is

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enough to say that the teaching is that the road to the only true triumph lies through self-abasement. Contemplating the divine perfection, which is the standard, no man can help having a deep feeling of humility. He is a worker at life, precisely as the writer is a worker at his books. And though he, as the writer, may realize his own failure, he can get the same comfort out of that true humility which makes him realize that after all the task set for his weak soul was beyond his powers. Though we may feel that we are all "knit together in one communion and fellowship," we still know that we need the divine grace if we are to follow God's "blessed saints in all virtue and godliness of living." The great examples of those who have preceded us are both a stimulus and a source of humility. And so the frame of mind of the man who strives to live greatly is precisely the same as that of the man who strives to write greatly. And there can be no great living or great writing apart from it. So humility naturally grows out of both situations.

But there is an element in the religious life that works toward the same end which is not

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present, or not necessarily present, in the life of the writer. And that is the sense of dependence on God. This makes a man strong, but it ought also to make him humble and conscious of his own weakness in and of himself. We realize, sometimes almost painfully, that "we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves," and so we reach out, it may be through the darkness, to the divine helper. But though humility is the natural portion of the man trying to live a noble life, it is still necessary to ask, as in the former case, how it can become a source of "comfort." Here the answer is less difficult. For the deeper the humility that we feel the more complete will be our reliance on God, and on the eternal law of righteousness, and so our strength for the daily battle of life will be all the greater. Strength thus flows naturally out of Christian humility—strength and confidence and hope. It is the old Christian law of life from death, strength from weakness, righteousness from a dying to sin and triumph through humility. All this is frequently taken in a metaphorical sense, and yet nothing could be more real. We have seen that humility is the source of strength—that

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strength grows directly out of it, for it throws us back on God, who is the greatest ally a man can have. And all this surely is a "comfort."

But many people think of humility as something weak and even despicable, and altogether fail to understand what a great part it plays in the conduct of life. It is, however, directly related to holiness. We read of "holy and humble men of heart," and we know that the saints of God have been humble men. Nor is this quality inconsistent with a true and proper pride. There was sometimes a mock humility and a wicked pride among the Puritans, but Macaulay was right when he said of the true Puritan that he was a man who would humble himself to the dust in the presence of his Maker, and yet set his foot on the neck of his king. It is so with all men of the right spirit in their struggle against wrong. They are strong—but they realize that their strength is not their own. So they are both humble and confident. These two qualities have been finely illustrated in the lives of the true saints. They were both the servants of God and the masters of themselves, with all their powers well-

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knit. And this is the true Christian type. So again it seems that Thackeray is right, and also that the principle which he laid down has a broader application than it might at first blush be thought to have. Men in these days are not much given to thinking of humility as a strong and masterful quality—but such it seems to be. Nor do many realize that humility “will help and comfort us,” and yet it appears that it may help and comfort those who work at any task as well as those who write books. To realize that you may not, because of your weakness, be able to do all that is expected of you, and yet to have the courage to make the effort—surely this is the right attitude for one to maintain toward life and its problems. One may, on the proper ground, excuse oneself for failure, but never for failure to make the attempt. If it were not so, the men with the highest aspirations would be the most wretched of creatures, for the higher the aspirations the wider is the interval between them and the man’s performance. But the aspirations themselves ought to count for much, provided there is an honest effort to live up to them. Truly

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“industry and humility will help and comfort us,” as they have comforted all who have fought the good fight, even though they may not seem to have enjoyed the triumph.

VIOLENCE OF SPEECH

THERE are few things that have a worse effect on character than violence of speech—on the character both of those who indulge in it and those who hear or read it. It beclouds our reason, disturbs our judgment, and betrays us into many and serious mistakes. Many men exposed to this contagion identify strength and power with violence, and so when a man states his case moderately and calmly, or meets an attack with good temper and courtesy, the statement and reply are almost certain to be characterized as “weak” by those who have fallen into the vice of violence or who have learned to admire it as a virtue. And so we come to rely, not on the truth itself, but on the outrageous way in which it is put before us, and to assume that those who do not use the same vehicle of expression are not telling the truth. There could hardly be a more abhorrent confusion of ideas. For the result is, not simply the mistaking of violence for

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strength, but the mistaking of weakness for strength, inasmuch as violence is the weapon of intellectual or moral weakness.

