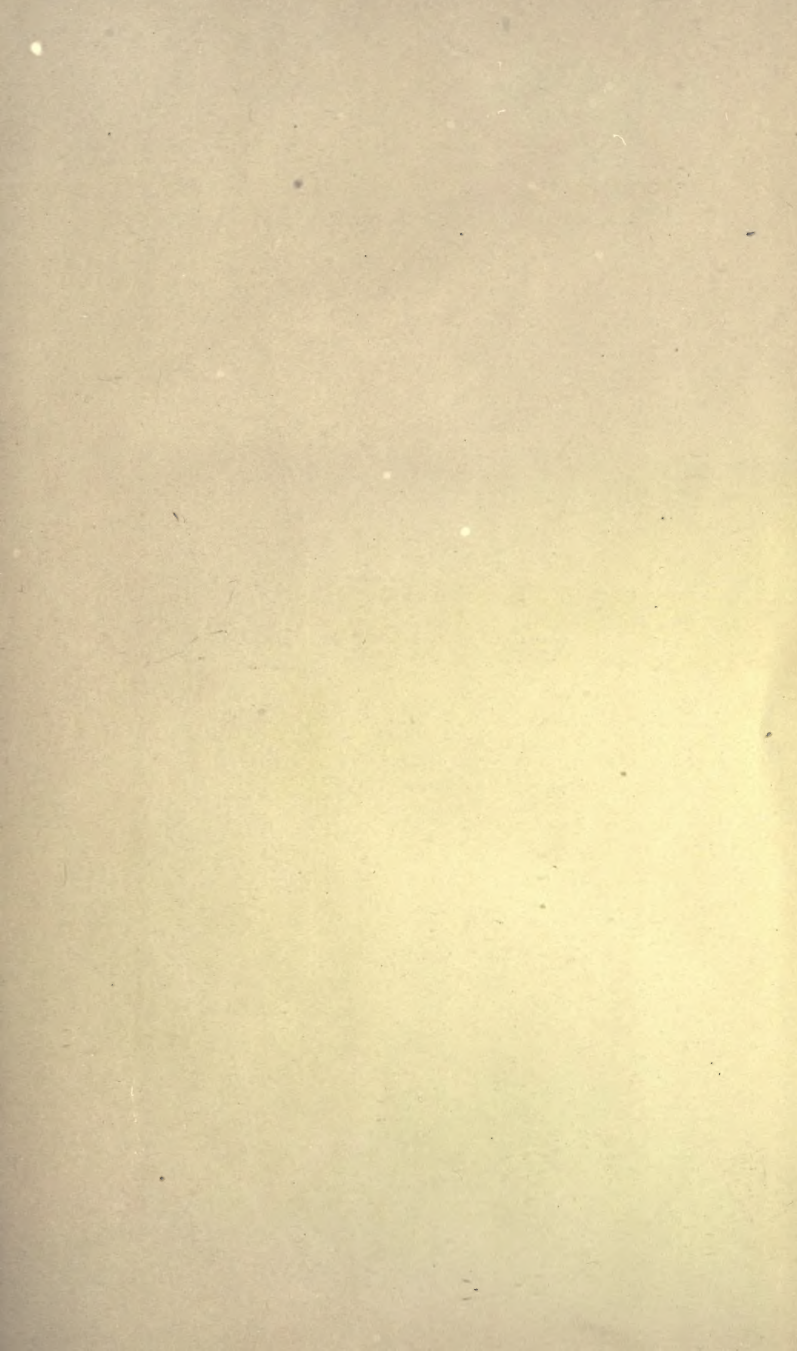



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75 Everett (Prof. C. C.) Essays, theological
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ESSAYS

THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY

BY

CHARLES CARROLL EVERETT

LATE PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY
IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

1901

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Published September, 1901

PREFACE

THESE essays are published in response to the desire expressed by a number of Dr. Everett's pupils and friends that his shorter papers might be collected and made generally accessible. It is to be regretted that they must be sent forth without having had the benefit of his final revision. But they were all written during the last fifteen years of his life, and may be regarded as expressing his mature thought. He might have retouched them here and there, expanding, abridging, or refining — it is not likely that he would have modified their positions in any important respect.

Most of the essays have already appeared in print, and are reproduced by the kind permission of the editors of two magazines. Eight appeared in the *New World*, vols. i.-ix., 1892-1900, and one, "The Poems of Emerson," in the *Andover Review*, vol. vii., 1887. Of the remaining papers, that on "The Philosophy of Browning" was read before the Boston Browning Club about ten years ago, and those on "Instinct and Reason" and "The Faust of Goethe" have not before been made public.

The essays, which are all both theological and philosophical, form a well-defined unity, and exhibit the several sides of Dr. Everett's thought and teach-

ing. They fall into two groups. The first group, Nos. 1-8, begins with the rational basis of religion in general, and the special nature of Christianity (the person of its founder and its distinctive mark), and then, passing over the earlier periods and coming to the modern era, discusses the significance of two representative thinkers, Kant and Nietzsche, the outcome of recent naturalistic views, and the parts played by instinct and reason respectively in the construction of human thought, especially religious thought. The group closes with an historical examination of various embodiments of evil, and of the development of the Christian embodiment. The second group, Nos. 9-12, sets before us these same spiritual ideas as they are found imbedded in the poetry of Emerson, Goethe, Tennyson, and Browning. In these last papers, especially in that on "Faust," literary criticism is prominent, but the chief interest is in the philosophical and religious conceptions.

C. H. T.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., *July*, 1901.

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ESSAYS

THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY

I

REASON IN RELIGION

SUPPOSE a child to have this problem set before him: Given fifty dollars to be divided among five men, how many dollars would each man receive? This problem, however simple it may seem to us, we can imagine to be a little formidable to the child. It sets down its figures, adding ciphers to represent cents, and proceeds by long division. It reaches the result that each man will receive a hundred dollars. Now, whether or not it discovers the cause of its mistake, that it omitted to mark off the ciphers which stood for cents, it might possibly be bright enough to see that the answer could not be right. This might be seen to be unreasonable. The child's reason might decide that the result of its reasoning was a mistake.

It is related of General Grant that, during a battle in the Wilderness, it was reported to him that one of the wings of his army was routed. He thought a moment and said, "I do not believe it," and went on with his whittling. The report was too unreasonable to be true.

In the course of the history of Christianity the

Christian world in general has been made to believe many strange doctrines. One doctrine, for instance, that has been received by many with joy, and has driven others insane, is that God from eternity elected some to everlasting joy and some to everlasting and unmitigated torment. Other doctrines, less terrible but otherwise more or less akin to this, were bound up with it. These doctrines had been reached by reasoning that seemed faultless. The authority of the Bible had been supported by miracles which were testified to by witnesses whose knowledge and honesty could not be doubted. The Bible seemed evidently to teach these doctrines; consequently they must be believed. While many accepted these results, some were found to dispute them. These persons had little in the way of an argument to offer. They could not disprove the argument from miracle. They had no satisfactory exegesis which they could oppose to that which was current. Whatever later science has done in this direction was not at their command. Some simply denied the truth of these doctrines; others forced the Bible to say something that was different. But whether the one course or the other was taken, the doctrines were rejected because they were unreasonable. Men urged the unreasonableness of the result against the truth of the reasoning by which this result had been reached.

Experiences such as I have referred to are not wholly unfamiliar to any. We consider all the arguments that lead to a certain conclusion, and we may perhaps be able to detect no flaw in them; but we reject the conclusion, in spite of the apparent truth and validity of the premises, because it seems to us too unreasonable to be accepted.

We recognize thus two uses of the word "reason." On the one side it may refer to the reasoning by which certain results are reached. When a man is asked what is his reason for believing this or that, he will probably give the arguments by which the belief is supported. On the other hand, we use the term "reason" with reference to what appears to us reasonable or unreasonable. It appears, then, that reason in the one sense may be opposed to reason in the other. Of course, there are minor antagonisms between different utterances of the same form of reason. In the case of reasoning, arguments may be urged against arguments. Thus, also, things may have different aspects; and what looks reasonable from one point of view may look unreasonable from another. At present, however, I wish to notice merely this fundamental opposition that may exist between the reason which affirms that a certain view is true or false because it is reasonable or unreasonable, and the reason which supports or denies a certain affirmation on the strength of reasoning. Although, as I have said, the term reason covers both these methods of procedure, still it may be convenient, though not perfectly accurate, to speak of the reason as over against reasoning.

We thus see that it is an interesting and somewhat important inquiry which seeks to fix the nature of this reason that undertakes, independently of all argument, and, it may be, against all evidence, to determine what we shall and what we shall not believe.

Let us look at the cases which I have just brought together in a haphazard way, using what chanced to occur to me. Take the first and the simplest of all,

the child with its sum. On what ground did it pronounce the result of its ciphering too unreasonable to be true? Perhaps we might differ a little in our account of this. Some might say that it was simply the result of experience, that the child had seen that the part was never greater than the whole. Some, perhaps, would say that it was the result of an insight such as needs the confirmation of no experience, that from the very nature of things, from the very nature of the whole and the part, as seen in the very mention of them, the part could not be greater than the whole. Neither explanation would assume that the child consciously enunciated this somewhat formidable proposition; but the idea would be that the child simply recognized in a concrete instance that which the formula expresses in an abstract and universal manner. In the incident from General Grant's life there need be no difference of interpretation. From Grant's knowledge of men, and of the special men who formed and commanded his army, from his knowledge of the strength and position of his army and those of the enemy, he knew that the story of a routed wing could not be true. In this case the verdict of unreasonableness was based upon a bit of rapid and condensed reasoning, which itself was based upon knowledge and experience.

When we come to the position that affirmed the unreasonableness of certain doctrines of the church, we have a case differing from the two just named. Here we have no place for experience or for arguments based upon definite knowledge of facts. Men have had no direct experience of divine beings upon which they could base any reasoning in regard to their habitual ways. Indeed, the actual experience

of life might very well be appealed to in defense of some of these doctrines. In life itself do we not see persons who seem to have been appointed to joy and others who seem to have been appointed to sorrow ; some who are born to ignorance and misery, and, we might almost say, to sin, and some who seem to have been born to ease, to delight, and, we might almost say, to virtue? Something like this was the line of argument adopted by Bishop Butler in his famous "Analogy." Yet in face of all these facts, and of this lack of experience of other facts which might be opposed to them, the reason dared to deny the doctrines which the known facts might seem to support. It denied that there was any God ; or it affirmed that, if there were a God, He was not like the one whom these doctrines described. I do not say that there are no arguments besides that of unreasonableness which might be urged against these views, but simply that the reason has often denied them without reference to any arguments. It has spoken like a monarch, recognizing no authority above and beyond its own, and has decided absolutely, by its own right and authority, that certain things could not and must not be believed.

The reason in the sense in which I now use it, that power of insight, or that assumption, by which we pronounce any form of thought or statement to be reasonable or unreasonable, may thus include various elements. Sometimes it might be difficult for the person uttering a judgment to explain precisely what is the real basis of it. It may be a condensed expression of the experience of life. Past thought, past feeling, past experience, may all be united in this expression. To these elements, as we have seen,

there may be added another. The statement pronounced reasonable or unreasonable may be judged by a standard which is independent of experience, which is purely ideal. The sense of what ought to be may have a more important part to play in the judgment than any knowledge of what is or has been. One may go so far as to affirm that what, according to his ideal standard, ought to be, must be; or that what ought not to be, cannot be. This is the nature of the judgment which, as we have seen, condemned some of the religious doctrines of the past, even when all the authority of tradition and much of that of experience seemed to be in their favor. This ideal standard of reasonableness may have been recognized in its isolation, or it may have been blended with the other elements which have been named. It may exist with some approach to perfection; or it may be very imperfectly developed. In either case the individual may accept it as final.

Thus the judgment in regard to what is reasonable or unreasonable is the expression of the whole intellectual or spiritual condition of the man who makes the judgment. It is the utterance of the entire self. It marks the position which the man has reached in his development; and it will therefore vary immensely according to the community and the age in which one lives. Just as arguments on one side may be met by arguments on the other, so the judgment of the reason may be met by counter-judgments. What is perfectly reasonable to one man, or to one age, may be pronounced absurdly unreasonable by another. In any line of national development each age has its distinct method of thought and feeling. It has its assumptions and its presumptions. It has

its traditions and its habits. It has its standard of right and wrong, of the probable and the improbable. It has its beliefs, the source of which and the evidence underlying which it would find in many cases to be wholly unknown and unsuspected. In many cases the question as to origin and basis is not raised, is not even thought of.

Of course, in every age, in the same community, there are very great differences between class and class, and between person and person. Some of the assumptions to which I have referred are indeed common to all classes and all persons in any given age, but others belong to certain spheres of life and special companionship. Even those that differ have, however, a certain community, or stand in a certain relationship to one another. Persons living side by side may practically belong to different ages. Persons are living to-day who might seem to belong to the thirteenth century, or to the sixteenth, or to the seventeenth, or, on the other hand, to the twentieth, or even to some later and better age of the world. But these men are not precisely what they would have been in these past centuries, or would be in those which are to come. No man can escape wholly from the age in which he lives. This community between those living in the same age and in the same mental environment forms what Leslie Stephen calls the "social tissue." It is this social tissue, as it is embodied in different individuals, that plays a large part in the judgment as to what is reasonable.

As this judgment is formed to a large extent, though not altogether, independently of conscious reasoning, so it is changed to a large extent, though

not wholly, without conscious reasoning. Lecky calls attention to the fact that no arguments could be used to-day against belief in witchcraft or the hanging of persons suspected of being witches, that could not have been used against them in earlier days. The change is simply that the spirit of the age is against the belief and the practice. What was thought reasonable once is judged to be unreasonable to-day. Persecution, in the bloody or fiery sense, would probably not be used to-day by any church even if it had the power. The spirit of the age is against it. Petty forms of persecution may be and are indulged in, even in civilized communities; but the grand forms of persecution are in the past.

Thus the judgment of what is reasonable or unreasonable in religious belief springs largely out of this social tissue, or spirit of the age. As this slowly changes, the notion of what is reasonable or unreasonable changes with it. The great advance which has been made in the religions of the world has resulted less from conscious reasoning than from the varying judgment as to what is reasonable. Take the development of the religion of Greece, for instance. To the larger and more developed spirits it seemed unreasonable that the gods should be such as the popular mythology described them, and so these larger spirits reached the idea of an absolute divinity who was wise and good. It would appear that they had little basis for reasoning that was not open to all. They felt, however, that it was impossible that the divinities could be such as tradition and the common thought of men would make them. They felt that, if the divinities were to be worshiped, they must be worshipful. And it was out of this feeling of worthi-

ness and of the reality of what seemed most worthy that the larger thought and faith arose.

I have spoken of this judgment of reasonableness as a feeling. I am inclined to think that this is a true name for that mental condition out of which the judgment springs. It is, as I have said, the condensed result of the whole mental and spiritual development, — a result that often is not reached by conscious reasoning which a man can analyze and of which he can give an account. It is rather the basis of reasoning than the result of it. It is something that is not reasoned to, but is reasoned from. It thus seems to belong less to the intellect than to the feeling. One feels that *it must be so*. The noblest spirits of Greece felt that the gods must be worthier than the common thought would make them. Thus reason has been the guide which has led men up from the depths of superstition to the grander heights which later ages have reached.

I have spoken as if the judgment of reasonableness had been to a large extent that of the age. The question here meets us, How then does any age advance? How can it escape from its own limitations?

In reply to this question it may be suggested that life is always introducing new factors into the mental structure of the world. New discoveries, like that of this Western Continent, broaden it. Profound experiences deepen it. Thought and feeling, though they cannot escape wholly from their age, may yet stretch somewhat the bands that unite them with it; and the spirit of the age may move forward with them. The movement of any age is like that of an army. It moves rank behind rank; none can escape from

the army ; every man wears its uniform ; but some are merely followers and others are leaders. The advance in the world has been made through the leadership of great souls who have obeyed the touch of reason and have led the elect spirits that followed them, like the volunteers to some perilous enterprise, through the darkness of superstition to heights where there was at least some glimmer of a brighter sun.

It may be urged that, even if what has been said is to a large extent true, if the reason has been the guiding principle in the advance of the world, yet the account given of it shows how little reliance can be placed upon it. We have seen that, after all, it is an individual matter. It depends upon external influences, upon the state of development which one may chance to have reached. As we have seen, what is reasonable to one person or to one age may be unreasonable to another. Thus it may be urged that reason is not a clear light according to which one may walk in confidence, but a sort of will-o'-the-wisp, shining now here and now there, and leading through devious and often dangerous ways. What is needed, it may be claimed, is some clearly defined authoritative and absolute revelation manifested by means of such marks as may make it unmistakable. Such revelation, it may be said, is like the clear and steady light of the sun, by the aid of which men may walk in safety, certain to reach at last their journey's proper goal.

However conclusive such reasoning may seem, the history of the world will hardly justify the result to which it has led. We can indeed conceive the abstract possibility of such a revelation, and we may admit that by it mankind might have been spared

some wandering and failure. We do not find in the world, however, such a revelation. I do not here raise the question whether God has revealed Himself in a way that may be called supernatural in the ordinary use of this word, that is, in a way to interrupt the course of human development and introduce a wholly new factor. I do not here raise the question whether Christianity is based upon such a revelation; I insist only that if there has been such a revelation it has not accomplished what is claimed for it in the form of thought to which I have just referred. It has not proved the clear and steady light according to which men have been able to walk in confidence and safety. Consider the history of Christianity: consider the different interpretations of it that have been given; consider the extravagance, even the horror, of doctrines that have been based upon it; consider the cruel persecutions which it has inspired. Where could we find more terrible torment or more refined cruelty than have been brought about by Christianity? But this, it may be urged, was because Christianity was misunderstood. It was not the real Christianity that has inspired persecution, whether of the sharper or of the milder form. The true Christianity, it may be said, would make men patient and loving as, full of hope, they press on to the fulfillment of its sublime promises. All this may be true. But it simply shows that revelation has not furnished to the world that safe and steady light which was needed. It also has led men into wild wandering in dangerous and toilsome ways, such as without it might never have been found. Nothing has yet appeared in the world that has prevented mistake and wandering.

There is, then, no guide more sure than reason. Men may scorn it, but to it they must finally, in some poor sort at least, return. The defenders of the dogmas of the church have sometimes set reason at defiance. They insisted upon the unreasonableness of the doctrines that they taught. They gloried in it. They bade men do dishonor to reason, trample it under foot. Human reason has been used as a term of mockery. Thus revelation might seem to be independent of reason. But why should men accept such results? and here come the arguments that prove the authority of the revelation, the reasons why men should accept it and submit to it absolutely. That is, the last appeal has been to reason itself, reason that takes form in argumentation. This, however, only leads to the higher form of reason that manifests itself in reasonableness. Reason was appealed to, to show that reason must be rejected. From reason under one form or other we cannot escape. We may apply to it the illustration which St. Anselm applied to God: We cannot escape, he said, from under the heavens. If a man flees from under one part of the heavens, it is only to find himself under another part of the same. So, he said, if one flees from God commanding, it is only to find himself in the presence of God punishing. In like manner we may say that we cannot flee from reason. If, with those who insist upon the authority of a special and authoritative revelation, we flee from reason affirming, it is only to flee to reason arguing. And so, after all, whether it be for good or for evil, whether we can or cannot conceive of anything that seems more desirable, reason remains our only guide. We may admit much that has been said against it. We may admit that it falls

often into self-contradiction, that its utterances depend largely upon time and place and upon individual idiosyncrasy. But what can we find in the world that is independent of these? We may as well give up once for all the thought of a ready-made perfect truth that may be had for the asking or the grasping, and make the best of the possibilities and powers that have actually been given us.

Let no one imagine that I mean to imply that we can be certain of nothing. The very basis of my reasoning is the fact of certainty. No one can look into his own consciousness and not find that he is certain of a multitude of things; that there are truths which he cannot doubt, and that upon these his life is based. I raise no question of the fact of certainty, I but seek the basis upon which this certainty rests. We may be mistaken; but the knowledge of this possibility does not affect our confidence in that of which we feel assured. Our truth may not be a finality, for the world or for ourselves; but none the less we absolutely trust and cannot help trusting to our reason, and to the truth of that which it reveals.

When we see what reason has actually accomplished, though we may admit its weakness and its frequent contradictions and failures, yet we may see that it has not wholly failed. If its utterances depend largely on the degree of development men have reached, we may see that, so far as the historical peoples are concerned, this development, on the whole, has been a progressive one. There have been retrogression and wandering, it is true, but as a road that is not free from winding, if viewed at a little distance from above, may be seen to have a fairly direct course, so the line of development of the his-

torical peoples has been on the whole an advancing one. Experience has moulded men's thoughts. Reasoning has enlarged them. More and more the great ideals of life have emerged out of the confusion and contradictions of the world. Men have not yet reached the region of perfect light. Complete and absolute truth does not yet belong to man, and never will belong to him. Yet, because the development of man has been, on the whole, in the direction of a fuller and larger life, so the reason of man, which is the exponent of this development, has reached larger and fuller results. The element of accident, which may have seemed to be involved in the statement of the dependence of reason upon the development of the individual that uses it, is removed, at least in some degree, because the development of the individual is to a large degree bound up with that of his race, and this has been an advancing one.