The case is one of the misuse of powers, of the confounding of such things as light and darkness, for instance, to such an extent as to make the very light itself bring darkness to us. This is also the thought of Isaiah, who pronounced woe upon those "that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." The first duty of man as a thinking animal is to differentiate and discriminate, especially between virtue and vice, and this he can not do if he yields to savage fits of temper. Not only can he not discriminate, but he actually comes in time to put evil in the place of good.

The matter may be considered in two ways—first as related to life, and second as related to literature. The conclusion is the same in both cases, and naturally, inasmuch as literature is the product, the analysis, the criticism, and the picture of life. The two can not be separated, for when they are really vital they run into each other. However, we may dis-

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tinguish them for the purpose of discussion. First then, as to life. The strong characters have, as a rule, been the ones in which reserve and restraint were among the most conspicuous traits. Somehow they manage to create the impression that they have more strength than they use—that there are stores on which they could draw, but on which they never seem to need to draw. The man who, apparently, does his work by using only half his powers seems greater than his task, great enough, indeed, for any task that might be imposed on him. This business of living requires, if it is to be properly managed, not only an exertion, but an economy of power. But there can be no such economy unless there is a surplus or reserve that is not ordinarily drawn on, though it does reinforce the power that is actually used. The man who uses all that he has in every action that he performs is a weak man precisely because he is without any such surplus, because he is forced to use all his power in everything that he does. There is no margin—nothing left with which to meet and master real emergencies. The men who are most nearly the masters of life—and of course no one is that—are

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those to whom it somehow seems to come naturally, those whose powers it does not seem to tax. We get an impression of "strength not half put forth."

The art of living has always been best exemplified by men of this type. Those Christians who have come closest to the Christ idea have shown calmness, moderation and gentleness—been free from fret, fever and anxiety. The same thing is true of the great Stoics. To them life was not a "fitful fever," but something to be lived quietly, bravely and nobly—something to be mastered. If it involved suffering, failure or defeat, that was not to be complained of, but to be borne as a part of life. There always is in such men both a dependence on God and a dependence on self. Looking up at the stars one night Arnold imagined that "from the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven" he heard a voice saying: "Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they." And how do they live? After this manner:

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

VIOLENCE OF SPEECH

“And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the suffering of some differing soul.”

If man at his best is a sort of cosmic force, he ought to work somewhat as other cosmic forces do—not, as the poet intimates, without sympathy or care for others, but still with easy power and freedom. Whitman had the same idea when he prayed “to be self-balanced for contingencies,” and that he might “confront night, storms, hunger, ridicule, accidents, rebuffs, as the trees and animals do.” That is the life of the strong man, of the great man. He strives to become a storehouse of forces which shall be equal and more than equal to any draft that may be made on them. Fitting in with all this we have the great advice of Marcus Aurelius: “Be not wordy nor a busybody.” Self-restraint is as necessary as self-criticism, and nothing can be more necessary than that.

As has been intimated, precisely the same law holds in literature. The point could hardly be made better than by Amiel in his criticism of Victor Hugo, probably the greatest offender against the principle under discussion that ever

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lived. Amiel says: "Event after event has given the lie to the prophet, but the confidence of the prophet in his own imaginings is not, therefore, a whit diminished. Humility and common sense are only fit for Lilliputians. Victor Hugo superbly ignores everything which he has not foreseen. He does not know that pride limits the mind, and that a limitless pride is a littleness of soul. If he could but learn to rank himself with other men and France with other nations he would see things more truly, and would not fall into his insane exaggerations, his extravagant oracles. But proportion and justness his chords will never know. He is vowed to the Titanic; his gold is always mixed with lead, his insight with childishness, his reason with madness. He can not be simple," and much more to the same purpose. And the criticism is true. Milton expresses the same thought as that given to us by the French critic when he speaks of work that "grows luxurious by restraint." And he emphasized and illustrated the principle in every great piece of work that he did. One never feels that Milton is working at the top of his bent—there is always the sense of power not fully employed, power

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which is nevertheless vast. Exaggerations and violences are the most serious blemishes that literature can have, for they indicate weakness and bad temper—or bad taste, which is in literature quite as evil a thing.