I have contrasted the reason by which a proposition is affirmed to be reasonable or unreasonable with the reason that takes form in a process of reasoning. This was done for convenience because, practically speaking, there is this difference. When, however, we take a larger view, the contrast disappears. Reasoning is merely included in the larger sphere of the reason. We accept the results of an argument because it seems to us reasonable to assume that a proposition which can be so defended is true. In other words, it seems reasonable to accept a certain amount of proof as convincing. In point of fact nothing can be absolutely proved. If a chain of argument is to support any weight, it must, like any other chain, be attached to something that is fixed. A chain without a staple, or some other fixed point,

is powerless. An endless chain is inconceivable, and even if such a thing were possible it would be useless. In like manner an endless chain of reasoning is impossible; and, if it could exist, it would be as useless as any other endless chain. The use of an argument is that it leads our thought to something that is accepted without argument. The proposition that may have seemed at first doubtful is attached to something that admits of no doubt, and is regarded as being fixed and firm like that. In the syllogistic argument two things are taken for granted, namely, the two premises. These are the staples that hold the chain. These may be found not to be firm. We then must go beyond them till we reach something that is indubitable, something, that is, which we must accept without proof, which we must accept simply because it is self-evident. These staples are driven in here and there, according to the mental development of one individual and another. One man will reach what satisfies him as being solid and trustworthy much sooner than another. The same individual will be more or less careful according to the necessities of the case. Practically we accept as true many things which, from a scientific point of view, would be uncertain. Many, and very often all, of us accept as sufficient what has come to us by way of tradition, or what is generally believed in our community. It often does not occur to us to go beyond this. In many matters it does not seem worth while. Who of us could give any sufficient reason for the belief that the tides are caused by the moon, or even for the belief that the earth revolves about the sun? Most believe these things because everybody else believes them. We say that we believe them

because it is the teaching of science. But how do we know even this? How many of us have talked about the matter with a man of independent authority, so that we could receive the teaching of science at first hand? Then, too, how many things has science taught that science has afterward contradicted! One's prejudices often seem sufficient ground for belief; or rather, we accept a basis for belief that has no other support than prejudice. In an *argumentum ad hominem* we sound a man's mind just as we try a wall into which we mean to drive a staple. We tap it till we reach a spot where it feels and sounds solid, and we think that there our staple will stick. The mind of another might be different.

The searcher for truth goes behind these superficial and convenient supports. The reformer, whether of thought or of life, brings forward the great hammer of his intellect. He pounds the wall that had seemed so solid to us, shows us that it sounds hollow, bids us seek some firmer basis for our beliefs and our habits of life, and shows us where, according to his thought, such a solid basis may be found. Of course the ultimate and absolute basis cannot be reached until we have found the fundamental principles of our reason. If we can reach these, we have found something that is enduring, and arguments that lead back to these are attached to a firm support.

The outcome of this whole discussion is that we pursue our reasoning until it seems unreasonable to reject the result to which it leads. The beliefs that we regard as most logically defended rest finally upon our recognition of reasonableness or unreasonableness. A simpler statement would be that we pursue

our reasoning till we reach a point where we cannot help believing ; that we believe because we must.

From another point of view we may illustrate the controlling power of the ultimate reason in our lives. We all believe that life should be reasonable. A man should know what he is living for ; and to this, perhaps, most would add, why he is living for it. In fact, however, this latter is something for which no reason can be given. At least, in giving an account of the matter, we reach at last a reason which is sufficient in itself and beyond which we cannot go. A man, for instance, is laboring to get rich. Why does he want to be rich ? In answering this question he may point to the goods which money can buy, to comforts and luxuries, to freedom from harassing toil and from the multitude of cares and anxieties by which poverty is so often surrounded. He may point to the social consideration which wealth may bring, and to the avenues of pleasure which it may open. If you should ask him why he desires all these things, he would probably stare at you with amazement, as if you lacked common sense. If he saw his way to an answer, he would probably say that with all these things he would be happier than he would be without them. If you still questioned and asked why he wished to be happy, he would be dumb. He could not answer the question. Neither you nor any one else could answer it. In fact, the question is unanswerable.

The same is true in the case of the larger objects of life. One man devotes himself to study. Possibly his object may be fame. Possibly it may be money. Perhaps it is truth. Why should he spend his life in striving to attain the truth ? He would be sur-

prised at the question. It seems such a reasonable thing to do that he marvels that any one should ask why he does it. Another may live for the good of his fellow men. He sacrifices his own ease, his private pleasure, and such money as he may have. He does it simply because it seems the most natural thing in the world. So it is with the great law of righteousness. Why should men feel impelled to do right? There are theories upon theories. At last we come upon Kant, who says that a man must do right simply because it is right. This is an answer that assumes the impossibility of an answer. It is such an answer as the child's "Because," that goes no further.

In fact, all these tendencies of human nature, the desire for happiness, the desire for power, the impulse to seek the truth, the impulse to philanthropy, all these, and one cannot say how many others, are instinctive. All taken together make up the sum of the instincts which compose the life of man. Every animate object is, we might say, a complex of instincts. Man is the most concrete organism that exists, and with him these instincts are more numerous and far reaching than those to be found in minor and lower organisms. These instincts we cannot get behind or outside of. They make up our life. One might say that they set the bounds to our life, except that some of them stretch far away into the boundless. Of course some of these are superficial. They are merely concrete forms of others that are more fundamental. Some are the results, doubtless, of inherited habits. Some, in practice hardly to be distinguished from the others, are simply the results of one's own habits. Some, however, are more pro-

found and are bound up with the fundamental elements and activities of our life. One might say more simply that they are bound up with the essential activities of our lives, for I suppose that there is no element of life that is not an activity.

Men speak of innate ideas as though they were something tacked on an organism at its very start, or somehow branded upon it in letters that may be read by it. Others study their own organism and that of the world at large, of infants and savages. They find no such tags or brands. In fact, what are called innate ideas, so far as they exist, are simply late abstractions made from certain active tendencies which do not so much belong to, as constitute, the life. Take, for instance, the great idea of the unity of the world. As soon as man begins to think, he unconsciously postulates this. For what is Thought? Thought is the recognition, or the attempt at the recognition, of the relations between objects. The man, the savage, if you will, sees something that makes him think. His thought is the attempt to answer the question, more or less consciously present to his mind, as to the relation between this object and the complex of objects that constitutes his world. The question is not whether such relation exists; but what *is* the relation. He assumes, consciously or otherwise, that there is a relation, and that he has simply to seek its nature. This assumption of relationship is made in regard to every object that interests him. It involves the tacit assumption that such relationship exists between all objects. Here we have, at the very first movement of thought, the implication of the organic unity of the world. Of this organic unity the savage knows nothing. He could

not understand what you meant if you spoke of it. Instinct is often defined as the tendency in any animate organism to act as if it knew something it does not know. The definition is an incomplete one ; but it is true as far as it goes. So even the savage thinks as if he knew that all the objects in the universe were bound together in organic relationship. Of this fact, as has been said, he has no comprehension and no idea. This assumption comes to consciousness only after ages of experience and thought. It may be science that formulates it at last in a proposition and claims to have discovered it. In fact, science rests upon it.

It is so with the other great ideals of life. They are bound up in certain primary impulses that are followed almost unconsciously. One has an impulse, for instance, to help another in some hour of need. Why should he not? It is the most natural thing in the world. Why should he? The question is not raised. It is an impulse as natural as any other. It is the practical recognition of the tie that binds him to his fellows. The tie is so slight that it seems insignificant, hardly noticeable. Yet it is real ; and it is something that could not exist except as a part of the universal relation in which all individuals stand to one another and to the whole. By degrees, just as the ideal of truth disentangles itself from the search after truths, until at last it stands in its completeness before the spiritual vision, so the ideal of universal relationship disentangles itself from the special relationships in which men have lived. Out from the mass of special duties rises the ideal of duty in its purity and vastness. So out of the loves which bind the individual to certain of his fellows rises the ideal of

a universal love. So out from the admiration of this or that pretty or beautiful thing rises the ideal of absolute beauty, the manifestation of which is recognized as one of the great ends of the universe.

It may thus be seen that these impulses or instincts of which I have spoken may exist under two forms, or rather in two somewhat widely separated stages. The first stage is that of the simple, unreasoning, perhaps hardly recognized impulse. Such is the impulse to think, or the impulse to help another. These take their place with other impulses. By experience and thought they are brought into consciousness. They are seen in their vastness, and, it may be, in something of their sublimity. In other words, instead of a mere impulse to help another in some moment of sympathy, we have the ideal of a life of service. Instead of what might be merely a certain sense of uneasiness if one does not perform some act of helpfulness, we have the ideal of duty. So also, if we may use the term ideal in a lower sense, instead of this or that impulse to self-seeking, we have the ideal of a life of far-reaching plans, all of which converge to the one fully recognized object of selfish gain or pleasure.

Between these two extremes, the hardly thought-of impulse on the one side and the fully recognized universal and imperious ideal on the other, we find the place for reasoning, for conscious intellectual activity. This opens and smooths the path between the impulse and the ideal. It forms, we might say, a broader or narrower belt between these extremes. For the impulse one can give no reason. For the ideal one can give no reason. It is its own reason. In the belt of the intellect we have the region of

arguments, of reasoning ; but the reasons, the ultimate reasons upon which reasoning is based, are found only in the extremes within which this belt of the intellect is inclosed. These, taken as a whole, constitute reason. It is to these that we make our ultimate appeal when we pronounce our judgment as to what is reasonable or unreasonable. This intervening belt must not be thought of as though it were one of clear intellectual light, sharply marked off from that which lies on either side. It is streaked through and through by feeling, blurred often and indistinct ; yet on the whole it performs well the office that I have claimed for it.

When men insist that in religion they will trust to reason alone, they sometimes mean that they will accept nothing that cannot be proved. More often they mean that they will accept nothing that is not in harmony with the great ideals of the reason. These ideals are used not merely negatively, not merely to criticise dogmas that are urged upon belief. They are used positively. They are made the basis of the largest faith. They rise above the soul like mountain ranges. Our mental and spiritual life is inclosed by them. Mentally and spiritually we live in a valley happy or otherwise, like that of Ras-selas. Not a breath from the outer world can reach us that does not blow across these heights of reason. They stand to us for the outward world ; for we cannot help believing that they have their basis also in that. They belong to the soul ; and yet we do not doubt that they are the revelation of the true nature of the universe. They are the ideals of our reason ; yet we cannot help believing that they are also the ideals of the world.

In a word, we cannot help believing that the world is a reasonable world. The day laborer, when he goes to his work in the morning expecting to find the stone wall which he left half finished the night before still standing as he left it, shows that he believes that the world is a reasonable world. The mathematician, studying the formulas in accordance with which some mighty bridge is to be constructed, shows that he believes that the world is a reasonable one. The man of science, searching out the laws which control the movements of the planets, those laws which are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and the philosopher, searching out the mysteries of the universe, — these share the same faith.

Religion utters simply the same great confidence in the reasonableness of the world. The confidence of Kant that what must be done can be done, and the postulates which he based upon this, show his faith that the world is a reasonable one. When Browning says through the lips of his David, —

“Do I find love so full in my nature, God’s ultimate gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here the parts
shift?

Here the creature surpass the Creator, — the end what Began?”

he appeals to the reasonableness of the world. That the creature should surpass the creator in the power of love would be too unreasonable to be imagined for a moment. When Jesus says, “If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” he appeals to the reasonableness of the world. He meets the error which he would refute by a *reductio ad absurdum*; and every *reductio ad absurdum* de-

rives its force from the universal assumption of the reasonableness of the world.

The difference between this assumption as made by religion and as made in respect to other relations of life, is that religion makes it with a clearer insight into its significance. It perceives that if the world is the embodied reason, it must be the manifestation of reason; that if it be a world in which the ideals of the spiritual nature are to be fulfilled, it must be a world that is, in its essence, not material, but spiritual.

When we reach this point, that is, when we begin to take seriously this confidence in the reasonableness of the world, we are met by many an objection. We are told that there are things in the world which contradict our reason. The world is not such an one as we reasonable persons would have made it. Things often go at cross purposes. There are difficulties where we would have had ease. There are sorrows where we would have had joy. There are failures where we would have had success. There is sin where we would have had holiness; hate where we would have had love.

However strange it may appear, it is true that out of these very irrationalities of the universe the special faith of religion, to a large extent, took its rise. It happened a little oddly, also, that the first method that men took to reconcile their faith in the reasonableness of the world with the facts of life was to a large extent directly opposite to that which religion has followed in these later days. To the savage, death, disease, and similar interruptions of the order of life were supposed to come by the act of some supernatural being. Whether they ever

stated it or not in this formal manner, the assumption would seem to have been that if these supernatural powers would only leave men in peace, then health and happiness and life itself might continue indefinitely. So, too, the destruction that came by tempest or other convulsion of nature was the act of these supernatural beings. The faith of these simple peoples in the reasonableness of the world would seem to have been so great that whatever of unreason they found, or believed that they found, was placed outside the world of ordinary life and ascribed to supernatural, and, therefore, in a sense, unnatural powers.

I have spoken of this way of looking at the matter as though it were peculiar to savages. In fact, it continued to have its place in the thoughts of men who had risen far above the condition of the savage. By many, plague, pestilence and famine, disturbances of whatever kind in the order of nature, have been felt to be in a special sense signs of the presence and power of the divinity. It was not merely that in regard to events which they could not comprehend men rested in the faith that a wisdom greater than their own was controlling the course of events; these things were, as I have said, regarded as the special manifestations of the divine; so that so far as science showed an order in the world it seemed to leave no place for religion. We read in the story of Elijah that "God was not in the earthquake," yet there is where many have thought that they found Him in some special manner. All this was but a survival of the faith of the barbarian in the rationality of the world which showed itself by placing whatever seemed irrational outside the world. Slowly and partially it has given place to that higher faith which finds in the

rationality of the world the indication of the absolute reason that rules it, and which appeals to the thought of this higher reason to complement and explain the reason which is embodied in the universe. This later form of thought may also say that God is not in the earthquake. That is, so long as the earthquake is not understood, so long as it seems an interruption of the order of the world, this higher form of thought could not see in it the divine presence. It might believe, but it could not see. Only when the earthquake is understood to have its place in the orderly movement of the world is God found also in that.

In all this I have wished to illustrate the faith of man in the rationality of the world and to show how these opposite forms of thought recognize it alike. At first the apparent unreason of the world is transferred to that supernatural power which is later seen to be the exponent and the source of the rationality that is in the world.

We can thus understand something of the nature of the strife between faith and reason which, as we have seen, played so large a part in the earlier church. The supernatural power that was called divine was to a large extent, like the supernatural beings of the earlier religions, the seat of unreason. It stood thus opposed to rationality. The difference was that the earlier peoples sought to win over these supernatural powers, to make them reasonable, so that they would no longer interfere with, and might even promote, the rational development of human life ; while in the later period which I have compared with it, men were called upon to sacrifice their reason itself to the divine unreason. Men have brought many precious offerings to God, but none more pre-

cious than the sacrifice of their reason at what was called his shrine. I do not mean, of course, that Christian worship was at any time the worship merely of unreason; but so far as the thought of God came into direct conflict with human reason, so far it obviously represented unreason, enthroned and deified.

We thus see what is the true relation between faith and reason. We see that when the nature of both is understood there is and can be no strife between them. So far is faith from being opposed to reason that it finds its object in reason. We do not find reason everywhere manifested in the world. There is much that appears irrational. Faith, so far as it is complete, affirms the absolute rationality of the universe. Where it cannot see, it believes. It postulates whatever seems to it absolutely needed, in order to represent to itself this rationality.

The assumptions made by religion are sometimes further criticised as exalting too much the human spirit. There is a tendency at present to insist that man should humble himself in the presence of the outward world; as if a single living, loving, aspiring human soul were not worth the whole physical universe put together. The older theologians used to speak scornfully of the pride of reason. Something like the same reproach we hear to-day, only from the opposite quarter. Herbert Spencer, in criticising a position taken by Dr. Martineau, refers to the well-known story of Alfonso of Castile, who is reported to have said that if God had consulted him he could have shown Him a better way in which to construct the world. Spencer says that this boast of the king was humble in comparison with the claim

made by Martineau to knowledge of the divine method of creation. In regard to the special point of difference between Spencer and Martineau I will say nothing. The illustration that Spencer uses is, however, if I understand the story, an unfortunate one. I suppose that what Alfonso criticised was the complicated system of the universe, of cycles and epicycles, as taught by the astronomers of his day. He accepted their account as true, and it struck him as a very awkward and complicated arrangement. He thought he could have arranged it better. If this is the truth of the story, we have here human reason criticising the world as it was falsely supposed to be. The reason was right. We have in this an example of the triumph of reason. Surely, if we have a right to be proud of anything, it is of our reason. This has weighed the sun and the stars. This has revealed the past and the future of our world. This has created ideals rising far above whatever the outward world can furnish. If anything could be the type of the power that is working in and through all things, surely it is this.

Pride of reason is, however, the last form of speech that I would use. I would speak rather of the humility of reason. After all, we walk by faith. The ideals of the reason are but dimly seen. Yet our faith is in them. We aspire towards them and are inspired by them. We have faith in them as we see them manifested by the truest and the best who have lived upon the world; as we see them in some degree confirmed by life and history, and as they offer themselves, however vaguely, to our own spiritual vision. One may feel himself exalted, as Kant felt himself, above the might and the vastness of

nature ; but one who feels the power of the ideas and the ideals of the reason can only humble himself before them with that form of humility which alone befits our nature, the humility of self-forgetfulness. They are not forces that we can use ; we must submit to be used by them. We see error and wrong abounding in the world ; we see the self-seeking, the political corruption ; we see the supremacy of things. If we take our place, as each one should, among those who are striving to bring about a purer thought and a larger life, our only ground of hope for a final victory is faith in the essential reasonableness of man, the essential rationality of the world, and in the supreme Reason that rules the universe.

II

THE HISTORIC AND THE IDEAL CHRIST

It is interesting to follow the changes in men's thoughts in regard to the person of Jesus, to see how his humanity has been taken up into divinity, to watch the different methods by which men have striven in their thought to unite the two elements that have seemed to most so incongruous; and then to see how, by a fuller recognition of his humanity, he has been brought back to earth, while men have sought by various theories to preserve for him an exceptional position among men. It is not only interesting but important to consider what truth may underlie this idealizing process, and especially to ask in what sense, if in any, Jesus, standing in the full light of history, must continue to be regarded as the ideal man.

The doctrine of the deity of Christ is doubtless held by many to-day in the simple and literal manner in which it is represented by the historic creeds. It is not many years since Professor Shedd wrote: "The Logos, by his incarnation and exaltation, marvelous as it seems, took a human nature with him into the depth of the Godhead. A finite glorified human nature is now eternally united with the second Trinitarian person, and a God-man is now the middle person of the Trinity."¹ I suppose that many would

¹ Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. ii. pp. 230 ff.

still accept these words as a statement of their own belief. But the history of modern thought shows that the doctrine is gradually losing its hold upon the world. This is seen in the origin and development of the Unitarian and other heretical bodies, and, not less clearly, in the changes which the doctrine is undergoing within churches that consider themselves and are generally considered to be orthodox.

It is not to be expected that a form of thought so long held as sacred would pass away at once, leaving no trace of its presence, and that Jesus after being regarded as God for centuries should quickly come to be looked upon as man. Great changes in human thought rarely take place suddenly. Both in the church considered orthodox, and in the bodies considered heretical, the change has been and still is gradual. He who had been a God still bore about him something of the fragrance of the upper heavens. Men could not help seeing him in the light of his previous exaltation. Such influences have colored men's conception of Jesus of Nazareth in the past, and they color it in many minds to-day. Thus, we find him regarded as the absolutely exceptional man ; the supernatural man ; the sinless man ; the ideal man, in the sense that in him was all possible perfection ; or the divine man, in the sense that in him, by nature and office, there was, in some special and supernatural manner, the revelation of God to men. These views, sometimes sharply defined, sometimes extremely vague, have marked and still mark the transition in men's thought of Jesus.

Perhaps as characteristic an example as we can find of this phase of modern thought is furnished by the German theologian Dorner. There is a special

interest for us in his views, because his system has influenced, in a marked manner, certain forms of theologic thought in our own country. According to Dorner, the Logos was incarnated in Jesus. The Logos is the second person of the Trinity, if the term "person" can be used in relation to such a Trinity as Dorner recognizes. It is a Trinity which has nothing in common with that of the creeds. The Trinity, according to Dorner, is made up of the elements that enter into the various aspects of all complete spiritual consciousness.¹ Thus, in one of these aspects the Father stands for what we may call the "I" of the divine self-consciousness; the Son stands for what we may call the "me;" while the Holy Spirit stands for the unity of the two. That is, according to this view, every one who believes that God is a spirit is thereby a Trinitarian.

Dorner illustrates the possibility of the mingling of the divine with the human in Jesus by certain elements of human experience.² One of these is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Christian. This higher life is not present as anything foreign, that can be distinguished from the human life into which it enters. It has become one with this human life, while at the same time it imparts to it a power which the human life by itself could not have shared. Another example which Dorner gives to illustrate the same truth is found in the moral sense. The conscience is the very presence and power of God in the soul, yet the unity of the life is not broken up by it. These illustrations seem to place the relation of Jesus to the Higher Power upon a level with that of other

¹ *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, vol. i. pp. 395 ff.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 420.

men. We might even think that there was no difference of kind, but simply one of degree. So to conceive his thought, however, would be to misunderstand Dorner, though there is such vagueness in his statement that I am unable to say wherein the difference consists. This vagueness arises in part from the fact that, according to his statement, the Word which in Jesus was made flesh has no separate personality or consciousness. It is simply the objective side of the divine consciousness.

While the view of Dorner may be taken as an illustration of the manner in which the doctrine of the deity of Christ may be retained in form while its substance has been lost, that of Schleiermacher may represent another type of thought which has been not uncommon since his day. According to him Christ was a new and higher creation, who was the introducer of a new life upon the earth. He was the supernatural man.¹

I notice these two forms of thought to illustrate the fact that the phases of belief which they represent are absolutely without Scriptural authority. If we assume, as the church has done, that the teaching of the New Testament is perfectly uniform in regard to this matter, we must take its highest and most definite statements to represent this teaching.

In the Epistles ascribed to Paul we have very clear and definite utterances. Christ was consciously pre-existent. He dwelt in the glory of God, exalted above all others save God. His subordination to God is often recognized, but, except for this, there is no limit to his power and glory. A single example will suffice. In the Epistle to the Philippians we

¹ *Christliche Glaube*, vol. ii. pp. 34 ff.

read of Christ : "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." ¹ Here we have something extremely definite. The passage declares a personal preëxistence in glory, and a conscious and voluntary surrender of this glory, in order to enter upon the earthly life. If the Bible is an infallible and divine authority, its statements must be accepted just as they stand. It will not do to go beyond them, or to fall short of them. It will not do to say : "Because the Bible says he is exalted in one way, therefore we will say that he is exalted in another way." It will not do to say, "Because the New Testament places him so near to God, we will make him the equal of God ; we will make him very God." Whether we go beyond the statements of the New Testament or fall short of them, we equally lose its authority ; if there is any reason for accepting such statements as authoritative, they must be taken just as they stand. We have no right to pick and to choose, to say we will accept this, and reject that. We have no right to soften down a declaration that seems to us too strong, or to reduce a clear statement of an individual fact to a hazy abstraction.

Vague notions in regard to the divinity of Christ, like that quoted from Dorner, which are more or less prevalent at the present day, and other notions in regard to his exceptional humanity, which reproduce something like the thought of Schleiermacher, have a certain air of orthodoxy or semi-orthodoxy ; but they have no more Biblical authority behind them than the barest humanitarianism.

¹ Philippians ii. 6, 7.

It may be said that beside the authority of the Bible there is the authority of the church; that in the church we have a progressive development of doctrine. This may be and doubtless is true; but obviously this assumption cannot be used to sustain any particular view that may be held at any one time by any portion of the church, or even by the whole church. The history of the church is not yet complete. Who can say what its final utterance will be? It is an interesting and important fact, however, that in the deification of Jesus, and in the modifications which the dogma of his divinity has undergone in its gradual relaxation, we have simply an example of doctrinal development. The doctrine was developed as an organism grows, and it is disintegrating as an organism disintegrates when it has passed its prime. In other words, the minds of men pass from one form of thought, which has been held earnestly, to another and radically different form of thought, very gradually. They tend to cling to the old as long as possible, and often they do not realize how the substance of the thought has been so transformed that its significance has been thoroughly changed.

In the dogma that we are considering there is a special motive at work to retard the transformation of belief. Jesus has stood as the central figure in history. He has been the object of love and reverence, even of adoration. Men have feared to let go the idea of some special supernatural and superhuman element in his nature and personality, lest his pre-eminence and his influence should be lost, undistinguishable among the manifold factors that enter into our modern life and our civilization. They have feared to leave him to take his chances in what may

be called the historical struggle for existence. Yet whatever supernatural elements may or may not be recognized in his life, to this we must come at last. The historical struggle for existence is as pitiless as that which has been going on in the natural world. Even man, the favorite child of nature and of Providence, cast apparently defenseless among the rude forces, animate and inanimate, that rule the world, would not have endured, had he not possessed certain powers of advantage in the great struggle. The Providence that preserved him was shown, not in surrounding him with safeguards, but in equipping him with those finer weapons by using which he triumphed over the elemental and brute forces of his environment. If, then, Jesus is to be recognized as the leader of the higher life of the world, the recognition cannot rest upon any theories of his office or of his person. He must hold the leadership simply because he leads.

We must here look upon the work of Jesus from the hither side. We can raise no question as to the divine plan or the councils of eternity. If we recognize a divine plan at all, this recognition can only rest upon what we find in the divine accomplishment. When, with this purpose in our minds, we look at the actual life of Jesus, we are at first baffled and disappointed. The story of his life, save in certain salient points, appears confused, if not contradictory. The Gospels were written long enough after the events which they describe to admit of forgetfulness, and of the growth of myths that obscure and distort the original facts. More confusing still, the thought of this later time to some extent necessarily blends itself with the thought of Jesus or takes the place

of it. The geologist can distinguish at a glance the vein of trap rock which cuts through the solid mass into which it has found its way; but who shall distinguish with equal accuracy the later thought that has been infiltrated into the discourses of Jesus?

As an example of the difficulty of reaching definite conclusions as to some of the fundamental facts in the history of Jesus, we may refer to a discussion that has recently interested many students of the New Testament. In his work entitled "The Seat of Authority in Religion" Dr. Martineau maintains that Jesus did not himself claim to be the Christ, but that this office was first ascribed to him after his death. He bases his argument chiefly upon a conversation of Jesus with his disciples that occurred during the journey to Jerusalem.¹ Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him."² Dr. Martineau assumes that Jesus here denies that he is the Messiah. In this he seems to me to force the words. The passage does take for granted that the Messiahship had not before been claimed by Jesus; and it suggests a reason why his claim was not known afterwards during his life. It seems to imply that while he lived Jesus was not recognized as the Christ. If, however, we take this and other passages that might be associated with it as our starting-point, we are met by many others that describe him

¹ *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, pp. 349 ff.

² Mark viii. 27 ff.

as taking openly upon himself the Messiah's office. I refer to this discussion, not to take one side or the other, but simply to illustrate the kind of difficulties that we meet when we try to form a clear picture of the life and work of Jesus. We have to adopt some principle according to which we shall emphasize one or another class of statements as most to be relied upon, or as most characteristic. Here is obviously much room for caprice; the most careful judgment and the keenest historic sense are needed.

When we turn from the attempt to construct the story of Jesus, and seek to comprehend something of his character and personality, we meet somewhat of the same difficulty, but in a far less degree. The personality of Jesus stands out with a distinctness that is not surpassed in the case of any of the heroes of antiquity. Despite the myths and the arbitrary reconstructions by which the narrative is marred, it is impossible to mistake the character of the central person. We find the same image stamped upon the work and the ideals of his followers. The church to-day, however imperfectly, reproduces the image of its founder. If criticism of the New Testament story should be far more destructive than it is, if the whole narrative should be resolved into the mist of a later mythology, even this would reflect, in glowing colors, the real image and the strong personality of Jesus.

We see in him a man in whom mysticism and practicality were united in a wonderful degree. His consciousness of God, from certain points of view, seems to be the one supreme factor in his life. It shows itself under all circumstances. Whatever may be the subject on which he speaks, this thought of the ever-present God mingles in the discourse. We do

not need the stories of the nights of prayer and of lonely struggle to teach us how he lived in this divine companionship, though these confirm and complete the impression of this aspect of his life. Sometimes this consciousness of God takes form in the glad sense of fellowship. Sometimes he finds in God the ideal of human living. Sometimes he bows before his unapproachable perfection. Under one form or another, the thought of God seems always present to him. When we turn to his life among men, his care and his loving sympathy for them seem to be each in turn the supreme power that manifested itself in him. His days were passed in ministering to their needs. While he shrank from being known as a wonder-worker, the strange healing power that he possessed was always at the service of those who needed his help. The spiritual needs of men moved him, however, more deeply than their physical sufferings. To him a blind and halting spirit was far more pitiful than a blind and halting body. He did not underrate, as his followers have sometimes done, the importance of ministering to the physical needs of those about him. Then, as we have seen, he never failed to help, so far as in him lay. But his great enthusiasm went to the quickening of the spiritual life of men. He would take them up into that fair world of aspiration and peace, of purity and love, in which he perpetually dwelt. He would make them share that divine companionship which was the strength and the joy of his own life.

In Jesus we also find blended in a union no less rare the elements of conservatism and reform. His keen vision distinguished accurately between the abuses that had gathered about the fundamental

principles of the national constitution and these principles themselves ; between the pettiness of observance that sank into triviality, and the service which the law itself demanded. Perhaps nothing is more marked in his character than his power of seeing things in their true perspective, of distinguishing between the great and the small. The saying, "This ought ye to have done and not to have left the other undone," illustrates the spirit which controlled his teaching and the habits of his life. Thus he reared within the Jewish law a moral and religious structure so complete that it stood undisturbed and fair when that law fell away.

Another of these harmoniously blended contrasts in the spirit of Jesus we find in the manner in which he looked upon different classes of sins. Nowhere does his sense of ethical perspective show itself more clearly. The sins that spring from impulse, and from human weakness, that have their roots in something not wholly bad, and are fostered by the needs of the individual and by the customs of society, the sins, at the same time, that the world most affects to despise, — to these he was unspeakably tender. He strove to uplift the fallen, to encourage those whose hearts had failed, to lighten by the smile of sympathy the path of those who moved in the shadow of the world's scorn. At the same time, there was nothing weak in this sympathy. It held up the ideal of a purer and better life that was still in the power of the sinner. On the other hand, for spiritual pride, for the spirit of those who, unconscious of their own sins, looked down in scorn upon their fellows, he had no sympathy. He seemed to feel that their spirit of self-righteousness crushed out all faith in the true

life and all power to attain it. While for the outcasts of the world he knew there was no hope save in encouragement, for those who were filled with spiritual exaltation, whose sins disturbed neither their satisfaction with themselves, nor the world's satisfaction with them, he saw that there was no hope save in humiliation. I have little sympathy with those who find something foreign to the spirit of Jesus in the denunciations which he hurled at the self-righteous oppressors of the lowly whom he would exalt. I am a little suspicious even of the sadly modulated tones in which, according to the familiar story, Channing rendered these words in order to remove the misgivings of a person who seems to have learned to know only one side of the completeness of the Master. The Christ whom the painters for the most part give us could not have uttered these words. They cannot give the whole ; so they take the fairest and the gentlest part. But Jesus united the tenderness of the sweetest psalmist with the sternness of the prophet who fearlessly denounced the wickedness of his time. While he rebuked with righteous indignation those who oppressed the lowly whom he loved, he met insult and cruelty directed towards himself with sublime patience and divine forgiveness.

When the "ideal Christ" is spoken of in contrast with the "historic Christ," the thought sometimes suggested by the comparison is that the ideal Christ has been formed by gradual accretion ; that the historic figure has been overlaid by the ideals of later generations. Thus it is assumed that Christ seems always in advance of the world simply because he is clothed upon by the unattained ideal of every age. I should not dare to affirm that this element has been

wholly absent from the relation of Jesus to the world. The idealizing process, however, has been on the whole rather one of abstraction than of accretion. The personality of Jesus has first been abstracted from its special environment. This separation has been, for the reasons already indicated, comparatively easy. The fact that we know so little of his definite plans and of the special significance of his work makes it easy to leave these to a great extent out of account. Indeed, the fact that while the personality of Jesus is marked so distinctly, his more direct relation to the circumstances of his time is left so vague seems to make the separation of the two unavoidable. Thus it has been possible for the life of Jesus to become an ideal fit to be applied to the circumstances of every life, however unlike these circumstances may be to those in which he moved.

The second step in the process of abstraction has been to separate the traits in the picture of Jesus which unite to form a harmonious whole from those which can with difficulty be associated with them. This, again, for the most part has not been done artificially, with a set purpose; it has been rather a process that accomplished itself. In a composite photograph only those elements that are more or less harmonious leave any impression upon the plate; that which is merely individual is unrecorded; so in the various representations of Jesus that are given in the Gospels, only the great mass of harmonious traits have impressed themselves upon men's hearts and memories; the few scattered details that do not conform to these have been for the most part disregarded. Such foreign elements are found, for instance, in the story of the cursing of the fig-tree because it failed

to produce fruit out of its season ; this perhaps was a parable hardened into a myth. Such also are some of the harsh and paradoxical sayings reported in the Fourth Gospel.

It is by such a process of abstraction, I conceive, that the ideal Jesus has been formed. I am not aware that any element of character attributed to this ideal is without a suggestion in the actual story. But the next stage in the process has been the abstraction of the few lofty moments of his life that are pictured for us, from his life as a whole, in affirmation of his absolute sinlessness either as man or as God. This certainly adds something to his nature ; it adds nothing to his character as it is represented to us. It throws a more intense light upon it ; and this very light tends to blind us to some of its more delicate *nuances*. Thus it detracts from the perfection of the picture instead of completing it.

There is in the Mahabharata a beautiful story of the marriage of Nala and Damayanti. Damayanti was a beautiful maiden who had given her heart to Nala, by whom she was tenderly loved. According to a custom of the time there was a gathering of heroes from among whom Damayanti was to select a husband. She cast her eyes over the assembly in search of him whom her heart had already chosen ; but to her dismay there were five Nalas. Four divinities also loved her ; and, knowing her love for Nala, each had assumed his form, hoping thus to be selected by the maiden. She prayed them sweetly to resume their proper form that she might distinguish the object of her love. They granted her request, and stood before her in their full divinity. " Their feet did not touch the earth, their eyes winked not, their

garlands were as fresh as if newly gathered, and not a stain of dust lay on their raiment nor a drop of perspiration upon their brows." "And Damayantí saw also the true Nala, for he stood before her with shadow falling to the ground, and twinkling eyes, and drooping garland, and moisture was on his brow, and dust upon his raiment."¹ Such were the marks of his humanity, and with them he was dearer to her than the immaculate gods. In like manner, may not a human Jesus be nearer to the hearts of men than one separated from them by a supernatural impeccability?

The theoretical question whether Jesus was or was not absolutely without sin does not much concern us. The important thing is to decide whether the spirit and the life of Jesus, as we know them, furnish an ideal which we may use for the shaping of our lives. When we take a rule by which to draw a line, we do not ask whether under a microscope it would still show an unbroken edge. We ask simply if it can be safely used. In the case of Jesus we have no microscope that we could use, even if we would. We have only glimpses at certain grand moments of his life. If we must pronounce upon his sinlessness, we have to base our judgment upon *a priori* considerations, resting on theological or metaphysical theories. It is far better to forget the speculations and the strife of the schools, and receive what guidance and inspiration we may from the personality of Jesus as it stands in living reality before us.

Let it be admitted that Jesus may be an ideal after which we can shape our lives. Does it follow, it may be asked, that he is *the* ideal? What becomes

¹ Wheeler's *History of India*, vol. i. p. 434.

of the central position that he has held? Why may not the world find others who shall as well, if not better, inspire men's lives? To these questions it may be answered that so long as the teachings of Jesus are recognized as embodying the loftiest truth, so long will his personality be regarded as the embodiment of this truth. This is the final stage in the process of idealization and generalization which we are contemplating. By this relation to the universal truth that was manifested through it the life of Jesus will be taken out of its individuality, and made also universal. So long as his teaching holds the central place in our higher thought, so long will his personality hold the central place as the ideal of life. It is necessary, then, to consider the teaching of Jesus, that we may judge as to the duration and extent of his personal influence.

In regard to this teaching, two questions suggest themselves. One is, What does the world owe to it? The other is, What do we owe to it? I believe that the answer to these questions is the same, that our indebtedness is also the world's indebtedness. To speak of the world's indebtedness would, however, demand a study of the utterances of the great leaders of the world's thought, and a comparison of them with the teaching of Jesus, for which we have here no space. I wish to present certain considerations in illustration of our indebtedness to him. After all, this is what chiefly concerns us. A boy's mother is, and will ever remain, his mother. Though he finds, as he goes out into the world, that there are other women as wise and good, they can never be to him what she is. Even if it should appear that other races owe to their teachers as much as we owe to

Jesus, he will still remain the source of our best life.

When we sum up the teaching of Jesus in a formula, it seems, we must admit, somewhat commonplace. He spoke of God as the loving Father ; of religion as an answering love, which strives to shape the life into conformity with the divine ideal ; of duty as being fulfilled in love. In his teaching, religion and morality were so interfused, they had become so indissolubly blended into one, that they cannot be severed even in our thought. Men sometimes speak of the Sermon on the Mount as if it were merely a system of ethics. Every word is transfigured by religious faith ; every word is luminous with the thought of God. These ideas seem commonplace, but it is partly because they are so often repeated ; yet chiefly because this repetition has often so little meaning for the life. With Jesus himself these truths were not commonplace. They were as if fresh minted and unsullied by careless handling among men. They came into the world as powers both of destruction and of accomplishment. They were the most revolutionary thoughts ever uttered. The living of them brought Jesus to the cross. However imperfectly recognized, they have been slowly transforming the world ever since.

Yet when we look at them more closely, do not the teachings of Jesus seem thin and abstract beside the fullness and sweep of modern thought and life ? Has not the world developed a religion and a morality more complex and many-sided than those which Jesus taught ? Take, for instance, the general matter of religion. He spoke, as we know, of the loving Father. Have we not learned to know God

as something more vast than this? Have we not learned to know Him as manifested in the perfect order of the Universe, in the sublime and inflexible law which holds the dust of our streets and star dust and human souls alike in its grasp? Does not religion demand a recognition of this truth also, and must it not shape itself to its demands? Does the thought of Jesus in truth furnish more than one factor in that greater and more complex whole which we call religion to-day? Have we any right to call this greater and more complex whole by his name?

Yet in this greater whole the thought of Jesus forms the only element that can be called religious. In a world of mere law, could there be anything like what we know as religion? There might be awe before the stupendous forces of Nature, and a deeper awe before the law by which each of these is kept within its appointed bounds. There might be submission to the inevitable. There might be peace in the thought that these laws are working out, on the whole, more good than evil; and one might be willing that his little bark should be wrecked by a wind that, in the end, brings good to man. But would all this be what we call religion? Does not religion imply the communion of spirit with spirit? Does it not demand to see love working in and through the law? What Jesus taught was, then, the essence of religion.

The revelations of our modern science open a world of which religion, if it would continue to exist, must take possession, and which it must transform into itself. So far as men can see or can believe that law is a manifestation of love, so far is religion possible. If the teaching of Jesus seems abstract, it is because it

is the form into which the whole life and experience of the world were to be taken up. This conquering and transforming of the world of law by the power of religion was not left by Jesus for the future to accomplish. Men sometimes fancy that he saw in God only a weak tenderness that granted its request to every cry. But in his moment of fiercest agony he cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." "If it be possible." He felt the terrible might of some necessity, in the divine plan, or of it, that might make the granting of his prayer impossible; but he submitted his will to it, because he knew that in it and through it a wise love was working.

Such was the relation of the spirit of filial trust in Jesus to the might of the law by which he felt himself encompassed. Such is the relation of religion to the laws of the universe now. Never did the world of material forces and inexorable law open to the thought of man in such vast complexity and order as to-day. This, however, furnishes no new element to religion. Submission to irresistible force is not in itself religious, even though this force be the manifestation of an order too sublime for our thought or our imagination wholly to grasp. Religion shows itself in a faith by which this world of law is transfigured; by which it is felt to be the expression of a presence and a power to which the spirit may trust itself and all things; to which it may trust farther than it can see or comprehend.

What is true of religion is true also of morality. Here, also, the world may seem to have advanced far beyond the simple teaching of Jesus. "Give to him that asketh thee," he said, "and from him that

would borrow of thee turn not thou away." This sounds superficial and old-fashioned to many ears to-day. We have to-day the science of political economy, a science extremely imperfect as yet, indeed, but still developed enough to change many of the forms of helpfulness. This science was not studied in Judea, although Paul anticipated its fundamental principle when he explained, "If a man will not work, neither let him eat." We sometimes think that with this science of political economy there has originated a wholly new kind of charity; and we look back with a certain contempt on the charity that incited to promiscuous almsgiving.