There are two powers in literature which in these days of extreme utterance and shocking confidences we make too little of. The first—and it is a great one—is the power of understatement. The man who uses all the adjectives in the language to express his thought inevitably weakens his thought, and raises in the mind of the reader the suspicion that he is sure neither of himself nor his case. On the other hand, the man who understates, who is sparing in his use of epithets, makes us feel that he is one who weighs his words with care, and we infer from the fact that he does not say any more than he means—possibly not so much—that he does mean all that he says. But this understatement is more than this, for it is a positive beauty in literature, at least in the eyes of those best qualified to judge. This was Hamlet's idea when he said to the actors:

“In the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) the whirlwind of passion, you must ac-

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quire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings."

The greater the force, in other words, the greater will be the moderation, reserve and restraint, for these qualities are the proof of power. All great literature testifies to the truth of this principle—the Bible, for instance. For literature is an art, as life is an art. It is, it is true, the product of the imagination, but of a chastened imagination, an imagination working under the control of the reason. And the masters of it have always known that there is a virtue, and the greatest, in this power of understatement. It both indicates and begets a calmness, a serenity and a sureness of aim and purpose, without which there can be no great literature. Even the most fanciful and fantastic poetry must be real, and this it can not be unless it is marked by the qualities spoken of as inseparable from the literary art at its highest estate. So we see that the same rule applies to literature as to life, that in this particu-

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lar, as in so many other particulars, literature and life are one.

The other great power spoken of is reticence. Literature is valuable both for what it tells us and what it suggests to us. And the suggestions mostly come from the great reticences. And how full the masters are of them! The man with a well-stored mind can never tell you all he knows—indeed he does not try to do so. Here, as in life, we like to realize the existence of a power not fully used, of a knowledge not wholly revealed. The loquacious and verbose writers may please in their way, but they do not and can not make the highest appeal. In the great books you get in some mysterious way a sort of sense of silence even in the very utterance, and much more in the things that are not said but that you feel might have been said. Close of kin to this reticence is the other fine quality of allusiveness than which nothing—unless it be the reticence itself—is more stimulating and suggestive. Fortunately all this makes for clearness, directness and simplicity, which are the very highest literary qualities, associated as they are with that other indispens-

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able quality of charm. So it is that the men who strain the language to the breaking point are as great offenders as the actors who "tear a passion to tatters." They are without lucidity, without charm, without persuasiveness, beauty or power. They use words, not to express thought, not to clothe beauty, but to ease their own souls and to give vent to their own passions. And that is a most debasing use to make of them. There is, too, a childishness in it that is belittling and dwarfing. As has been said, the great masters of speech have always understood this, and so it is that their power persists through the ages. When one of them does occasionally sin against this law we instinctively feel that for the time he has ceased to be himself. Both in life and literature we need to learn from the masters, to emulate their reserve and restraint. So shall we have nobler living and greater literature.

MODERATION

SOMETHING has been said of the power of restraint or reserve, especially in relation to literature and life. We have from St. Paul this admonition—"Let your moderation be known unto all men." The word "moderation," as here used, differs somewhat in meaning from the words which were discussed in the preceding essay. It signifies, to some extent, pliability, and a capacity for yielding. But what it is proposed to discuss is the application of restraint, reserve, moderation and even pliability to the religious life. For a long time now the people of this country have been listening to extravagant praise of the fighting spirit, and it is, perhaps, not surprising that they should have forgotten that this is not the spirit of the religion they profess. But first of restraint and moderation. Men dealing with vast themes, such as religion, are all the while in danger of running to extremes. All about us

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are sects based on some narrow interpretation—usually a misinterpretation—of a text of Scripture, the chief quality of which is violence. With them religion is a sort of madness or frenzy. They never approach it, never think about it, except in a spirit of hysteria. The phenomenon is, of course, not new, for such sects have existed in all ages. Many of the saints starved themselves into a state of mind that was extreme and unnatural. And to-day many ignorant men and women sincerely believe that they see visions and hear voices, and are sometimes led, as they suppose, by God into the perpetration of crime, even of murder. The first point to be made is that all this is utterly unchristian. For Christianity is like that wisdom which is described thus by St. James:

“The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

The faith which Christians profess is a reasonable and sober faith, the prime fruit of which is conduct.