But charity was always the same divine power that it is to-day. Charity has not changed its nature. It moves a little awkwardly, it is true, among the rules to which it has not become fully wonted; but it is the same divine power which showed itself in the life of Jesus, and the praises of which Paul uttered in words which have never been surpassed. Charity has grown wiser. It has had to adapt itself to new conditions; it has learned more of the real needs of men. All this has not changed its nature. Suppose a charitable man to be giving clothes to some poor people who need not clothes but bread. When he learns their real need and gives them bread, has his charity changed its nature? His charity was the love of helpfulness working through such channels as seemed best at the moment. Political economy by itself is not charity. It has no moral worth. When it is animated by the power of love, then it becomes the means of charity.

Thus charity and religion, when once their highest truth has been uttered, remain simple and unchange-

able. The world changes, and these elements have to penetrate new sets of facts and new conditions with their power. So religion stands in the presence of the laws of the universe that have revealed themselves in such stupendous majesty in these later years. So charity stands in the presence of the political economy which has become such a controlling element in our thought. Each retains its primitive simplicity in the presence of a world which it is to conquer.

When Columbus raised the cross on this western hemisphere it was not a new religion which he brought; it was a new world that the old religion claimed as its own. The two commandments in which Jesus summed up the teaching of the law, "Love to God and love to man," remain to-day the final utterances of religion and morality.

When we speak of a final word in regard to anything, do we seem to put a bar in the way of progress? Can the human mind see finality anywhere? We sometimes forget that without something that is regarded as fixed once for all there can be no progress. Progress requires not only that there should be successive stages won and held; it also requires that some principle should be reached upon which all future accomplishment can be based. If the law of gravitation were held in doubt, how would the progress of astronomy be checked! Newton, in stating the law of gravitation, uttered a principle within which the science of astronomy could develop indefinitely, beyond which it cannot pass. So the teaching of Jesus is the sphere within which religion and morality may develop indefinitely, but beyond which they cannot pass. Love, divine and human, is the

highest word, a word which we are even now hardly beginning to comprehend.

If Jesus had merely uttered such teaching, we might have had another school of philosophy ; or we might have had simply another great individual filling one of the niches of history. It is more probable, however, that his words, unwritten and unsystematic as they were, would have been forgotten, and that he would have been forgotten with them. We certainly should not have had in him the founder of a new religion. The teaching of Jesus, was, however, embodied in his life. On the other hand, his life would have been remembered simply as we remember the lives of other heroes, or it would more probably have been forgotten, if it had not been the bearer of the teaching which we have just contemplated. Happily for the world, the two elements, the teaching and the life, were united in him. Whatever theories we may hold, whatever theories we may reject, in regard to the nature and person of Jesus, his life will have a position and a power unlike that of any other so long as his teaching retains its place as the inspiration of the best and truest living. The older theologians insisted that the blood of Jesus had infinite worth, which was derived from the presence of the indwelling God. So the outward life of Jesus gains sacredness and power from the teaching of which it was the incarnation.

We may illustrate the power that is won when the loftiest teaching and a noble life are harmoniously joined, by a reference to the leader of men who would most naturally be compared with Jesus. To a large portion of the inhabitants of the world Buddha holds a place like that which Jesus holds in the re-

gard of the Christian. He is believed to have uttered the words which alone can bring emancipation from the evils of existence. His teaching was also embodied in a life of tender and compassionate service. The words of Buddha, however bare they may seem to us of the highest spiritual truth, were to his followers words of salvation; and, being such, they added unfading glory to his beautiful life. His followers never dreamed of ascribing to him superhuman qualities. What he was, any human being might in time become. None the less, his life, because in it his teaching became incarnate, is to them the ideal life, and Buddha stands before them as the central figure in the world's history.

How, then, can it be possible that Jesus, from whom the nations that call themselves "Christian" have received the truth that seems to them the highest, should not have a place that is all his own, and that his life should not be set apart from other lives, not necessarily as in itself different from them, but as being, to those who accept his truth, the source of a common inspiration? Thus we see how the simple historic Christ may and must stand as the ideal for those who accept his teaching.

What is true of the life of Christ is true also of his death. By his crucifixion he became accursed before the Jewish law. His followers shared his pollution. They were outcasts from the Jewish sanctities. Being under the curse of the law, they were free of the law; and if they were accursed they were accursed with him who was to them the very Christ of God. Thus their shame was their glory. Their condemnation was their liberty. Thus through the pain and ignominy of the cross Jesus passed out from the limita-

tions of his race, and became the leader of the best life of the world. Thus the cross must always stand as the symbol of the triumph that may spring from defeat, of the glory that may spring from shame. It will stand as the symbol of that self-sacrifice which is the portal of the truest life and the grandest victory.

III

THE DISTINCTIVE MARK OF CHRISTIANITY

IN seeking an answer to the question What is the distinctive mark of Christianity, we have to look for something that is peculiar enough to separate it from other religions, and that, within Christianity, is universal, fundamental, and definite enough to be regarded as essential. With the truth of any teaching or claim of Christianity we have, just here, nothing to do. Our question is not whether Christianity in itself, or in any of the forms under which it has appeared, is true. It is simply what Christianity actually is. Thus we may dismiss at the very start the claim that Christianity is true while other religions are false. This claim is by no means distinctive. It is made by every religion. Again, it may be said that Christianity differs from other religions in the fact that it is revealed. There is in this claim nothing peculiar to Christianity. The Brahman claims that the Vedas were revealed. They have been uttered through all eternity. But, it is said, the content of these so-called revelations is very unlike to that of Christianity. This is true. It is, then, at the substance of the religion that we are to look and not at any claim as to its origin.

When we look at Christianity itself, and strive to detect some element in it which may be called distinctive, we are at first bewildered by the multiplicity

and divergence of the forms that it has assumed. We have the magnificent pomp of the Catholic Church, and we have the severe simplicity of the Quaker. We have complicated creeds and, over against these, the protest of a creedless faith. We have stress laid here upon form, and there upon doctrine. We have continual changes as to form and doctrine. What we seek is something permanent and, within Christianity, universal.

We may first turn to those creeds of the church that have been most widely accepted. No one of these has been universally adopted, indeed, but the so-called Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed have come very near to this universality. These are so familiar that they do not need to be quoted in full. They both begin with the recognition of the one God. They then state certain facts, or what are assumed to be such, as to the nature and history of Christ. The Nicene Creed tells us that he was begotten of the Father before all worlds, that he was very God of very God; that for us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven. We are told of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Church, of baptism for the remission of sins, and of the resurrection.

Suppose that this creed had been and were now universally accepted by the church, what would it tell us about Christianity? What help would it give us in our present quest? I must answer, practically none. It tells us of a divine personality who is the source of this religion, but it does not tell us what the religion is. He came down from heaven, we are told, and died for us men and our salvation; but what he accomplished on the earth, in what way his death accomplished our salvation, we are not told.

It may be said that this is Christianity, that it consists in the recognition and the adoration of him who was at once Man and God. The terms Man and God are, however, in themselves so general as to be for our purpose meaningless. There have been many notions of God and many kinds of men. I do not say this in criticism of the creed. It is a vast form into which those who used it poured the substance of Christianity as they understood it. Every word was for them full of real meaning. They had their thought of God. They knew by heart the story of the life of Christ. They had their theory of the efficacy of his death. It is this substance of Christianity that we are seeking from which the statements of the creed receive their real significance.

Further, it may be said, the careful wording of the creed implies that there were some who did not accept it; that it was designed, not merely to express, but to shape Christianity. Those who did not and do not accept it may be so few as to seem a negligible quantity, but still they were and are, and their claim ought at least to be considered. Still further, what is asserted in the creed is not absolutely distinctive of Christianity. It must be remembered that we here have no regard to the legitimacy of any claim made by any religion. We are for the moment looking at things merely from the outside. Other religions have recognized incarnations of gods. Buddha, though not a god, is believed to have descended from his glorious estate in heaven, to have lived for the good of man a life of privation and effort, and to have died. The comparison will be rejected, perhaps, with scorn. "All this," it may be said, "is so unlike Christianity; it is something so unutterably far beneath

it." I do not deny the difference. It simply shows, however, that we have not yet touched the true essence of Christianity. It is this, whatever it may be, that makes the Christian incarnation so different from others, that makes the Christ so unlike the Buddha.

The question, then, which now meets us is that which was so distinctly put by Anselm: "*Cur Deus homo?*" Why, in the belief of the church, did God become man? If we can get a clear answer to this question, it should, one would think, give us the characteristic of Christianity. It would give us the substance that would fill out the sublime form to which we have just referred. The difficulty that meets us here does not spring from lack of clearness or definiteness. It comes from the fact that we have not merely one answer but many. We are confused by the multiplicity of responses. Our first thought would be, perhaps, of the doctrine which in recent controversies has been known as that of the atonement. We often forget, however, that, though to some extent something akin to this doctrine had been recognized earlier, the doctrine itself did not take its fundamental place in the church, and begin its orderly development, before the eleventh century of our era. Before that time the theory that the death of Christ was, in some sense, a price paid to the devil had been prominent, and this indeed held its place still later by the side of that just referred to. I raise here no question as to the truth of this or any other dogma; but till we are ready to deny the name of Christian to the multitudes who, before and since the time of Anselm, have not known or have not accepted it, we cannot claim that it is essential to Christianity.

Discouraged in the hope of finding some one dogma that shall be at once specific and universal in Christianity, we may be tempted to look at the matter merely from the outside, to assume that the essential characteristic of Christianity may be found simply in the fact that in it we have a series of changing forms and beliefs which took its origin from the life and death of the Christ. These changing forms and beliefs followed one another, and grew out from one another, and thus formed a mighty and ever-expanding stream. The stream has been continuous though the elements that entered into it may have changed. We do not hesitate to speak of the Mississippi as a single river, though all along its course it has been swollen by inflowing streams, though all the water that constituted it at its start may have evaporated or become absorbed long before it pours itself into the sea. Certainly even if Christianity had no other unity than this, it would be entitled to be called by a single name. It is, however, not a lifeless stream. It is a living organism; and we cannot help believing that it must have been animated by a single soul.

We find an inner and spiritual unity in every other religion, no matter through how many changes it may have passed. Northern Buddhism, with its fantastic and extravagant forms, looked at from the outside, seems like a wholly different religion from the simpler Buddhism of the South. Indeed, some of the beliefs which seem most fundamental have become completely changed in the more complicated religion of the North. Yet, at the heart of both the Northern and the Southern forms of Buddhism, we find the impress of its founder. We find that the two

are thus, in fact, one. This truth might be illustrated, were it necessary, by the history of other religions. We cannot believe that in this respect Christianity differs from the rest. Surely no one from whose teaching any form of religion ever sprang was more fitted than was Jesus to leave an abiding influence upon the religion that bears his name. As in the case of Buddhism we have to look through all the extravagances of its Northern form, to consider them for the moment as non-existent, if we would find the Buddha seated at its heart, so we might expect that we should have to look through the changing, sometimes complicated and extravagant, forms and beliefs which bear the name of Christianity, if we would find at the centre of them all the presence of the Christ.

The Kingdom of Heaven, said Jesus, is like leaven, which is hidden in a measure of meal till the whole is leavened. Never was uttered a truer prophecy. The influence of Jesus went forth into the world. It became the centre of what was recognized as practically a new religion. Forthwith the habits of thought and life, that were prevalent in the world, began to seek to take possession of it, like the tributaries that flow into a fresh stream, bringing waters clear or discolored, as it may chance. The thought of Greece poured in upon it. The politics of Rome found a place in it. Ambition, worldliness, the love of the play of logic and of metaphysical subtleties, gathered about it and forced an entrance into it. We read the history of all this and we call it the history of Christianity. It is made up of the story of councils and popes, of orthodoxies and heresies, of persecutions — persecutions of Christians and persecutions

by Christians. All these things and others like them we bring together. We recount them in some consecutive series; and this we call the History of Christianity. I do not dispute the usefulness or the propriety of the term. Only do not let us forget that its propriety grows out of a superficial convenience. Do not let us confound the measure of meal with the leaven that is hidden in it, — so hidden that it is sometimes difficult to recognize it. Yet it is there, and has been there all along. It has been there doing its work. Its work has often been secret. In the external forms, in the clash of creeds and of personal ambitions, we may see no trace of it. Yet it was at the heart of all.

The history of Christianity, real Christianity, has never been written and never can be written. Present in every moment of these nineteen centuries, within this outward show of pomp of dogma and pomp of worldliness, has been the Christ. The story of the gospel has been present through all these ages. It has been recognized in the midst of the speculations that have gathered about it. By the side of the notions that seem to us so fanciful in regard to a ransom paid to the devil St. Augustine recognizes, apparently indeed as somewhat subordinate, the lesson that comes from the life of Christ; and St. Anselm, in the midst of his speculations in regard to what was due to the honor of God, dwells upon the beauty of the life of Jesus and the power of his example.

The real history of Christianity would be the story of lives lived in faith and hope, manifesting themselves by patience and meekness under trial, or by energy and heroism in the time of need; lives

lowly or exalted, that were full of kindly and helpful deeds ; devoted and self-forgetful lives ; in a word, lives that had been touched by that of Jesus, or by those that had been touched by his. It is the history of these lives that have formed an unbroken series during these nineteen hundred years that would be a history of Christianity worthy of the name.

To say this may seem like giving up altogether our quest for something distinctive in Christianity. In lands where the name of Christianity has never been uttered, through the ages that preceded the appearance of Christianity upon the earth, there have been lives inspired by love and faith. There have been patient, self-sacrificing, and heroic lives. Indeed, what land has not borne such ? and under what form of religion have they not manifested themselves ? As the stress of dogma has grown weaker, many, moved by a fear like that which has been just suggested, lest Christianity should have nothing to mark it save the circumstances of its origin, lest it should have no specialty that should distinguish it from other religions and raise it above them, have sought to find in the spiritual and moral life upon which Christianity insists, something that could be found nowhere else. Some have believed that they found this specialty of Christianity in the faith in immortality which may be based upon the resurrection of Christ. But this faith was strong in the world before the appearance of Christ, and it is strong to-day in the hearts of many who have never heard his name. Among those who to-day accept the story of the reappearance of Christ after his death, I believe that there are more who do it because on other grounds they believe in the future life, and thus this reappearance seems nat-

ural and reasonable, than base their belief in the future life upon this event; just as I believe that, among thinking persons who accept the stories of the miracles performed by Jesus, there are more who do this because they find in his personality and his teaching that which seems to justify these miracles than base their belief in Christ and his teaching upon the miracles. We do not lower the dignity of the resurrection and the miracles when we say that to those who accept them they are coming to be matters which put an additional strain upon Christian faith rather than foundations which support it. They are believed to add so much glory to the manifestation of Christ in the world, and so naturally to flow from this manifestation, that they are accepted gladly.

Some would find the specialty of Christianity in its teaching of the Fatherhood of God, forgetful of the tender words of the Psalmist, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him;" forgetful of Paul's quotation from the Greek poet, "For we also are his offspring;" not knowing perhaps the wider use of this form of thought and speech. What is Jupiter but Father Zeus, and far back in the Vedic hymns we find the original of both Zeus and Jupiter spoken of as Dyaushpitar or Father Dyaus.

Some would find the distinctive mark of Christianity in a particular moral precept. They make much of the fact, which indeed is not wholly without significance, that in the teaching of Confucius the Golden Rule is given in a negative form only: "Do not to others what you would not have them do to you." The spirit of the two commands is, however, similar;

and leaving out the question of the form, the substance of the teaching is found on the lips of many a sage. The utterances of Buddha are full of injunctions to patience, to freedom from anger, and to service.

Some would find the distinctive mark of Christianity in its humanitarian spirit. But nowhere more than in Buddhism is this spirit manifested. It is related of a disciple of Buddha that one day he asked a woman of low caste to give him some water. She reminded him of her caste. "My sister," he answered, "I did not ask about your caste, but for some water, if you will give it to me." Buddha is reported to have said, when reproached for admitting an outcast to his order, "My Gospel is one of Grace for all," and he added, "What is a Gospel of Grace for? It is one that may be preached to such wretched sinners as this."

Shall we, then, because we find it difficult to discover some special trait in Christianity that shall distinguish it from every other religion, give up our search and insist that it has no distinction? Shall we assume that all religions stand on a level? There are those, indeed, to whom such a position as this would seem to be the only fair and honorable one. To claim that Christianity occupies a higher ground than any other religion would seem to them to smack of conceit. The truth of history may, however, be violated by too much catholicity as truly as by too great exclusiveness. Such critics of Christianity have appealed to the history of religions. It is no more than fair, then, that to history, carefully studied, they should go. It would be to fly in the very face of historic truth to affirm through a certain

excess of delicacy that the sculpture of any other nation is equal to that of Greece. There is no reason why we should not examine the religions of the world with a like regard for the actual perspective and the true relation of facts. There is no more reason why the highest form of religion should not proceed from one portion of the world than why the highest art should not proceed from a special people. Nationalities are gifted in different ways. To deny this would be to blur the actual lines of history.

But where shall we look, after the failures we have experienced, for the distinction that we seek, provided such distinction do actually exist? Our latest examination failed because we compared merely fragment with fragment. We found something that resembled some aspect of Christianity in one religion and something that resembled another aspect of Christianity in another religion. The only proper method of comparison is to take each religion as a whole. Scattered fragments do not make a whole. Because there is a virtue here that reminds us of a Christian virtue, and a truth there that reminds us of a Christian truth, it does not follow that the religion in which such virtues and such truths are grouped together, and complemented by other virtues and other truths harmonious with them, may not have an exaltation and a worth that no other religion actually possesses. Neither does it follow that these virtues and these truths, when thus combined and complemented, may not each have a worth far greater than that which they possessed in their separateness.

Take, for instance, the humanitarian spirit of Buddhism. The benign founder of this religion stands as an ideal of self-forgetting love. According to the

teaching of this religion,—and behind this teaching we do not now intrude,—he remained outside of Nirvana, long years after he might have entered it, because he would not take his rest till he had prepared the way by which the brethren that he loved might enter it like him. We have seen illustrations which might be indefinitely multiplied of the tender humanitarianism of the religion that he taught. Shall we therefore insist that in Buddhism we have Christianity under another name? When we look more closely, we see that Buddhism in its ideal form involves a life of withdrawal from the world, a life of beggary. The monkish life or the life of the recluse, which crept into the developing Christianity, which was wholly foreign to its original form, and which has been outgrown by so large a portion of Christendom, was the original, and has been the permanent, ideal of Buddhism. To call attention to this is not narrow-mindedness or bigotry. It is not to rake out in a hypercritical spirit obscure circumstances in the history of this faith. It is simply to take one of its most primary, its most obvious and essential, characteristics, and to see it as it is.

On the other hand, there is no student of Buddhism with any right to claim authority who does not recognize the fact that Buddhism in its typical form is, in the truest sense of the word, atheistic. Surely, in comparing religion with religion, this is not a trifling matter to be passed over without notice. Let us glance again at the story of the disciple of Buddha who asked the woman of low caste for water. Who that hears the story could fail to be reminded of the scene by Jacob's well? But in the case of the Buddhist saint, with the occurrence described the story

ends. In the case of Jesus the like occurrence is but the beginning of the story. The Jew, the Samaritan woman, the water and the well, these are only the framework, the scenery for the great conversation that is to follow. The humanitarianism is as great in the one case as in the other, but to this is added in the Christian story the sublime utterance of Jesus, an utterance which the Buddhist saint could not have made without being false to his religion, — "God is spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This is a difference between the two forms of teaching that meets us at every turn. Buddha could say, "Let a man overcome anger by love" and "Hatred does not cease by hatred; hatred ceases by love." He could not say "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." He could urge purity; he could not say, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." To recognize such differences is to recognize what are among the most obvious and unquestionable historic facts.

We find, then, that Christianity, in contrast with this one religion of Buddhism, unites the humanitarian virtues which are so beautifully taught by the latter, and so magnificently illustrated by its founder, with a certain divine element. Jesus found in the teaching of the Jewish Scriptures two great commandments which he accepted as their sum and presented as the highest expression of the law of life. These were: Love to God and Love to man. Of these two principles Buddhism had a place only for the second. It is obvious that this difference involves something more than is expressed in the simple terms of its utterance. It is evident that

love to man wholly apart from any faith in God must be in some respects different from love to man which is united with the thought of God ; just as, on the other hand, a love to God held apart from any love to man would be very different from a love to God that is united with love to man. Thus it is that each element of religion is in itself transformed when it is united with other elements ; just as no virtue is complete if it stands alone. "He that offends in one point," said St. James, "is guilty of all." Whatever special significance he may have attached to these words, they have a universal significance. There is no glory like that of completeness. One may own certain scattered volumes of a set of books. When the set is completed what worth is added to each separate volume ! So do separate truths become each filled with a new significance when they are united in some comprehensive truth. Thus do all the different elements that enter into Christianity transform and ennoble one another.

Other religions, as we have seen, have spoken of God as the Father. What difference of meaning has the word according as the idea of human fatherhood varies ! As our thought of man becomes exalted, as the relation between parent and child becomes more wise and tender, the thought of the universal father assumes a new significance ; just as, on the other hand, all human relations assume new meaning in the light of the teaching of a lofty religion. Thus, though other religions have called God Father, there must have been in Jesus a peculiar sense of sonship, and this he called upon his followers to share.

Other religions, as we have seen, in one shape or another, perhaps all religions, have recognized the

thought of the life after death ; yet how different is this thought according to the varying ideals of earthly life ! On the other hand, what dignity does the larger thought of the life to come add to the life of the present ! Some have insisted that this earthly life must be belittled by the contrast. History shows that in general this is not the case. As some one has said, it was when in France death was voted an eternal sleep that blood flowed like water. Whatever exalts the worth of the individual makes life sacred.

What we may say of the truths of Christianity we may also say of its moral precepts. Each of these is to be seen in the light of all the rest. We thus see one aspect of the place which the personality of Jesus fills in the religion that bears his name. Not merely does it add to the force of his teaching the power of personal attraction and inspiration as it has done to so many ; it shows by a living example the relation of one part of his teaching to another. No words could so well draw the lines of separation or indicate the proportion of intermingling. It shows that the power of Christianity consists not in this or that special teaching, but in the fact that it tends to embody itself in a spirit that does not ask what has been commanded, but takes counsel of itself and of its sympathy with its greatest ideal.

In my own thought the specialty of Christianity is found in the fact that it has no specialty. I find that other religions can be described more or less perfectly by certain formulas. They have certain salient points ; one has one, and another has another. One emphasizes one truth and another another. One elevates a certain aspect of life, and another another.

In Christianity the whole level of life is lifted. We cannot put it into a formula except so far as we may wish to emphasize certain aspects of it. We cannot attach a tag to it which shall describe its content. We say that it is love to God and man, but how about that personality which has been the source of its greatest power over the hearts and lives of men? Its distinction I find to lie in its universality.

In what I have said I have stated my idea of the essential nature of Christianity, and have illustrated this by comparing certain aspects of Christianity chiefly with certain aspects of one other religion. Obviously, what I have said does not prove anything. A multitude of questions remain to be asked and answered. I have simply tried to illustrate the manner in which religions should be compared if they are compared at all. To state this method more fully, I will say that if it is to be followed scientifically, it would be necessary to begin with a careful psychological examination. We should see clearly what elements of human nature, ideal, intellectual, ethical, emotional, and the rest, demand from religion stimulus or satisfaction. We might enter these upon a chart. Then we should examine each religion and determine in regard to each just how many and what of these psychological demands are met by it. If we had things arranged in such a way that each religion should throw light upon those elements of human nature that it satisfies, as they are represented on our chart, we should see at a glance how nearly it fulfilled the ideal of a religion. When the light of Buddhism, for instance, fell upon it, the humanitarian virtues or certain classes of them would shine forth, but all the instincts of the nature that demand satisfaction and

impulse from the thought of God would be left in darkness.

By some such method as this we should have a scientific test of the degree in which each religion approached completeness. This is what I meant by saying, in effect, at the beginning of this paper, that I proposed to take each religion, so far as it was considered, at its face value. In the method described there is no question of credentials. The question proposed to each is, "Supposing your credentials are all right and that your claims should be admitted, precisely what do you propose to do for man? Here is a list of the requirements of human nature; how far do you propose to satisfy them?" This method would have, indeed, one defect. It would not show the added gain to each element of religion as others are united with it, and the wonderful transformation of each religion in proportion as the demands of the whole nature are satisfied.

I am confident that by such an examination the distinctive characteristic of Christianity would be scientifically proved to be that which I have assumed — Jesus united a life of mystical piety with a life of activity among men. In the light of his teaching the virtues became blended and exalted in love; and human love and virtue became interpenetrated by, and blended with, the divine life.

We are in the habit of speaking of religions as if they were many. In fact, there is but one religion, of which what we call religions are the more or less partial manifestations. This one religion is not to be found by seeking for what is common to all religions. The element reached by such a process of abstraction would contain nothing that is not found in the lowest

form of religion. The one religion differs from the historical religions not through being more abstract, but by greater concreteness. It is the imperfect religions that are abstract, and their imperfection is found in this abstractness. Buddhism, as we have seen, takes the humanitarian elements and holds them apart from the element of conscious relationship to God. I have tried not to prove but to illustrate the thought that Christianity differs from other religions in its greater concreteness, and thus in being the most perfect manifestation of the one religion. Of course, it is not meant that there was an original complete religion from which the various religions have taken one one element and another another. Still less is it meant that Christianity has brought together elements selected from other religions.

We have seen that nearly all religions claim to be revealed. It may be interesting to ask, in the light of what has been said, in what respects Christianity agrees with or differs from others, so far as this claim is concerned.

The thought of evolution, which has modified in so many ways our notions of the world, cannot fail to make its influence felt in regard to the question that is before us. The idea of creation has been profoundly modified by it. A few years ago each new appearance in the world, each new species of plant or animal, was believed by most Christians to be the result of a special act of the divine will. Man was created by such an act. The appearance of Christianity in the world, the manifestation of its founder, his marvelous birth, his presence as a being from another sphere — all these formed a fitting continuance of the method by which the world had been carried

through its many stages, and a fitting climax to the whole. Christianity was simply a new creation that concluded and crowned a series of numberless creations.

So far as our thoughts are influenced by the idea of evolution in other relations, Christianity in this conception of it would stand alone. It would be left, as it were, hanging in mid-air, the stages by which it had been approached being knocked away from beneath it. It would be a solitary fact, not the culmination of a series of facts. This condition of things manifestly suggests, if it does not demand, a reconsideration of the whole theme.

When we look at the history of the world as seen in the light of the doctrine of evolution, what forces itself upon our recognition as more important than anything else is the presence of a movement that has been going on steadily from the beginning in the direction of certain definite results. First we have the world adapting itself to the production and support of life. Then life appears. Life presses upward through various forms until man enters upon the scene. Then come higher and higher manifestations of the intellectual and spiritual life. Religion appears. At last Christianity takes its place and begins, to human apprehension very slowly, to display its own inner life and to shape the life of the world.

Here we have a force working through all these ages, in one direction. What is the nature of this force? What can it be but the manifestation of the divine life in the world? It came from God, and presses up to the glad recognition of its source, and to loving fellowship with it. The religions of the world are its utterances.

“ Out from the heart of nature rolled
 The burdens of the Bible old ;
 The litanies of nations came,
 Like the volcano’s tongue of flame
 Up from the burning core below,
 The canticles of love and woe.”

This divine force is the very heart and core of the world’s life. In Christianity it reaches what we must regard as its highest utterance, for in it is expressed most clearly the relation of the life of the world, in its full completeness, to the life of God. Yet Christianity is thus far only the germ of this absolute fulfillment. We see not yet all things put under him. We find in it, however, the principles that are the promise and potency of the highest life and fullest thought of man.

Thus there is a sense in which all religions may be said to be natural, and a sense in which all may be said to be revealed. Do you, then, I may be asked, put Christianity on a level with all other religions? When we recognize man as taking his place in the evolution of the world, as the lower forms of life have taken their place in it, do we thereby put man on the level of the brute? Is not man here to speak for himself? Is not Christianity also here to speak for itself? Do we deny that man was divinely created because he has his place in the line of evolution? Is Christianity any the less the revelation of God because it also has its place in the history of the world? If this is a godless world, then any revelation that may come to it from without can only make more manifest the blind and warring forces of which we are the sport; but if the world is God’s world, then its highest utterance is his voice.

In the days of Carlyle and the New England

Transcendentalists much emphasis was laid on the direct vision of truth. "All minds," said Emerson, "open into the infinite mind." The soul recognized ideas and ideals which brought their own credentials. They needed only to be seen to be believed in. Thus the soul stood independent of the outer world and gazed upon the truth. Then came what seemed to some the darker days, when the inward vision was obscured, when we were pointed to the material aspects of the world, especially to the law of natural selection, which seemed to be the only guide and ruler of the world's life. Now, however, we may recognize, as I have already intimated, a power that has been working through these external relations, using mechanical elements and laws, up to a certain point, using the principle of natural selection, but in the higher forms of human thought and life setting at defiance this law which it had used as long as it served its turn. Now at last the transcendentalist and the biologist may be reconciled. The world has shown itself to be an idealist; for we see that the ideas and the ideals which to the transcendentalist seemed to be revelations made to the individual soul were hidden in the heart of the world itself, and the travail of the ages has been the struggle towards their manifestation. "And I saw," cried the John of the Apocalypse, "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." That vision has not yet been fulfilled. But is that city less from God which we see rising from the earth? not, indeed, as yet with a bride's adornment, but rather in the garb of one who serves.

Christianity differs from other forms of religion,

as we have seen, by its larger completeness. They open to the life of God and man in one or two directions only. Christianity is like the holy city of John's vision, with gates opening to the North and the South and the East and the West, fitted to absorb into itself what comes from every quarter, and to exert its power in every direction for the subjugation and service of the world. There could be no more sublime vision than the rising of this city out of the earth. First come here and there the partial manifestations of which I have spoken, forerunners of the great consummation. Then appears Christianity, which has the germinant elements of development in all directions, and is the most complete revelation of the God who is manifesting himself in all.

Such, as I understand it, is Christianity, the religion that was revealed to the world through Jesus, and somewhat less purely through his apostles. It has been wrapped in by forms and dogmas that men have believed were essential to its very being. They have had power because the life of Christianity was within them, though it was not from them. In these later years this life is beginning to show itself more clearly in its simple beauty, as it has been beheld now and then by some in every church, and by some also who were not recognized as belonging to any church. Let us rejoice in its light and yield ourselves to be the instruments of its power.

IV

KANT'S INFLUENCE IN THEOLOGY

THE revolution which Kant accomplished in theology is as great as that which he wrought in philosophy. Indeed, I believe that this change in our theological ideas was what chiefly interested him in his philosophical investigations. The basis that he laid for a new theology is, I know, by some considered to have been a mere afterthought. With this view I cannot agree. Kant's interest in religion is unmistakable. It was evidently profound, and if all his speculations are seen in their outcome to point towards a reconstruction of theology and the placing of it upon a new foundation, there would seem to be no reason why we should not recognize this as belonging to Kant's fundamental thought. All the more reasonable is this when we notice how his interest in religion was manifested during his whole mental development, and how he believed in it even when his philosophical principles might point in the other direction.

This position is especially noteworthy as it is exhibited in the "Träume eines Geistersehers." We find here even a foreshadowing of the method that Kant followed in the "Critique of Pure Reason." In one part of this essay he presents a scheme which would make the existence of disembodied spirits plausible. This he calls a bit of mystic (*geheimen*)

philosophy. Then he presents a view which would make such a belief absurd. This he calls a bit of vulgar (*gemeinen*) philosophy. Then follows a statement of the result of this comparison. Kant claims to have put the considerations *pro* and *con* into their respective scales, and to watch impartially to see which outweighs the other. He adds, however, "The scales of the understanding are not quite impartial, and the one that bears the inscription, '*Hope for the future,*' has a mechanical advantage, so that even lighter reasons that fall into it cause weightier speculations that are placed in the other to kick the beam." He adds, "This is the only unfairness of which I cannot easily rid myself, and of which I never shall rid myself."¹ Thus, after letting the intellect present the arguments from each side, he suffers feeling to determine the result.

The general nature of the revolution which Kant accomplished in theology is familiar. He showed that the ideas upon which religion rests cannot be proved by any logical process. They lie outside the world of human reasoning. If they cannot be proved, they can as little be disproved. If, therefore, there is any extralogical ground for accepting them, they may be held without fear of attack from the side of intellect. The ground for their acceptance he found in the moral law. He did not, as many have done, reason back to the thought of God as the Being whom this law by its very existence reveals. He found in the thought of God and of Immortality the

¹ See *Kant Studien*, Band i., Heft i., for an extremely interesting article by Dr. E. Adickes, by which what was said above was suggested. Dr. Adickes calls attention to other similar statements by Kant.

elements without which the fulfillment of the moral law is impossible. This law is absolute. It must be fulfilled. Therefore, we have the right to postulate God and Immortality, since these furnish the only conditions which make obedience possible. It is as if two men were fighting with swords. One proposes to the other that they should lay down these weapons. As soon as this disarmament is accomplished he pulls out a pistol and has the other at his mercy.

The two sides of Kant's system are thus intellectual agnosticism and religious faith. In considering Kant's influence upon theology this agnostic element should have full recognition. Very many have accepted this element of Kant's teaching who have flatly rejected the other. The latest important manifestation of this form of the influence of Kant is found in the system of Herbert Spencer. This is, however, only a single illustration of a widely extended fact. It is doubtless owing, in part at least, to Kant that agnosticism is at the present day so widespread. It often finds, indeed, reasons for its existence other than those laid down by Kant. Still the agnosticism of Kant furnished a powerful impulse in the direction of this form of thought, if thought it can be called. My special theme is, however, not so much the influence of Kant upon theology from the outside as his influence in theology. The phenomena we have been considering lie outside of positive theology and are hostile to it. Kant's agnosticism has also from time to time exerted an influence within theology, and has given rise to special forms of theologic thought. Doubtless it gave an impulse to the intellectual agnosticism of Sir William Hamilton and of Mansel.

The influence exerted by the intellectual agnosticism of Kant taken by itself was, however, in a sense accidental. It has no relation to his work taken as a whole. It is the influence of Kant along the line of his own special and complete ideal that is most important for our purpose. In this we have the result of his personal pressure. We have the outcome of the system which represented his whole thought.

To understand this influence in theology it is important that we should thoroughly understand the religious aspect of the system of Kant in all its assumptions and implications. For this it is necessary to make a very careful examination of the Kantian postulates.

The first fact which we meet as we enter upon this examination is that two sets of postulates are put forth by Kant. These are not only unlike; they are, taken in connection with the development of his thought, in some respects contradictory and irreconcilable. If they stood alone we might indeed combine them, a little awkwardly perhaps, in a whole, of which they might be complementary elements. We must take them, however, where we find them; and doing this we see that it is impossible for them to exist side by side.

The first of these sets of postulates is found in the "Critique of Pure Reason." In this work Kant insists that the moral law is a mere phantom of the brain unless it be regarded as the expression of the will of a lawgiver, and unless its authority be enforced by the sanction of reward and punishment. The first of these requirements involves the existence of a divine Lawgiver. The second involves a future life,

in which the sanctions of the law can be fulfilled. We are thus forced to postulate the existence of God and Immortality. These postulates, as here presented, have two aspects. One of these may be called cosmic, the other may be called personal. According to the cosmic point of view, the universe would fail to satisfy the demands of our reason if virtue did not meet its reward, and if vice were not punished. Further, it seems to be somewhat vaguely intimated that, without a lawgiver and without sanctions, the moral law would be a mere phantom of the brain, because it would stand outside of the working forces of the world, pointing backward to no source and forward to no result. In regard to the personal aspect the statements are much more clear and strong, and upon this the chief emphasis is laid. The whole discussion, indeed, stands under the heading, "What shall I hope?" With no thought of a lawgiver the moral law would have no binding force for the individual. Without the thought of a lawgiver and of the sanctions of the law the individual would lack the motive power (*Triebfeder*) necessary to obedience. We are told, indeed, that the moral sentiment must be regarded as the condition of blessedness, and not itself spring from the hope of blessedness as its reward; for in this case it would have no moral worth. This can be reconciled with the rest of the discussion only by assuming that the moral sense must exist independently of any other consideration, but that practically it would lack power, unless aided by the impulses to which reference has been made.

It is important to look a little more deeply into the nature of these postulates. By whom and under

what circumstances are these supposed to be made? Are they supposed to be made by the sinner who is struggling to obey the law but finds it impossible? Is it he who cries in his great need, "There must be a God and a future life, for without the stimulus that these offer I cannot keep the law"? Could it be that Kant himself in his quiet and studious life at Königsberg felt so strongly the need of help in his striving to attain righteousness that he made these postulates, assuming that all without which he would fail in the great struggle must have reality? I think that these questions must be answered in the negative. These postulates seem to me not to take the form which such a cry for support in the hard contests of life would naturally assume. It will be noticed that it is not a cry for help. It is not the belief that there must be some power that will come to the aid of the sinner who is sore beset. The cry is not "Save me or I perish!" In his religion Kant was the true child of the eighteenth century. In other words, he was a deist.¹ The mystical element was wholly foreign to his idea of religion. God was to him the Lawgiver who awarded to men the results of their conduct according as it had been good or ill, and who established the conditions under which the possibility of the fulfillment of the Law could exist. In other words, God established the rules of morality, prepared a fair field for the struggle, and awarded the prizes of victory or the penalties of defeat. All this was external. In this scheme God was represented as watching with impartial eye the great con-

¹ Hermann denies that Kant can properly be called a Deist, but, as it seems to me, on insufficient grounds. See *Die Religion im Verhältniss zur Welterkennung und zur Sittlichkeit*, p. 173.

test, but, except by offering the external stimulus of hope and fear, never as stooping to the help of those who in themselves were too weak to win the victory. The postulates of Kant were, by their very nature, those of an observer of the conflict rather than of one who was himself in the midst of it. They are the postulates of philosophy, not those of life. Kant believed that unless the moral law was supported by the authority of a lawgiver and the sanctions of reward and punishment, it would not be effective in the world.

From all this it must not be supposed that Kant took a merely utilitarian view of the case. He was not sufficiently the child of the eighteenth century for this. He did not think of the moral law simply as something necessary for the preservation of social order. He venerated that law as the most sublime thing to which the thought of man could attain. It moved him to eloquence as nothing else did. When he spoke of himself as awed by two things—the starry heavens above and the moral law within—the glory of the starry heavens is seen to be as nothing to that of the moral law. He called their grandeur up before the thought of men that the sublimity of the moral law might be more clearly seen. It was not that men might lead orderly and useful lives that he urged the claims of the law, but that they might fulfill their true nature. In the moral law, and only in this, do men come into relation with the absolute reality.

When Kant put forth these postulates, he had evidently not fully thought out his theory of ethics. When seven years later his "Critique of Practical Reason" was published, it left no place for the pos-

tulates we have considered, so far as these had a personal application. According to the principles laid down in this later work, an act, to have moral value, must be performed purely from moral motives. The idea of reward or punishment adds an unmoral element to the transaction. The postulate which recognized the thought of reward or punishment, even as a subordinate impulse to moral action, became thus absurdly out of place. Kant now distinctly tells us that there can be but one source from which stimulus (*Triebfeder*) to obedience can be sought, and that is reverence for the law itself. In saying this he repudiates the kind of stimulus upon which his postulates in their earlier form were so largely based. Kant evidently saw that he must present the postulates on which alone religious faith can rest under a wholly new form. The end of the moral law, he now tells us, is the attainment of the highest good. The highest good consists in the adjustment between happiness and desert. There is nothing in goodness itself that necessarily produces happiness. If the moral idea is to be fulfilled, we must assume a Being with power to make this adjustment. Furthermore, although the element of personal interest may be a vanishing quantity, it never can be wholly eradicated from individual life. The individual can, at no moment of time, become perfectly moral; consequently the moral law needs eternity for its fulfillment. From this fact springs the postulate of immortality.

What I have called the cosmic aspect of the postulates is much more marked in this than in the earlier form. In fact, it here exists alone. There is no suggestion now of help to the individual in his

struggle after the better life. The moral law is now applied no longer to the individual, but only to the universe. These later postulates contain elements foreign to the moral law, so far as the individual is concerned. The law as defined by Kant is the categorical imperative, nothing more or less. It is not the business of the subject of the moral law to consider possibilities of success or failure, but simply to obey. Such considerations would be, according to Kant's general theory, as unmoral as personal hope or fear.

Moreover, these later postulates lay upon the individual a duty which is not included in the moral law. The highest good, we are told, is the correlation between happiness and desert; we are told, also, that it is our duty to further the highest good. But the moral law lays upon the individual no obligation to adjust happiness to desert. It is not the business of the private citizen to punish the wrong-doer. Jesus uttered truly the command of morality when he bade his disciples to be perfect as their Father in Heaven is perfect, whose sunshine and whose rain bless alike the evil and the good. Thus these later postulates of Kant look wholly away from the needs of the individual. Primarily they concern not morality as such. They are the basis, or rather the form, of faith in a perfected universe. They are, indeed, not postulates at all in the sense in which Kant earlier used the term. They do not involve what is necessary to the obedience of the individual. They are in no true sense practical. They are simply the application of the moral law to the universe; and the universe needs no help from postulates.