MODERATION

Religion, it is true, does make its appeal to the emotions, but its purpose is not to inflame them, but to stir them to the expression of themselves in action or conduct. They are not to be indulged for their own sake, as is the case with those who think they are "saved" when they "feel" that they are saved, and this without much reference to the character of their lives. It is to be borne in mind that religion is something for rational beings, and that therefore the mind must have a large part in it. Creatures without minds can know nothing of it. And those who dethrone their minds can know little more of it. Men dealing with the great truths of religion are bound to use all the powers they have to the best of their ability, and are bound, too, to be humble and quiet in the presence of the divine mysteries. This has been the attitude of all men—Moses and St. John, for instance—who have had any true vision of God. The very consciousness of the nearness of that presence ought to restrain and sober men. We can learn something from the attitude of the scholar or investigator when he finds himself all at once face to face with a new truth. His joy and sense of triumph are

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chastened by the realization of his own insignificance—he feels indeed as though he were on holy ground. The possession of the truth, and the consciousness of possessing it, impose heavy responsibilities. For it is to be rightly and nobly dealt with, and to be used for the benefit of others. The first thought then ought to be how we can make it fruitful in our own lives, how we can impart it to others less fortunate than we are. There was no wild rejoicing on the part of St. Paul when he was converted. On the contrary, his first question, when he realized that he had been called of God, was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Very humble and quiet he was. Any man in his right mind would, in the midst of the very joy of conversion, have one sobering thought—namely, that he was pledged to a change in the whole course of his life; that he had entered on a lifelong business.

And that would bring with it a feeling of self-distrust, distrust of one's ability to measure up to the new responsibilities. Everything therefore seems to indicate that reserve and quiet are not only most becoming, but that they are the necessary and natural consequences of a

MODERATION

true faith. But there is another element in the problem, and that is the one of character-making. This is what religion is mostly for. Now character does not result from conversion, but from a faithful following of that light which one may suppose that one has received at that time. The process is long and arduous. Character is not a suddenly manufactured thing. On the contrary, it is a growth, the product of a careful culture. In other words, it is to work that men are called, to a strife for perfection. And a part of that perfection is that very quality of restraint or reserve or quietness, which has been so marked a trait of the really great heroes of the Christian faith. "Study to be quiet," writes St. Paul, "and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you." So the same rule applies to religion as to life, which is in no way surprising, as religion is itself a life—designed to be the true and only life. Studying the life of the Founder of Christianity we can not think of noise or violence or brawling as having any part in the divine life which He brought to the world and would impart to men. He quotes Isaiah as saying of God's servant: "He shall

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not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets." There was in it all a dignity of submissiveness which Christian people would do well to cultivate. There is a warfare, but it is one that is waged against self. Christ was wiser than St. Paul in that He did not "appeal unto Cæsar," did not appeal to any one save the Almighty Father. It was He "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not."

But there is something more than this in the Christian idea, for the reserve and restraint are less negative qualities than they are in the ordinary life or in literature. The restraint must operate as a positive force—must restrain from something. And that something is not simply external evil, not the ordinary passion of men. The Christian must have this power to yield even when he knows that he is right, the power to refuse to answer back, to refuse to avenge himself. A good deal of folly has been written by the champions of absolutism about the duty of passive obedience in politics. But this does not enter into the present discussion. We may few of us be able to live up to the Christian ideal, but the ideal is nevertheless