It has been necessary to make this analysis of the

postulates of Kant, because it is only by understanding them fully that we have any test by which to determine what elements of later theology bear marks of his influence. This influence is not to be found merely in the reproduction of his special forms of thought and utterance. It is something vastly more delicate and pervasive than this. It concerns not the precise results of Kant, but the principles or assumptions upon which these results rest. Indeed, the postulates as laid down by Kant in different connections are so self-contradictory, he so absolutely ignores in one place what he had so solemnly affirmed in another, that his precise statements can have little weight. In fact, the implications of his teaching have had vastly more effect than its special form. We have now to inquire what these implications are.

Every particular proposition implies the truth of a broader proposition, of which it furnishes a more or less concrete example. Every special truth implies a larger truth in and through which it exists. The special truth may, indeed, prove to be the only form in which the larger truth is valid; but none the less is it through the larger truth that this special form has validity. The order *Bimana* has under it only one genus, the genus *Homo*; but though, in this case, the order and the genus are identical, nevertheless it is true that one is the order and the other is a genus within it.

When Kant affirmed that the truth of religion rests not upon intellectual arguments but upon postulates growing out of our recognition of the rightful supremacy of the moral law, his assumption was that the law has for man such worth that it must be accomplished at whatever cost, and that whatever is ne-

cessary for this must be assumed to exist. It was thus the worth of the moral law that furnished the ground for his postulates. From this we may logically infer, first, that if our sense of the worth of any particular result be sufficiently strong, we may postulate whatever is necessary to the accomplishment of it. In point of fact, the moral law may be the only thing that has sufficient worth for such unquestioning postulates. Whether this is so or not, experience alone can show. This, however, remains true, that according to the degree of worth which we find in any desirable result, just in that degree will the postulates concerning it have force.

Secondly, a corollary from all this was recognized practically by Kant himself. It is to the effect that nothing can have any place in theology which does not represent some vital interest in the religious life. Abstract dogmas, merely theoretical assumptions, fall away. Theology has no right to exist except so far as the true life of the spirit is involved in it. Thus it is implied that theology can rest on no merely intellectual belief. If all religious faith rests upon judgments of worth, merely intellectual acceptance of theological doctrines has nothing to do with such faith. Theology thus must become something living, if it is to have any recognition.

Thirdly, religion is thus wholly a matter of faith. It must be a faith that springs out of the deep needs of the soul; but still it is faith, unaided by the intellect, sustained by its own buoyancy alone.

Fourthly, reverence for the moral law is a feeling. The sense of obligation is a feeling. Kant would stoutly deny this. He claimed that the supremacy of the moral law is a revelation of the reason, as seen

on its practical side. Every intellectual element is, however, according to Kant, absent from this procedure. The supremacy of the moral law is something that is felt rather than seen. Kant thus practically removed the basis of religious belief from the head to the heart, from the sphere of thought to that of feeling.

Fifthly, it is hardly more than a summary of all this to say that, with Kant, theology becomes subjective rather than objective ; so that it may be said to rest upon religion rather than religion upon it.

There is a passage in the "Critique of Pure Reason" in which Kant, contrary to his usual habit, indulges in figurative speech. The figure is vividly presented and introduces into the dry discussion a moment of welcome relaxation. He speaks of the Land of the Pure Understanding. He says, "We call it the land of truth, a charming name." This land is an island. It is surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean. In this ocean illusion reigns. Many a fog-bank and many a dissolving iceberg cheat the seafarer into the hope of the discovery of new lands. Thus they lead him into adventures which he can never give over, and in which he never can succeed. Kant undertakes to survey the land which we possess, the land of the understanding, and to inquire into the terms of our possession. He intimates that if we can find no other, we may perhaps content ourselves with this. He refers, of course, to the attempts of the philosophers to find, by some intellectual process, a basis for a knowledge of absolute reality apart from that which we find within ourselves. Such attempts he regards as hopeless. Yet, later, he himself sets forth to find

the continent of objective reality. He seeks it by a course that no navigator had followed, though many a simple soul had drifted thither, not witting what it did. He believed that he had succeeded in his search. The land he found was very unlike that which he had left and its inhabitants spoke a different language. It was the land not of knowledge but of faith. The people did not say, "It is," but, "It must be," and they claimed that a *must be* is stronger than an *is*. To the stranger it might seem a topsy-turvy world; for the ideals in which its people believed rested on no basis of fact. What they took as fact rested on the basis of their ideals. Nevertheless, Kant claimed that it was the continent of truth.

As Columbus in his quest, so Kant stood merely upon some outlying island, or at best only on some projecting promontory of the continent that he had discovered. Yet he was its discoverer none the less. The statement that I made of the assumptions and implications involved in the postulates of Kant may serve as a rude chart of the continent that he discovered. As we have seen, he made no exploration of it. He set his foot only upon a little spot at its outer edge. Since his day it has become thickly populated. There is not a tract recognized in my rude chart that has not been built upon. Jacobi, for instance, preëmpted the region of pure faith. Some, like Feuerbach and Lange, have accepted the thought of the subjective nature of religion, and have reared fortresses upon it, from which they have waged war upon those who accept its objective truth, declaring that no other part of the continent should be inhabited, and that except for their little strongholds, the Kantian land should be a desert. I will, however,

pass over positions like these that have little historic value. I will pass over, also, the attempts at the direct embodiment of Kant's thought in a theological form. Even Kant's own attempt at this can be passed over very lightly. It is found in his work, "Religion wholly within the Limits of Reason." The work is, of course, interesting and important in the study of Kant, but not, I think, of any far-reaching influence. It seeks to some extent to express the most liberal thought in forms more or less similar to those of the Orthodox Theology. Liberal thinkers forget sometimes the caution about putting new wine into old bottles. They do not realize that the new thought demands its own expression. Instead of total depravity, Kant recognizes in human nature a tendency to evil. Instead of the Christ suffering for the sins of man and thus accomplishing man's redemption, with Kant man is redeemed by the suffering of his own better nature. Perhaps the thought of the Kingdom of God as brought out in this work has proved as fruitful as anything else that it contains.

Leaving less important considerations, we will pass at once to the examination of Kant's influence in later and larger theological developments. Modern theology may be said to have its beginning in the contrasted works of Hegel and Schleiermacher. These two great figures may be called the pillars of Hercules, through which entrance was made into the broad ocean of modern theological speculation. No theological work written since their day, so far as it has been really living, has failed to receive some impress from one or both of these controlling spirits.

It is a familiar fact that Hegel constructed his sys-

tem within the lines drawn by Kant. His theology was one with his philosophy ; thus what is true of the one is also true of the other. While he insisted upon the fundamental importance of thought in opposition to Schleiermacher, who gave the primacy to feeling, the feeling of which he spoke slightly was raw or undeveloped feeling. He thought little of the faith upon which Jacobi insisted ; but this was not because it was faith, but because it was undeveloped faith. It might be said that Hegel's whole system rested upon faith ; or, rather, that it was an expansion or a construction of faith. I mean by this that it did not rest upon proofs. The time-honored arguments were either ignored, or else, like the ontological proof, were so transformed as wholly to change their nature. The system of Hegel was self-supporting. Its strength was in the harmony of the parts and the perfection of the result. It is said that Giotto, failing to find the friend whom he sought, left, instead of his name, a circle drawn as perfectly as only he could draw it. The system of Hegel was such a perfect circle. It carried the evidence of its truth within itself. It showed that a philosopher had been with us. A system so self-completing must, it was thought, be true. Thus, the acceptance was the result of a more or less conscious estimate of worth. Though apparently so wholly foreign to the method of Kant, it may be said to be a structure reared upon the continent which Kant discovered.

In like manner, nothing could seem at first sight more foreign to the thought of Kant than the system of Schleiermacher. At one point, indeed, the work of Schleiermacher and that of Kant obviously coincided. Schleiermacher accepted the intellectual

agnosticism of Kant. He recognized the Absolute, it is true, as Kant did not, but it was an unknowable Absolute.

When we reach the positive side of the system of Schleiermacher, it might seem to be as much opposed to that of Kant as the torrid zone is to the frigid. He spoke with respect of Kant, while his words glowed with enthusiasm when he spoke of Spinoza. Kant's religion was awful through the stern sublimity of the moral law. The religion of Schleiermacher was æsthetic rather than moral. His language in his earlier presentation was sometimes almost voluptuous. Religion in this presentation was the music to which life moved, and was hardly of the nature of martial music. In the later development of his thought, religion, instead of involving a call to duty, consisted wholly in the sense of absolute dependence. This had a place for duty, but duty was evidently not its most prominent element. Take the definite system of Kant precisely as it was put forward by him, and the idea that the system of Schleiermacher in its positive aspects was an outgrowth from his thought might seem absurd.

When, however, we look at the general meaning of Kant's position as I have already presented it, we see that the theology of Schleiermacher also has a place in the continent that was discovered by Kant. With Schleiermacher there is no basis of argument.¹

¹ Schleiermacher says, quite in the spirit of Kant and the Neo-Kantians, "Were religion really the highest knowledge, the scientific method alone would be suitable for its extension, and religion could be acquired by study, a thing not hitherto asserted. Philosophy would be the first round in the ladder. The religion of the Christian laity would as *πίστις* be an imperfect way of having the highest knowledge, and theology as *γνώσις* would be the perfect way,

Religion exists in feeling, and the feeling is its own justification. While there is no formal reasoning from postulates, it is evidently the measure of worth which is the measure of belief. In striking accord with the method of Kant, nothing enters into the theology of Schleiermacher that does not stand in direct relation with the religious feeling, that is not in fact a projection from this. In the later development of his thought it is the sense of absolute dependence that constitutes religion; and theology, as he develops it, represents simply one and another aspect of this absolute dependence. Any doctrine that does not conform to this, or that cannot be forced into conformity with it, is cast aside. There is very little similarity between the sense of dependence of Schleiermacher and the sense of moral obligation of Kant; but both systems rest upon feeling; both exclude whatever is not vital with the soul's life; both, as far as their basis goes, are purely subjective, and both reject all help from the intellect. Schleiermacher thus built upon the land that Kant had discovered.

It is, however, in the later development of German theology that the principles of Kant are most directly and consciously applied. The application of which I speak is made by the theologians who form what is known as the school of Ritschl. This group is bound together somewhat loosely. Its outline is vague. Its members differ on various points among themselves, and stand at a greater or less distance from the posi-

and stand at the top, and no one of the three stages would be consistent with the other two. This I cannot at all accept; therefore I cannot hold religion to be the highest knowledge, or, indeed, knowledge at all."—*Reden*, note 1 to the second *Rede*.

tion of Ritschl ; but in one point they all agree. They unite in rejecting argumentation or philosophy as having anything to do with the foundation of belief. Belief rests merely upon the recognition of the worth of that which is believed. For those of the group who stand nearest to Ritschl, as for Ritschl himself, the one and only thing that has such positive worth to the soul as to command its absolute and unquestioning acceptance is the revelation of God in Christ, especially the Kingdom of Heaven as founded by him. The acceptance of this revelation does not depend upon miracles or upon conformity to prophecy, but simply and solely upon the divinity manifested in Jesus, and the fullness with which this Kingdom of Heaven satisfies the needs of men. To a critic who objected that he could not thus trust to Jesus unless he first knew that he was the Son of God it is answered in effect, — “You cannot accept the picture without the written inscription under it ; but how are you going to be sure that the inscription can be believed?” Elements that the church has been in the habit of dwelling upon in its thought of Jesus have little or no place with these theologians. Of his pre-existent glory they say little or nothing. This has no relation to the actual religious life of the Christian ; and, as with Schleiermacher and with Kant, nothing has a place in their theology that does not stand in essential relation to this.

On the other hand the element of mysticism is ruled out as sternly as philosophy. God is known only as He is revealed in Christ ; but with this there is nothing of that mystical relation to Christ that has been so prominent in many Catholic saints. The individual Christian has no private methods of reach-

ing truth. The Christian's walk with God is walking in the presence of the light of the revelation that was in Christ. Neither has the individual Christian any private relation to God. It is as a member of the church which Christ founded that he is a child of God. Jesus was in a double but harmonious sense a founder. He founded the church that bears his name. He established also upon earth the Kingdom of God. The former is a religious organization. The latter is an ethical fellowship. The Christian belongs to both, for the two represent the same thing from different points of view.

From what has been said may appear the wonderful mingling of breadth and narrowness in these theologians. No questions of philosophy, no results of science, no claims of the higher criticism can disturb them. Ritschl believed in the divinity of Christ simply because he overcame the world, and thereby showed himself its master. No criticism can affect the manifestation of this divine personality, and what does not affect it does not touch the basis of Christian faith. One of these writers reproaches the church with its undignified and unsatisfactory relation to Biblical criticism. It has fought it step by step, but has yielded position after position to its irresistible advance. Another, though believing that John was the author of the Fourth Gospel, says that practically it is no matter who wrote it. In respect then to science and to criticism the Ritschlian theology is as broad as that of the most liberal Christian. In other respects its most characteristic representatives are as narrow as the narrowest sect of the Orthodox. Man is, as I have said, a child of God only through his relation to Christ and through mem-

bership in his church. Little is said of the fate of the rest of mankind. In one place at least annihilation is suggested. Christianity is a sudden and unmediated irruption into the world. It stands in no relation with past history, except so far as in the Roman Empire, for instance, the world was prepared for its reception. It stands in no relation with anything that can be called natural religion. To trust to this in any degree, as to trust to philosophy in the slightest degree, is heathenish. Any merely theoretical belief is heathenish. The recognition of the divine helpfulness of Christ and his church in connection with human needs constitutes the whole basis and completion of Christianity.

This school represents the most living and important movement in the later German theology. It is making rapid advance. Harnack is perhaps its most widely known representative outside its founder. There are differences in the views even of those who are most completely identified with it. Its most prominent defenders are Kaftan and Hermann; it is to these writers in connection with Ritschl himself that I have chiefly referred. There are other writers who accept the fundamental principles of the school, the rejection of philosophy and the acceptance of the sense of worth (*werthurtheil*) as the only basis and guide of religious faith, but who avoid the narrowness of which I have spoken. The most important of these writers are, so far as I know, Bender and Siebeck. Bender's theology is very broad, but it has a certain morbid element in that it finds the essence of Christianity in the hope and promise of a future life of ethical completeness and blessedness. In this he is wholly in accord with Kant. Siebeck's

“Philosophy of Religion” seems to me the broadest, the sanest, and the most generally helpful outcome of the movement. Its literature is, however, immense, and I cannot pretend to have exhausted it.

Though, at first sight, the view that finds the only basis of faith in the *werthurtheil* seems to knock away the foundations of religion, yet a closer examination would show that this is the essential thing in all our reasonings in regard to the matter. We have a fine example of it in the often-quoted couplet of Browning:—

“A loving worm within its clod
Were diviner than a loveless god.”

This for Browning and his sympathetic readers settles the question. There is perhaps no conscious reasoning that what is most divine in its nature must be most real in fact. The assumption of truth is bound up with the perception of worth.

At the present day comparatively little use is made of the argument for design in its older form. The doctrine of Final Causation in its larger sense is more dwelt upon than the argument of Causation. The fact that in its history the world presses on to the evolution of spirit and to ever higher and higher forms of the spiritual life is taken as the best indication of the nature of the power that is working in and through the universe; but to one to whom spirit was worth no more than matter, and the intellectual and moral life had no more value than the shrewdness of self-seeking such as even the animal may sometimes show—such reasoning would have no significance.

Again, we say that we cannot conceive of the world except as a manifestation of spirit. If one

refuses to make such a postulate and obstinately rests in agnosticism, what further is to be said? Religious faith furnishes the key which more fully than anything else fits the locks of the world's mysteries. It furnishes the conditions under which the life of man may reach its fullest and most harmonious development. On these facts rests largely its claim to acceptance.

The number is growing continually smaller of those who accept the teaching of Jesus on account of the miracles that are ascribed to him. This teaching is more and more accepted as divine on account of the divinity that is in it. Such considerations as these show the place in our thought of the estimate of worth.

We owe the theologians of whom I have spoken our gratitude for bringing this aspect of religion into prominence. Their mistake is in denying any importance to other elements. When Christianity is wholly separated from philosophy, from the great movements of history, and from so-called natural religion, it becomes somewhat unreal and ghostly. All these elements are helpful, though the final word must be left to faith. They give a robustness to Christianity that it would lack without them. Thus the mistake of Kant and those who have traveled in his track is precisely the opposite of the one made by Columbus. Columbus thought he had reached the other side of the continent from which he sailed, but in fact he had discovered a new one. Kant and his followers have believed that they had discovered and settled upon a wholly new continent. What they have really done is to take possession of the other side of that on which the religions of the world

and Christianity itself have found their home. The head and the heart have always worked together in the founding and the upbuilding of religion; and they always will thus work together so long as religion shall endure.

V

“BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL”

A STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE¹

ONE of the earliest chapters in the “Thus Spake Zarathustra,”² of Nietzsche is entitled “Of the Three Metamorphoses.” It is so suggestive of the position of the author in the development of the world’s

¹ The Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, edited by Alexander Tille, Ph.D., Lecturer at the University of Glasgow, in ten volumes: Volume VIII., *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, a Book for All and None, translated by Alexander Tille. Pp. xxiii, 479. Volume X., *A Genealogy of Morals*, translated by William A. Haussmann. *Poems*, translated by John Gray. Pp. xix, 289. Volume XI., *The Case of Wagner; The Antichrist*, etc., translated by T. Common. New York: The Macmillan Company. London: Macmillan & Co., Limited. 1896-1897. These are all the volumes of the series as yet published.

Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft, von Friedrich Nietzsche, Sechste Auflage. Pp. v, 273, viii. Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von C. G. Naumann. 1896.

Bibliothèque de Philosophie contemporaine, La Philosophie de Friedrich Nietzsche, par Henri Lichtenberger, Professeur adjoint de littérature étrangère à la Faculté des Lettres de l’Université de Nancy. “Das schnellste Thier das euch trägt zur Vollkommenheit ist Leiden” (Meister Eckhard). Deuxième édition. Paris: Ancienne Librairie, Germer Baillièrre et Cie., Felix Alcan, Editeur, 108, Boulevard Saint Germain. 1898.

² The Zarathustra of Nietzsche is a purely ideal character, and is not intended to be understood as representing in any way the Zarathustra, or Zoroaster, who is the supposed founder of the Parsi religion.

thought that some extracts from it may well serve as an introduction to this essay.

“Three metamorphoses of the spirit I declare unto you : how the spirit becometh a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child.

“There are many things heavy for the spirit, the strong spirit which is able to bear the load and in which reverence dwelleth : its strength longeth for the heavy and heaviest.

“All the heaviest things are taken upon itself by the spirit that is able to bear the load ; like the camel which, when it is laden, hasteth to the desert, the spirit hasteth to its own desert.

“In the loneliest desert, however, cometh the second metamorphosis : there the spirit becometh a lion. Freedom it will take as its prey and be lord in its own desert.

“There it seeketh its lost lord : to him and its lost god it seeketh to be a foe ; with the great dragon it seeketh to contend for victory.

“What is the great dragon which the spirit is no longer willing to call Lord and God ? ‘Thou shalt’ is the name of the great dragon. But the lion’s spirit saith, ‘I will.’

“‘Thou shalt’ besets his way glittering with gold, a pangolin, on each scale there shineth golden, ‘Thou shalt.’ . . .

“Values a thousand years old are shining on these scales, and thus saith the most powerful of all dragons, ‘The value of all things is shining on me.’

“‘Verily, there shall be no more “I will.”’ Thus saith the dragon. . . .

“To create new values — that even the lion is not able to do : but to create for itself freedom and a holy Nay even towards duty — therefor, my brethren, the lion is required. . . .

“As its holiest it once loved ‘Thou shalt ;’ now it

must find illusion and arbitrariness even in the holiest, in order to snatch freedom from its love : the lion is required to seize that prey.

“ But tell me, my brethren, what can the child do which not even the lion could? Why must the preying lion become a child also ?

“ The child is innocence and oblivion, a new starting, a play, a wheel rolling by itself, a prime motor, a holy asserting.

“ Ay, for the play of creating, my brethren, a holy asserting is wanted. It is its own will that the spirit now willeth. It is its own world that the recluse winneth for himself.”

In this passage the author pictures in symbolic form the three great stages in the development of the spiritual life of man. They are submission, rebellion, and spontaneity. In the first stage the great virtue is obedience — obedience to law and afterwards to duty. But, whether under the form of law or duty, religion stands, for the most part, supreme, claiming submission in thought as well as in life. In order, however, that a higher level may be reached, there must come denial. The authority to which men have bowed must be overthrown. To use a favorite expression of Nietzsche, there can be no advance until the old valuations have been swept away to give place to new. In order that the new valuations may be accomplished there must be a period of negation. Denials and mockeries must take the place of reverence and obedience. When the old valuations have been overthrown, then the new may be set up in their place. The new are the manifestation of freedom, but of a freedom that does not know itself as such. The child does not mock at tradition,

or, in its sport, exult in being free. It simply acts itself. So the spirit, in this third stage of its development, simply asserts itself without the consciousness of self-assertion. The old valuations are forgotten. It naturally sets its own values upon all things, and takes itself and its own valuations for granted.

If we regard this parable as really illustrating the spiritual development of the world, we recognize the fact that in these later years many roaring lions of negativity have been going about seeking what they may devour. We may further accept Nietzsche as the king of this sort of beasts. There may perhaps be some comfort in the thought that there are few directions in which denial can go further than in the case of this writer. There are, as we shall see later, one or two things which he affirms, and in behalf of which he is ready to fight if need be. On the whole, however, we may consider the work of negation to have been pretty thoroughly accomplished by him.

He is, in the first place, a hearty and thorough-going atheist. One of his favorite expressions is "God is dead." When Zarathustra comes down from the mountain in order to preach to men the results of his long thought, he falls in with a hermit who has sought the wilderness for pious meditation. The hermit speaks of serving God and man. "When Zarathustra was alone, however, he spake thus unto his heart: 'Can it actually be possible? The old saint in his forest hath not yet heard aught of *God being dead.*'"

This denial of the truth of religion loses something of its force from the other denials with which it is

associated. We are in the habit of seeing those who, with the most serious consciousness of what they are doing, reject religion, vying with Christianity itself in insisting upon the authority of moral truth. They claim to be putting morality and virtue upon a more stable foundation than religion is able to do. With Nietzsche all this is different. The "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" of the moral law are but the glittering scales of the dragon against whom he makes war. The so-called Christian virtues, he insists, are the virtues of slaves. Even Schopenhauer, who finds the ideal of virtue in compassion and helpful sympathy, shows himself thereby little better than one of the godly. Philosophy fares with Nietzsche no better than religion and ethics. It is, in fact, a kind of religion. Of science he speaks, if possible, with even more contempt. The poets, he says somewhere, are the great pessimists, because they feel forced to create a new world for themselves out of their own imaginations. Thus we have a complete rejection of almost all that men have been accustomed to revere.

All these sweeping denials may seem to us simply absurd. It is easy to say that the man was crazy. In proof of this, one may point to the insanity which actually came upon him in later life. One may, indeed, say with Nordau, though the statement would not be true, that his works were written between his periods of sojourn in a madhouse. Even if we should not insist that the utterances of Nietzsche are the ravings of a madman, it is easy to dismiss him from our thought as unbalanced and conceited and thus as a negligible quantity. When, however, we have got rid of him, what are we going to do with the

multitude of his readers? Here, for instance, we have a translation of his works announced by the Macmillan Company in ten substantial and not inexpensive volumes; and the name of Macmillan is generally accepted as signifying that the books on which it appears have some good claim upon the attention of the world. This translation is edited by a lecturer in — of all places in the world — a Scotch university. A great mass of literature has grown up around the works of Nietzsche, favoring or opposing. We read even of the "Nietzsche archives" in some German city. Prominent in this mass of literature is the work of Professor Lichtenberger that I have associated with this article. In this book the author, without formally declaring himself a disciple of Nietzsche, gives a careful and sympathetic exposition of his doctrines. In a word, Nietzsche has become a fad, the object of a cult.

As I have said, we may dispose of him, but what are we to do with all these that he has gathered about him? They are not all wanderers escaped from a madhouse. We may criticise their taste and their judgment, but we should hardly venture to call them insane. Certainly, in view of this widespread interest, Nietzsche is no longer a negligible quantity. It is worth while to ask seriously what is the nature and ground of the teaching that he offers to the world, and what is the source of his influence.

Beginning with his atheism, and looking at it more carefully, we notice that it is supported by little argument. When he exclaims "God is dead," he means simply that religion is dead. He refers the reader to what seems to him to be one of the obvious characteristics of the time. He appeals to the fact that re-

ligion is no longer the power that it was in the hearts and lives of men. Nietzsche's cry of unbelief is a glad and triumphant one; but the loud laughter of Zarathustra was less that of mockery than that of joy. Indeed, when we think of the dogmas that have marked the darkest ages of Christian history, the endless and measureless suffering which was believed to be the unavoidable doom of the great majority of men, a doom of which one could hardly bear to think, did it threaten one man alone — when we think of the wrench upon the noblest faculties of human nature which was needed in order that the soul should love or worship, or believe that it loved and worshiped, the source from which this mighty horror took its rise, and the unseemly shifts that were made to win the favor of this power, no words of exultation are too strong to express joy in the fact that this shadow has passed away from the heavens and the earth. One might join in the laugh of Zarathustra at the thought that this God is dead. Nietzsche had heard indeed of the milder God of the gentler creeds; but the terrible being of which we have spoken was to him the real God. It was the ideal of this God which had been stamped upon his mind. The milder God was to him simply a God that was fading out. It was the dying God. Of the living God who rules the world, not arbitrarily, from without, but as the life of all that live, the strength of all that are strong, and the upholder of the weak, of this God he seems never to have heard, or having heard not to have comprehended or believed.

So far as conscious reasoning furnished support to the atheism of Nietzsche, we must look for it in connection with his treatment of philosophy. Philoso-

phy was with him, as we have already seen, only another kind of religion. It makes the same assumption that religion makes. It assumes that there is an absolute principle or an absolute truth. This absolute truth is what the philosopher seeks in his quest, and what he announces in his teaching. It is this recognition of an Absolute that allies philosophy with religion. The Absolute of the philosopher and the God of Religion are different forms of the same thing.

In opposition to such assumptions Nietzsche insists that for man, at least, there is and can be no Absolute. Man is a creature of instincts. His instincts practically make up his life. He has instincts of belief. Beyond these instincts he cannot pass. What then becomes of the Absolute of which there has been so much talk—of the absolute Being, or of the absolute Truth? There can be no real proof of anything. A man believes simply what it is his nature to believe. What is suited to one may not be suited to another. Each must take what belongs to him. It is obvious that from this point of view Nietzsche's own teaching would lose all coercing power. Indeed, he would hardly claim such authority for it. What we have in his teaching is simply the statement of the way in which things look to him. Their only influence over others must be by way of suggestion. If his view commends itself to them they will accept it; if not they will reject it. I am not, however, disposed to press this *argumentum ad hominem*. For one, I heartily accept the premises of Nietzsche's reasoning. In fact, I have more than once insisted upon the same.¹ The result, however,

¹ As in the foregoing essay entitled "Reason in Religion," and in

which Nietzsche practically draws from these premises is wholly unwarranted. His reasoning is at the first sight plausible, and seems to leave matters of belief and thought in hopeless confusion; but when we look at the matter more closely this confusion disappears. It really makes no difference whether we speak of an absolute truth or of an absolute necessity of belief. What we cannot help believing we cannot help regarding as true. It is idle to say of a proposition that it is simply our belief, but that we do not know whether or not it is true. If we cannot help believing anything we cannot really raise the question whether it is true or not. Take, for instance, the Law of Contradiction. This underlies and works through all our thinking. It implies a necessity of thought. It is idle for us to say that, because it is merely a necessity of thought, we do not know whether or not it has validity in regard to other facts of the universe. When we say this we speak words without meaning. In regard to any definite case of the application of this law we cannot admit even the thought of the possibility that it may not have validity, any more than we can admit the possibility of the thought that, because two and two seem to us to make four, it does not follow that, in point of fact, they may not make something very different. Indeed, the reasoning by which the purely subjective character of the Law of Contradiction is insisted on rests upon this very law. What the philosophers call an absolute truth we may then call an ultimate necessity of thought. The latter expression may perhaps, logically speaking, be the more justifi-

The Science of Thought, in which work this principle is accepted as fundamental.

able ; but practically the two forms of speech mean the same thing. To say that we have simply instincts of belief does not leave us any freer than the doctrine of absolute truth. The Law of Contradiction holds our thought in as firm a grip as any objective truth could do of which the philosophers and the theologians have ever spoken.

Science fares no better at the hands of Nietzsche than philosophy and religion. Like them it has its Absolute. He tells us that science has also its god, and that to no divinity which men have worshiped have such costly offerings been made. They have sacrificed to it their noblest instincts. They have sacrificed to it God himself. But what, asks Nietzsche, is truth that we should love and worship it for its own sake ?

Atheism under one form or another is no new thing. It was as confident of itself in the days of the Psalmist as to-day. Contempt for philosophy is no new thing. Some of our most noted theologians are teaching this contempt. But to deny the ideals of morality which have commanded the reverence if not the obedience of men for so many ages is something different. To say that the "Christian virtues" are the virtues of slaves is indeed to affirm something startling.

To understand the ethical theory of Nietzsche we must glance at his theory of human nature. He criticises and rejects the view of Schopenhauer, according to which the fundamental reality is the "will to be." It is not the will to be, said Nietzsche ; it is the will to exercise power. This may at bottom not be so very different from the meaning of Schopenhauer, for the will to be cannot manifest itself ab-

strictly. The will always wills something. It seeks ever to gain some end, to accomplish some result. The form of speech used by Nietzsche, however, serves admirably to emphasize what is to him the one important thing in life. The fundamental nature of man is self-assertion. This self-assertion manifests itself not merely in maintaining a position, in repelling attacks and invasions. It manifests itself rather in mastery. The end towards which the nature of man, like the nature of everything else, presses is power. Man seeks power over the world and, above all, power over other men. The truest man is he who seeks power with the firmest will and with the least consideration of anything besides.

This view of the real and ideal nature of man is the source of the special contempt that Nietzsche pours upon science and its votaries. The truest man of science, according to him, is the man who most successfully depersonalizes himself. He makes of himself a mere mirror in which the world is reflected. Nothing of himself must be left to mar the perfect fidelity of the reflection. He becomes, says Nietzsche, with a supreme disregard for facts, "a man that no woman would love."

For a similar reason scorn is felt for the teaching that insists upon self-forgetfulness and self-surrender. Asceticism and whatever looks in the direction of asceticism are regarded as standing in direct opposition to the true development of the essential nature of man. "Right" and "wrong" exist according to this view only after the establishment of Law. "To speak of right and wrong *in itself* is altogether meaningless. *In itself* the act of injuring, violating, exploiting, destroying, can, of course, not be anything

'wrong,' inasmuch as life *essentially*, that is in its fundamental functions, works injury, violation, exploitation, and destruction, and cannot be conceived otherwise." "A legal order . . . which would enforce the principle that every will should treat every other will as its equal — such an order would be a principle *hostile to life*, tending to destroy and disintegrate life — an outrage upon the future of man, a sign of languor, a byway to the nothing." Practically speaking, the great mass of men exist for the benefit of the few. It is foolish to talk of elevating the laboring classes or to waste sympathy on them. One should, of course, incidentally regard their comfort, but they are there, like the chorus of a play, as a background for the chief actors. The great man of modern time was Napoleon. Nietzsche has a good word even for Cæsar Borgia.

Nietzsche recognized two types of morals. One was the virtue of the warrior, and of the dominant caste. It recognized bravery on the field, and the consideration which was due from one member of the ruling race to another — and nothing more. The other type was the virtue of slaves. By this is meant not so much the virtue practiced by slaves as that which slaves would most naturally enjoin upon those above them. When Nietzsche calls the "Christian virtues" the virtues of slaves, he means to be taken literally. Slaves preached to their masters compassion, kindness, and forgiveness; first, in order to obtain better treatment for themselves, and then as a means of revenge. The Jews were a race of slaves. The teachings of Jesus were the culmination of the Jewish development. They were the expression of the sublime vindictiveness of the Jew. It belongs

“to the secret black art of truly grand politics of vengeance . . . that Israel itself should deny and crucify before all the world the proper tool of its vengeance, so that all its enemies should ‘bite at this bait.’” This is called the means of vengeance because these teachings sapped the spirit and energy of the conquering world.

Nietzsche attempted to support his theory of the development of altruistic ethics by history and etymology. Both forms of argument have been shown to be without foundation. Nordau calls attention to the fact that Buddhism, in which the passive and sympathetic virtues are most distinctly set forth, was the creation not of a slave but of a prince. Even the editor of the English edition of Nietzsche’s works admits that the etymologies upon which he bases his philological argument are for the most part false. He says, however, that the theory they were meant to support does not therefore fall to the ground. Professor Lichtenberger also maintains that the weakness of the reasoning of Nietzsche does not take from the value of the result. It illustrates the personality of the man just as well, and this is the main thing. Notwithstanding all this, if we try to take Nietzsche at all seriously, we must recognize the fact that there is a great difference between saying of tenderness and compassion, “These are slavish virtues” — meaning that they are such as slaves might naturally be expected to urge — and saying that they are slavish virtues in the sense that they are the virtues which a race of slaves actually imposed upon the world. In the one case we have the expression of a mere individual opinion which we may call fantastic or absurd ; and in the other we have

the statement of a historic fact which can be taken only seriously.

Whatever opinion we may form in regard to the matter, with Nietzsche pity was one of the great weaknesses of man, and the cause of many of the evils of the world. It has taken human life out of the sphere of the struggle for existence, the battlefield in which alone nobility and strength can be developed. It is pity that has kept alive what much better had perished. Infirmity of body and mind has flourished and multiplied, and has corrupted the very springs of life. Further, pity is indelicate. It looks on that from which one should more properly look away. It invades the personality of others, and sees what had much better be hidden. God, according to Zarathustra, died of pity. This may mean that it is compassion with the suffering of the world that has made religious belief untenable; or, as it is more clearly stated in one passage, men could not bear the exposure to this all-penetrating and all-revealing compassion, and so they made an end of God. Pity, we are told, was the last sin of Zarathustra. For a moment the view of the suffering of the world penetrated his heart.

The worst thing, according to our author, that could happen to man would be the abolition of suffering. The hero must be strong to suffer; he must also be strong to inflict suffering, which is much harder. In fact, men do not suffer enough, for out of suffering alone come manliness and heroism. It must be admitted that Nietzsche was not speaking of something of which he had no personal knowledge. It was through suffering that he learned to know the meaning of suffering. He did not look forward to a

time in which life should become easier. It should become rather more difficult. The ideal of life is a battle in which should come defeats as well as victories. It is sometimes said of war that the end justifies the means. Nietzsche says of it that war justifies the end.

The great evil of life is its pettiness. All Nietzsche's powers of sarcasm are brought to bear upon this. All the vials of his contempt are poured upon it. Men's virtues and their sins are alike too small. The prevalence of pity is one mark of this pettiness. Men's idea of justice sprang from fear. It was the expression of the instinct of self-preservation. Now that men feel themselves safe, they are too weak and sympathetic even to punish the wrong-doer.

With all his sense of the unavoidable part that is played by evil in the world, Nietzsche is no pessimist. He does not seek to answer the question whether life is a blessing or a curse. In fact, we live, and the one thing for us to do is to make the best of life. This is done, not by whining and groaning, not by trying to escape from it into undisturbed quiet, but by plunging into the thick of life, taking as well as giving blows. This course of action introduces a certain joyousness into existence. The true man is he who can laugh. Laughter and dancing and singing are to mark the course of the hero. The laughter of Zarathustra rang out in the most serious moments of his life.

A thought was developed by Nietzsche in his later years which was calculated to put this joyousness to a test. It was that, since both the elements and the laws of the world are unchangeable, the existence of things must continue in an endless series of cycles.

Each cycle must be perfectly similar to all that have been before. Such as we are now, such we shall be over and over again. There is no cup of joy that shall not in endless repetition be offered to us, and no cup of sorrow that shall not, over and over again, be pressed to our lips. That is the true joyousness which welcomes this endless repetition of all the experiences of life, that, as life is ending, "can cry to the Universe *Da Capo*." "For I love thee, O Eternity" is the often repeated refrain in one of the chapters of Nietzsche's chief work, and Eternity is the endless revolution of the same great series of experiences. Professor Lichtenberger, who in general is a trustworthy exponent of Nietzsche's thought, at this point introduces an idea which I am confident is foreign to the teaching of the master. It is that a man may look forward to this endless return in the hope that another time he, or another in his place, will succeed better than now, and win the stroke which he now has missed; or at least that blind chance may some time reach some miraculous and dazzling success.¹ The hope that in the future will be ground out, or reached by struggle, anything better than the past, over and over again, has seen, contradicts the very foundation on which the theory of Nietzsche rests. Should this hope be fulfilled, a new element would introduce itself into the process, whereas the theory rests upon the assumption that the elements are always the same, and that the same elements must always produce the same results. It is like the cycle of the seed, the growing, blossoming, fruit-bearing plant, and then the seed again. The varia-

¹ So, at least, I understand the rather vague statements on pp. 163, 164 of *La Philosophie de Nietzsche*.

tion thus introduced would by necessity multiply itself in the eternities indefinitely, even infinitely, and the endlessly self-repeating cycle would be no more. It is the eternal recurrence of the same with which the modern Zarathustrian must proclaim himself content, as the ancient Zarathustrian proclaimed himself, in advance, content with the awards of the final judgment.

From all that has been said it will be seen that the system of Nietzsche is extremely aristocratic. The world exists for its great and strong men. He had as little sympathy with philanthropists, reformers, socialists, and anarchists as he had with pessimists. The woman question for him did not exist. "Man," he says, "should be educated for war; woman should be educated for the recreation of man."

We have thus far looked for the most part at the darker side of the philosophy of Nietzsche. We have not considered the promise of hope which is bound up in it. The one central thought of his most mature work, the "Thus Spake Zarathustra," is that of the "Beyond-Man." The Beyond-Man is that Being which shall be developed out of the struggles of humanity. He is to stand in the same relation to man in which man stands to the ape. Man, we are told, is a bridge between the ape and the Beyond-Man. I do not know that Nietzsche gives us any light upon the character and the method of living of the Beyond-Man. Indeed, to do this would seem to be absolutely impossible. What idea could the ape form of the Beyond-Ape, that is, of man? Zarathustra himself makes no claim to be the Beyond-Man, though, from the oracular nature of his utterances and the veneration that he inspires in his followers,

we might almost suppose that he was himself the first example of the coming race. He, however, speaks always as a man. The burden of his teaching is to prepare the way for the Beyond-Man. The largest number of his utterances consists of stinging criticism of the present, its littlenesses, its meannesses, its petty shifts. Over against these is the great promise of the future. Precisely how men are to prepare the way for the Beyond-Man, and to help on his coming, is not so clear as it might be. One thing at least is plain: it is the duty of every one to let himself out. Man is to have no shams and no submissions. He is to recognize no right and no wrong.

In regard to the Beyond-Man, we know at least that he will make a revaluation of all things, an *Umwertung der Werthe*. This would also seem the kind of work to which all are summoned. Here I find in the teaching of Nietzsche a weakening that amounts to a self-contradiction. From certain statements made by him it would appear that not every one is called to this absolutely free manifestation of all that is in him. The system is, as we have seen, an aristocratic one, and it recognizes a class of the select. Zarathustra says:—

“Do you call yourself free? But I wish to know what is the thought that rules you, and not what yoke you have shaken off.

“Are you of the number of those who have the right to shake off a yoke? There are those who, when they reject the servitude in which they have lived, reject all that has given them any worth.”

After quoting this passage, Professor Lichtenberger says: “Nietzsche proclaims very emphatically that his teaching addresses itself to only a small number

of the elect, and that the mediocre crowd should live in obedience and in faith." In this way Professor Lichtenberger would prove that the teaching of Nietzsche should not be criticised as a dangerous doctrine. It is addressed, he tells us, and Nietzsche says the same, only to the few who will understand it, and know how to apply it properly. I confess that I cannot see where the line is to be drawn. The abolition of the distinction between good and evil is publicly proclaimed. What reason has one or another to suppose that it is not meant for him? The test of greatness is, primarily, to make a "re-valuation of values," and, secondly, it is the power to make this revaluation accepted, to impress it upon the world. Now the power to accomplish this revaluation belongs to every one, but no one can tell till he has tried whether or not he can make his new valuation accepted. In fact, such revaluations are continually made. A young man, for instance, grows up in a community in which license is unknown. Under the influence of a strong passion he overturns the old system of values, and sets up a new one in its place. What are traditions and sanctities and laws in the presence of a passion like his? It seems to him that his experience is as new to the world as it is to himself. He makes an *Umwertung der Werthe*. It is so with all the offenders against the order and peace of society. The thief, the murderer, the embezzler, all have set a fresh valuation upon the various possibilities of life. They have overturned the old estimate of things, and have established a new. According to Nietzsche, they would seem to be absolutely in their right, and no talk about the select few can do away with this natural outcome of

the system. It is true that these reformers of the world frequently fail in accomplishing their revolution. They fail to impress their new ideas and ideals upon society. But how could they know that before they tried? Many a hero must fail before one succeeds; but if there were not freedom of competition how could the one be successful? Napoleon is the hero of modern times, but he only did on a large scale what many are doing, or trying to do, on a small scale. The world is fertile in this sort of vegetation. Many upspringing shoots are crushed or crowded out of existence or into dwarfage, while now and then one succeeds in raising a stately trunk.