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clear and plain. It may be summed up in the love of one's enemies. To refuse to punish your enemy on the theory of leaving him to a God, who, you feel, will punish much more dreadfully than you could—this is not Christianity at all. The refusal to seek or to desire revenge must grow out of that other Christian idea—namely, that all men are our brothers, and that as such we are bound to love them. "If ye love them which love you," said Christ, "what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" The teaching is unmistakable, and it can not be refined or interpreted away. Christians were meant to have this quality of moderation in the sense of yieldingness. The whole of Scripture testifies to that fact. Men talk of miracles as being hard to accept. They are not one-half so hard as this doctrine concerning the conduct of life. And after twenty centuries Christians have not accepted it nor lived by it. Indeed, many of them go so far as to say that the ideal is impracticable and unrealizable. But nevertheless it is the ideal. And we may believe that men are closer to it to-day than ever before.

How practicable it is may be proved by a

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consideration of the effect of its application to the life of the world. Suppose people were to give over the business of fighting with one another, not in actual war, for that is the least deadly form of strife, but in social, political and business rivalries—what a blessed peace would descend on the hearts of weary and vexed men! Most of our annoyances come from the constant effort to assert what we think are our own rights, and from the intense jealousy we show lest others should get more than we deem their due. Even now the great and really successful and happy men are those who never fight back, who are careless of their own rights and privileges, and whose great ambition is not to compete with, but to help others. The servants of the race have almost invariably been men of this type. And they are the only men who have known that peace and joy—even amid great sorrow and pain it may be—which we all covet. So it is that the apostle tells us to let our “moderation,” or yieldingness, “be known to all men.” If we could but rise to this height of spiritual excellence we should see an end of all those cares and annoyances and distractions by which we are now

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“sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us.” Of a truth all our obstacles are within. It is the old worldly temper which we have to combat and to conquer. We are far enough from the victory, as is proved by the applause which we bestow on those of violent speech and action, on those who, as we say, “stand up for their rights”—though they may be careless enough of the rights of others!

Really the world is to be saved, and humanity redeemed and glorified, not by the fighting spirit, but by the yielding spirit, the spirit which the apostle commends to us. We must believe this if we believe at all in Christianity. Men are saying—and we hear them every day—that Christianity has failed, when as a matter of fact it has never had a fair trial in its purity. People are running after new religions or new modifications and adaptations of the old one, their chief aim apparently being to “get something” for themselves. Yet all the while we hear the old call to service and self-denial, the old call to forgive and to love rather than to fight and to crush our enemy. The question is simply one of heeding and obeying it. We need no new revelation, no new religion.

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What we need is the new heart, so often spoken of in the Bible. To work for others, to serve them, to be willing to suffer in a noble cause, to refuse to add to the awful discord which now mars the life of the world—this is Christianity. It is once more a question of noble and true living—as we saw it was in literature and life. The whole Christian revelation is saturated with these ideas. If they are true, how foolish are those who think it brave and manly to be quarreling and fighting all the while, how insane those who see in every man an enemy rather than a brother! The world can never make any progress along this line. It can only revert to barbarism, to the days when every man was a soldier, and when private vengeance was the law of life. So Christianity and civilization are one, and civilization can be saved from marching to ruin by the old and well-worn path which has so often been trod, only by the application of the Christian morality to it. And it can only be so applied by men who are at least trying to rule their lives by the Christian spirit. What tired and tempted lives need is not the fighting spirit, but the peace which is promised in the gospel.

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That is a peace that will keep a man serene and self-poised in the midst of alarms, that will make him master of himself and his own base and fierce passions. It can come only from a realization of the Christian ideal.

THE FUTURE LIFE

IT is often the case that scientific men fail to meet fully their responsibilities to the people, fail indeed to realize how serious those responsibilities are, and this is never truer than when they try to deal with revelation, and to carry forward science into a domain in which it has no proper place. Almost invariably in such cases they seem to be making concessions which they themselves in their hearts feel are not legitimate. Such men forget that the uninformed and the ill-informed will take their words for vastly more than they are worth, simply because they are the words of a scientist. People do not stop to think whether the subject is one in which the man is an authority, whether, indeed, that subject has any relation of any kind to physical science. They are quick to assume that the voice which speaks is, not simply that of the scientist, but that of science itself. Many undoubtedly will have this

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feeling in regard to Sir Oliver Lodge's amazing statement concerning his "communications" with three of his dead friends through two very remarkable mediums. It will not occur to them to ask what Sir Oliver can know about this subject more than other people know, or to inquire as to the possibility of any one having any knowledge on the subject. They will not stop to ask even whether he carried his scientific temper into the inquiry, whether his usual scientific doubt accompanied him on his excursion into the unknown world. They will be content to learn that a distinguished scientist has been converted to what is at best only a respectable form of spiritism. The *New York Times* puts the case so clearly—and on such a subject as this it is important that the people be not deceived—that a quotation may be pardoned:

“ ‘Mediums’ of high and low degree, and all the shady, shabby troop of traffickers in mysticism and superstition, will hail the news as the corroboration of their claims by a real scientist, and they will eagerly await the inevitable increase in the number of their dupes—and of admission fees to their seances. Well,

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they have the corroboration, for Sir Oliver is a real scientist, but the assumption that, because he speaks with authority on electricity, for instance, he should be heard with the same respect when the subject is mediumship, so-called, can be made only by those who think that a scientist knows all science. As a matter of fact, though Sir Oliver Lodge has long been prominent among the psychical researchers, and has given much of eager attention to occultism, he has never shown the slightest inclination to use his scientific training in that field of his activity. On the contrary, he has there always illustrated precisely the characteristics of the ordinary haunters of the dimly-lighted back parlors where elementary tricks of legerdemain are received with gasps of reverent astonishment. * * * The truth is that no medium ever yet came successfully through a scientific test conducted by experts trained to precision in that particular field of inquiry, and, as for automatic writing and speaking, which Sir Oliver calls 'the most important set of phenomena,' their importance is wholly for the student of pathology, who, if he happens also to be a neurologist, treats them

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for their nervous instability, and sometimes cures it. Never, in their company, does he hear the whisper of a spirit or the rustle of an angelic wing; instead he listens to the invariably childish chatter of the subconscious self, temporarily deprived of intelligent guidance and control."

There is, as the *Times* says, no mystery except to those who reject the distinction between the conscious and the subconscious, and who suppose that "because Lodge and Crookes are on their side the world of science is with them." In short, a great deal is made of the support of a scientist who has for the time ceased to be a scientist. Nor should it be forgotten that it is almost invariably the strange fate of those who go into these investigations to acquire, sooner or later, not a mere willingness to believe and to be convinced, but a strong determination and a most earnest desire and longing to believe. There is something in the subject that takes the mind captive, that overwhelms the imagination, and that sweeps the investigator to conviction before he realizes that he is no longer an inquirer, but a devotee. Doubtless it is so with Sir Oliver Lodge. He

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has been working for a good while with the psychical researchers, and been very greatly interested in occultism. And now at last he thinks that he has scientifically proved his proposition, which is really only what he himself is eager to believe. There is nothing scientific in his attitude, though, of course, he thinks there is, and though he uses language that is to a certain extent scientific. But when he says that the boundary between the two worlds is "wearing thin in places," and expresses the belief that it will soon be broken down, he is talking of something of which not even a scientist can know anything.

All that has happened to him is the reception of certain so-called "messages" from three dead friends, an experience which millions on millions of people have had. Of course, it is perfectly conceivable from a religious point of view that there might be such communications. But it is not scientifically conceivable, nor is it conceivable either that science should ever prove the existence of life beyond the grave. The existence of such a life can not be "proved" even with the help of revelation. The only point it is desired to make here is that

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Sir Oliver Lodge can know no more about this matter than is known by the most ignorant and superstitious haunter of the "back parlors." There is a field for investigation in which much is certain to be discovered, and that is the relation of the conscious to the subconscious self, and of the operations of the mind of man. Man himself in the deeper recesses of his nature is a proper subject for study. But science can have nothing to do with a spirit world, for there is no point at which the two meet.

It has been said that Sir Oliver Lodge makes use, to a certain extent, of scientific language. Yet one can not tell what he means when he says that "on the question of the life hereafter the excavators are engaged in boring a tunnel from the opposite end," and that "amid the roar of the water and the other noises we are beginning to hear the strokes of the pickaxes of our comrades on the other side." Does Sir Oliver himself know what he means? At best this is only a metaphor, and the true scientist is sparing in the use of metaphors. What this man's conception of the future life is it is impossible to judge from his extraordinary language. If the boundary, which he says is "wearing thin,"

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should be finally broken down, there would not be two lives—one on this side and one on the other side of the grave—but simply one life. We should, in a sense, all be dead, or else we should all be living a life very like that old life with which we are so familiar. Poor Macbeth, driven to insanity by the coinage of his disordered brain, spoke the sane truth when he said :

“—the times have been
That, when the brains were out, the man would
die.”

Death truly means, and necessarily involves, separation in time and space. When men are dead they are dead. As far as we can know, death ends all. The boundary between life and death, between this world and the next, is precisely as “thin” as it ever was, and no thinner. The doctrine of immortality, which is so precious to the race, and so necessary to man’s moral well-being, can not be proved by any reasoning which confuses and confounds two lives which God Almighty has sundered. There is, therefore, no possibility of understanding what Sir Oliver means when he says that the

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denizens of the two worlds are at work penetrating the partition that now separates them. What would happen in such a case? How would the two species of beings meet and mingle? What would be the nature of their relationship? Try to put such thoughts as these into scientific language if you care to realize how tremendous—and how hopeless—is the problem.

The whole subject belongs within the realm of faith, and there alone. It can not be dealt with except in terms of revelation or philosophy. We must to the end of time be content to believe "where we can not prove." To take any other view is to discredit both faith and reason. To desire to take any other view is to confess to a weak and helpless faith. Immortality, that great and divine thing, transcends reason, is above experience, and is beyond the utmost reach of science. Its very greatness and wonder take it out of all those categories under which we classify truth as we know it by reason. When, therefore, scientific men intrude here they dishonor their science, confound faith, and confuse and paralyze the spiritual nature of man. It sometimes seems that as

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men become more rational they become at the same time more superstitious. Clamoring for proof of what can never be proved, and realizing that the old truths are incapable of demonstration by logical process, they throw them away. And then, having lost them, and desiring to recover them, they resort to the "soothsayers." So we need, not more science, but vastly more faith, and faith of an ordered and intelligent kind. And so in an old collect we pray: "O Lord, we beseech Thee to keep Thy church and household continually in Thy true religion; that they who do lean only upon the hope of Thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by Thy mighty power." And again we are bidden to pray that we may die "in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope." Faith and hope—a faith and hope that flower in charity—these must be our dependence and stay. There is nothing else on which we can rely.

And they are enough, for they are from God Himself. Could even knowledge help us here? Should we be any better men if we knew scientifically that we were to live beyond the grave?

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Should we be persuaded "though one rose from the dead?" This is doubtful. For the strength that we need for the struggle of life is that which is developed by the exercise of faith, and yet we "stumble at truth's very test." It has always been so with men. They lose their faith, and then cry aloud for knowledge to take its place. The result is that they get nothing. Bishop Blougram puts the case well:

"How you'd exult if I could put you back
Six hundred years, blot out cosmogony,
Geology, ethnology, what not
(Greek endings, each the little passing-bell
That signifies some faith's about to die),
And set you square with Genesis again,—
When such a traveler told you his last news,
He saw the ark atop of Ararat
But did not climb there since 'twas getting dusk
And robber bands infest the mountain's foot!
How should you feel, I ask, in such an age,
How act? As other people felt and did;
With soul more blank than this decanter's knob,
Believe—and yet lie, kill, rob, fornicate,
Full in belief's face, like the beast you'd be!"

If, as Christ said, it is not given to us to "know the times or the seasons," such forbidden knowledge would not, we may be very

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sure, help us to lead nobler and truer lives. The proof of immortality is wholly moral and religious. The most that science can do, if it can do even thus much, is to suggest that the nature of man is such as to make it improbable that he is to perish everlastingly. It certainly can not bridge the gap between the living and those whom we call the dead. / Faith can do this, and nothing else can.)

THE END

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