To another instance of self-contradiction we owe that which forms one of the most satisfactory things in the writing of Nietzsche, namely, Zarathustra himself. He is nobler than his own teaching, far nobler than much of the teaching of his creator. Pity was, indeed, as we are told, his last sin, yet throughout he was animated by sympathy for men, and a desire to serve them. In fact, it was to the satisfaction of this desire that he devoted his life.

When, for instance, he is going down from the mountain to preach his gospel to the world, he thus apostrophizes the sun as it is rising:—

“Thou great star! What would be thy happiness were it not for those for whom thou shinest? . . .

“Lo! I am weary of my wisdom, like the bee that hath collected too much honey; I need hands reaching out for it.

“I would fain grant and distribute until the wise among men could once more enjoy their folly, and the poor once more their riches.

“For that end I must descend to the depth, as thou

dost at even, when, sinking behind the sea, thou givest light to the lower regions, Thou resplendent star!

“I must, like thee, go down, as men say — men to whom I would descend.

“Then bless me, thou impassive eye, that canst look without envy even upon overmuch happiness!

“Bless the cup which is about to overflow so that the water, golden-flowing out of it, may carry everywhere the reflection of thy rapture.

“Lo! This cup is about to empty itself again, and Zarathustra will become once more a man.”

Another time Zarathustra exclaimed:

“I love him whose soul wasteth itself, who neither wanteth thanks nor returneth aught; for he always giveth and seeketh nothing to keep for himself.”

This gracious figure of Zarathustra, who exclaimed once “I love men,” stands as a protest against some of the teaching which Nietzsche puts into his mouth.

The teaching of Nietzsche being such as we have seen it to be, we may naturally ask why it should have been received with so much favor. One can understand why it should arouse, in some, such indignation as that with which Nordau overwhelms it. It is more difficult to understand how it should draw to itself the sympathetic interest of thoughtful and well-meaning men.

The first suggestion that may occur to us is that this teaching is startling by its very oddity. A man walking through the street on his hands will be followed by a crowd, while the most graceful walker on his feet will pass unnoticed. This suggestion, though it may in part explain the attention which Nietzsche has attracted to himself, will do little to explain the

thoughtful and even sympathetic reception which has been to such an extent given to his writings.

Another suggestion which is more pertinent is that it is the talent, not to say the genius, of Nietzsche, that has made his work interesting. No matter what genius does, there will be found those who will admire it. Nietzsche was unquestionably a man of great talent. His genius was perhaps not so great as some of his admirers picture it. It certainly was not so great as he pictured it to himself. This estimation of himself appears in the fact that he apparently considered everything that came into his head as worthy of publication. The sweepings of his mental workshop evidently seemed to him as precious as those of a gold-worker's room. Thus we have, for instance, in the "Beyond Good and Evil," pages of little paragraphs in regard to matters wholly unconnected with the subject of the work, which would be epigrams if they were only epigrammatic. Some sayings are put into the mouth of Zarathustra which would be commonplace if it were not for the pompous diction in which they are expressed, and some that are commonplace in spite of this. We find in these works repetition, inflation, and indiscriminate-ness. We find also talent, even genius.

When we look into the matter more deeply, however, we are tempted to ask whether, after all, the ethical theories of Nietzsche are so very foreign to the hearts and lives of the men and women of the present. Have the teachings of the New Testament taken such complete possession of the world that doctrines like those that we have been considering naturally excite an indignant rejection? Put in another form, the question is whether these doctrines

are not found startling because they run counter to the current ethical teaching rather than because they run counter to the principles and methods of ordinary life. We are law-obeyers, on the whole, but is there not some truth in a remark of Nietzsche that the law has worth, not because it preserves peace among men, but because it furnishes conditions under which they may the better fight one another? A sweeping affirmative answer to these questions would evidently be an unworthy exaggeration. On the other hand, it seems pretty obvious that a sweeping negative answer would be an exaggeration no less.

Perhaps we may gain a little help in this matter from a glance at some of the aspects of our modern life. Let us begin with the war with Spain that has just closed. It is obvious that there was behind the movement which finally brought about the war a deep sympathy on the part of many with the people of Cuba and a great indignation at the manner in which, as it was believed, they had been misgoverned. This feeling was altruistic. It showed the influence of Christianity. So far as this altruistic feeling was the ruling motive, the war was one of the noblest ever fought. If ever there was a Christian war, so far as this motive was supreme, this was a Christian war, more really Christian than the Crusades.

To what extent and in what proportion this feeling existed, and how much it contributed to the final result, I would not undertake to say; perhaps it would be impossible to say. Other feelings and other motives were working together with this. So far as these other motives existed and so far as they simply made use of the altruistic feeling, so far the war was unchristian. That these other motives existed

no one, probably, will doubt. Persons in respectable society, or society considered respectable, would hardly commit murder to advance their personal interests or for the good of their political party. But by what other word can we name the crime of those who urged on the war in order to enlarge the circulation of a newspaper, or to advance any other form of speculative interest? What was the crime of those who urged it on in order to win popularity for themselves or to advance the interest of their political party? On a somewhat higher plane stood those who fanned the flames of war out of what is called "Jingoism," or out of a spirit of revenge called forth by the destruction of the Maine. In these motives, however, we find no trace of the spirit of Christ. After the war had been declared, many even of those who opposed it felt that it should be fought out as sternly and as rapidly as possible. Still it would be interesting to know the special motives that led individuals to take part in it. Some unquestionably did this with the special idea of helping to free the oppressed Cubans. Of what proportion this was true we can hardly guess. Whether there were few or many who were influenced by this motive, we see in them the force of an impulse that may be called Christian. On the other hand, how many went from quite other motives, such as a love of adventure, or the impulse of a warlike patriotism? Christianity, as I understand it, does not frown upon love of adventure or patriotism; but perhaps if we had a column of Nietzschean virtues and a column of Christian virtues, these would seem more allied with the former. They are at least akin to the virtues of a dominant race.

In the course of the war, and in the events that have followed, it has been made evident that the popular hero is to-day just as truly the military hero as at any other period in the history of the world. In extolling the grand fighting qualities of our army and navy we have had little thought of the cause for which they were fighting. Now that the war is over we see the nation virtuously protesting, in regard to Cuba and its debt, that the war was not one of conquest; yet it is apparently ready to hold fast whatever else may be in its possession by the right of the strongest, even that which was won by error in a time of peace, and even that which has not been won at all. What our nation is thus doing is a type of what other nations are doing. There is one other aspect of the war that should be noticed. I refer to the fraternal relations at once established between the soldiers of the opposing armies when peace came. Our soldiers would seem to have taken the initiative in this movement. We are tempted to see in this the product of Christian civilization.

If we turn from this special illustration taken from the war to the picture of life as it offers itself under ordinary conditions, we find a like contrast. We find a far-reaching philanthropy. We find gracious and useful lives, lived under modern conditions it is true, but with much of the spirit of the Master. On the other hand we have much that is hard and selfish. We have a competition that often shows no mercy. We have a self-seeking that is certainly very far from anything that could be called Christian. If we look at our politics — but I would rather not look at them.

In what proportion all these various elements are mingled in our modern world I do not undertake to

say. I wish merely to recognize the fact that there is much in it that would find in the teachings of Nietzsche the expression of its own life. We may imagine the relief which many, and they not of the lowest, may feel at having the altruistic talk to which they have been so long used interrupted for a moment to give place to utterances of what seems to them good, solid, common sense. We may imagine them to feel a satisfaction like that of the spoilsman in our national politics when some one bolder or more outspoken than the rest pronounces civil-service reform to be a humbug, and holds up again for respect the time-honored rights of the victor.

Leaving more superficial matters out of the account, it would seem, then, that the qualities of the teaching of Nietzsche most likely to excite interest are its apparent frankness and honesty and its robust strength. In comparison with it, it is easy to understand that, to some at least, the precepts of Christianity, as uttered in these days, should seem like cant, or that, if they are taken seriously, they should seem fitted to produce weak and ineffective lives.

In conclusion, I would like to compare a little more carefully the ideal of Nietzsche with that of Christianity. However different they may be, there is a sense in which they may be said to spring from the same root. As I expressed myself in agreement with the doctrine of Nietzsche in regard to the instinctive basis of belief, so here I find myself in perfect agreement with his doctrine that the desire of power is the fundamental element of life. Life is self-assertion, and this self-assertion is, as Nietzsche insists, not merely negative but positive. One who, simply for the sake of practicing the negative virtue

of forbearance, should, when one cheek is smitten, turn the other also, or who, simply in order to avoid an act of refusal, should, when some one asks his coat, give his cloak also—such a person would be on the way to self-effacement, and the completion of the process would involve little loss to the world.

Students of the New Testament have taken various methods to explain, or to explain away, the precepts, such as I have referred to, that are found in the Sermon on the Mount. Some would find in them merely a popular exaggeration. Doubtless there is in them a certain amount of popular exaggeration; but in making allowance for this we must beware of minimizing them into commonplaces. Some would say that they are rules designed for the time when the whole world shall be Christianized. It seems unfortunate, however, to have rules that cannot be used till they are needless. Some would have them designed especially for the Disciples, who had on hand so much pressing business of the highest moment that they had no time to waste in quarreling. This explanation seems hardly complimentary to those of us who come after. It would imply that our duties and responsibilities are less pressing.

Perhaps it is impossible to explain with perfect clearness the sweep and the significance of these injunctions. One thing is, however, perfectly clear, that if we are to approach in any degree the comprehension of what Jesus meant by them, we must call to our aid whatever the Gospels tell us of the habits of life and mind of him that spoke them. We gain nothing when we take them by themselves, and try to guess how much or how little scope they had in the thought of the great teacher. According to the Gos-

pel story, the same lips that uttered these precepts of submission to whatever might occur uttered also the terrible and stinging words which were addressed to the Pharisees. Some persons are greatly troubled by these because they seem so foreign to what they consider the Christian spirit. Others have been troubled, as we have seen, by the sweeping character of the precepts in the Sermon on the Mount. If we are to understand the character of Jesus, and if we seek to obtain the inspiration that comes from contact with his real personality, we must unite, as well as we can, these two forms of speech that may seem at first sight so divergent. We must feel something of the power of the personality that could utter the Sermon on the Mount and upbraid with such intensity of passion the oppressors of the poor. Whatever difficulty we may find in formal exposition, we must be content with no explanation of one of these utterances that seems to leave no place for the other. The fundamental element of life is, as Nietzsche insisted, an active, invasive self-assertion. The life that lacks this is simply an imperfect life. So far as it lacks this, it is not life. The difference between lives depends upon the kind of self that is asserted. If a man has nothing to assert but his simple individual personality with its demands for satisfaction and honor, let him maintain that. If such a man does not resent an insult or an injury he is a craven. Let him resist evil which is done or threatened against himself. He has nothing better to do in the world, and to fail in this would be dishonor. A man, however, may have a self so large that these matters of personal annoyance seem insignificant. His self may include his family, his country, humanity. Such

a man would spend little time and strength on the trifling matters that have been referred to. Why does a gentleman ordinarily not stop to bandy words or to fight with boys that may insult him on the street? It is because he sees that it is not worth his while. Why does not the true mother fall into a passion with the waywardness of the child? It is because she loves it. In neither of these cases does self-restraint spring from weakness or self-effacement. It comes rather from strength and self-assertion. The negative virtues, so called, are worthless and worse than worthless, if they do not result from the fullness of a large and strong life. Even "Zarathustra, the godless," said:

"Often there is more bravery in one's keeping quiet and going past, in order to spare one's self for a worthy enemy.

"In particular, ye have to pass by much rabble that maketh a din of people and peoples in your ears."

If we reach the thought of Jesus as a complete and living personality, and feel the power of his life and his teaching as a single whole, we shall find that the precepts that seem most negative and repressive take for granted a fullness of positive life. The great principle of service of which he speaks becomes transformed when we recognize it as the service of love, for love is the purest self-assertion. What a man does out of love, he does because it is his passion to do it. If love seems sometimes weak, we realize its strength when we see it beating against oppression that would contradict its fundamental nature. When Jesus said, He that loseth his life shall save it, he said in effect, The self-surrender to which I call you is the truest self-assertion.

We find thus in the teachings of Christianity a summons to a strength far greater than that implied by the self-assertion which is most characteristic of the teachings of Nietzsche, because it is the assertion of a larger self. It was Jesus who fulfilled the ideal to which Nietzsche points, for it was he who accomplished the greatest transformation of values that the world has seen. What had been of no account he lifted to the highest plane. The enthusiastic words of Paul are not too strong to describe the "revaluation of values" which was involved in Christianity: "The base things of the world, and the things that are despised," these, he tells us, did God choose. Jesus had also power to impress his revaluation upon the world. The cross, the emblem of disgrace and suffering, became the symbol of victory. Service rather than mastery became the ideal of the world; and we have had a race of Christian heroes than whom the world has seen none nobler. I say *became the ideal*. We have just seen how limited is the power that specifically Christian teaching has to-day. Yet through the ages of Christian history it has furnished the ideal which has, on the whole, guided the development of man in Christian lands. This ideal has been honored even where it has not been obeyed. It has opened a larger life to the hearts of men, even where their acts fell far short of what this ideal would require. Even the little that was done received a new significance from the largeness of the thought of which it was so poor an expression.

While Nietzsche made a readjustment of values, it cannot be claimed for him that he has made a new valuation. What is most characteristic in him is the attempt to reinstate old valuations. The point of

view which he inculcates is, practically speaking, identical with that of a robber-baron of the Middle Ages. The new valuation had been already made. Zarathustra in his loftiest moments recognizes it. It was in Christianity that this transformation of the world's estimates, this *Umwertung der Werthe* was accomplished. The world of which Nietzsche speaks as being beyond good and evil is rather below this distinction than above it. It is the world of the savage, in whom the moral ideal has not yet been created. The world to which Christianity points is the only realm which is above and beyond good and evil. There the moral law has no place, for in love the law is fulfilled.

VI

NATURALISM AND ITS RESULTS

IT is a familiar fact that every person stands in the centre of his own world. The zenith is directly over his head. The horizon circles about him as its centre. The rainbow paints itself for his eye. If he stand upon the shore of the ocean the declining sun stretches its golden pathway to his feet. Something like this is true in regard to time. Each moment is an epoch in which past and future meet. Old tendencies, old movements, put on new forms and work towards fresh results. Thus it is probable that to every developing people each generation has seemed to fill a special place in the unfolding history of the world. Each age has seemed to be in some special sense an epoch. Besides these apparent epochs, the special importance of which may be due to the same sort of illusion which makes each individual the apparent centre of his world, there are epochs which are recognized as such, even after the times which they represent have receded into the past. There are dates which stand out from other dates, marking real turning-points in history. There are dates from which time is reckoned, like that of the birth of Jesus or the flight of Mohammed. There are others which, although they do not serve as dividing lines in the world's reckoning, are yet recognized as marked points of accomplishment and beginning. Such, for

instance, is the time of the *Renaissance*, or of the so-called Enlightenment.

It may be owing to the illusion of which I first spoke — that which makes every age seem a special one to those who live in it — but I cannot help thinking that the generation just passed will take its place among those periods which are epochal, not merely to the persons living in them but to the general historian. It may help us to understand its position if we recall a remark made somewhere by Herbert Spencer, a remark that was of the nature of a prophecy. He said, in effect, that inventions and discoveries would increase in a constantly accelerated ratio, for the reason that each one as it was made would suggest others, so that out of each would spring a group, and out of each member of this group would spring another group. In this way we may understand how it is that tendencies which have long been quietly working towards their goal should suddenly manifest themselves by the production of marked disturbances and rearrangements.

The most important tendency in modern thought would seem to have reached its climax in the years just passed, and to have opened the way for the beginning of a movement that is to a large degree a fresh start in the intellectual and spiritual life of the world. The line of development which has thus reached its climax is that which is known as Naturalism. We may trace it back to the humanism of the *Renaissance*. First we had the recognition of man and of human interests. The natural human life with its beauty and its charm took the place of the supernatural relations to which thought and art had so long devoted themselves. Then we had interest

in nature, meaning by this the physical world, asserting itself to such an extent as to leave little space for the mental and spiritual faculties of man. The ideal of the naturalistic philosophy is to make of the history of this developing world a series of equations. The lowest and the earliest condition and content of the world must be equivalent to the later and the higher. In order that these equations may exist it is necessary to reduce everything to a mechanical process. To the smooth working of this machine the human mind and the human will do not naturally adapt themselves. Freedom of the will was long ago cast aside. It was reserved for these later times to deny that any state or activity of the conscious life of the human spirit can have any effect whatever, either upon the world without or upon any subsequent condition or act of the mind itself. I am not going to discuss this matter of so-called automatism. I wish merely to recognize the result to which the naturalistic philosophy has arrived in its attempt to explain the world. It simply casts aside troublesome factors, although these may be among the most obvious and fundamental facts of experience. I am reminded of a young doctor of whom it is related that when he was called to set a broken limb, he found it impossible to reduce it. A part of the bone stood out and he could not force it into its place, so he simply sawed off the projecting portion of the bone. In this way he made a wonderfully neat job, but the operation was not considered a success. I confess that I am continually reminded of this young doctor by the naturalistic attempts to present a systematic view of the world. The one object appears to be to make a neat job. Whatever does not yield itself to

the process is ruthlessly sawed away. What are the human mind, and the human will, and the unity of the spiritual life, that they should stand in the way of a smooth and well-rounded system of the universe? Notwithstanding these heroic measures the neat job is not even momentarily accomplished. By the side of automatism we have agnosticism. Agnosticism is simply a confession of failure. The naturalistic philosophy has had everything its own way. It has had at its service the discoveries of modern science, so vast and so marvelous that we cannot wonder if its head has been somewhat turned thereby. It has excluded from its calculations the factors that gave it trouble. Yet at the end it confesses that it finds the riddle insoluble. It throws up the problem in despair. Its method made its failure a predestined fact. In this case, as in all cases, the solution of a problem is to be sought at the point of greatest difficulty. The elements that were cast away as negligible, because they seemed unmanageable, were the very ones in which the possibility of even proximate success was bound up.

I have said that in these later years we seem to have reached one of those greater nodes which mark real divisions in the course of human thought, and which will be recognized as such by the historian. Has not naturalism in its attempt to form a system of the universe reached a point beyond which it can go no further? It started in the earnest quest for truth. At the end it is greeted by the blankness of Agnosticism. In its beginning it would deal with facts alone. It ends by ignoring the most important facts of our experience. In its effort to avoid the supernatural it has given us in its place the unnatural ;

for is not the mechanical world, and the mechanical life that it offers us, as unlike the living universe and the living man as a manikin forced into spasmodic movement by springs and wheels is unlike the living, feeling, willing, and aspiring man? ¹

While naturalism, so far as its claim to furnish a system of the universe is concerned, has ended in the *reductio ad absurdum* at which we have just glanced, it must be remembered that this claim is the point of least interest in its history. Though when standing alone it can accomplish so little, it has, in its development, exerted a mighty influence upon all forms of life and thought. This influence has been sometimes for good, sometimes for evil. It has been a power working for the physical well-being of man, and has made wonderful transformations for which we cannot be too grateful. It has accomplished these partly by discoveries and inventions which have freed men in some respects from the tyranny of the environment, and partly by promoting political liberty. In its advance old superstitions in regard to church and state which had united to keep men in subjection have disappeared, and men were left to work out their own welfare to a degree that had been long unknown. At the same time the tendency to a theoretical materialism, or to a view of the world practically indistinguishable from this, has been

¹ A passage in one of the letters of Spinoza (variously numbered as the 12th and the 29th) is so pertinent to the present situation that I cannot resist the temptation to quote a part of it. After speaking of measure, time, and number, which may well represent the elements that naturalism has at its command, he goes on to say: *Quare non mirum est quod omnes, qui similibus notionibus et quidem praeterea male intellectis progressum naturae intelligere conati sunt, adeo mirifice se intricarent, ut tandem se extricare nequiverint, nisi omnia perrumpendo et absurda etiam absurdissima admittendo.*

accompanied by a tendency to an actual materialism in which the ideal elements of life, in the higher sense of these words, became obscured. Humanism, indeed, has retained enough of its original marks to promote great schemes of philanthropy and much individual devotion to the welfare of the world, but it is a mere commonplace to speak of the absorption of many in the merely material objects of life. By a curious inversion the tendencies that at first led to the emancipation of man from oppression have in these latter days resulted in a new form of tyranny, that of party and party leaders. As America is more purely modern than Europe, that is, as here modernity is less influenced by old tradition and the remnants of the past, so it is here that this misrule that grows out of the intensity of the struggle for material advancement has had its most perfect development. The tendency that led to making freedom and comfort the first and greatest object of life ends in a degradation of municipal government which is to a large extent peculiar to our country among civilized peoples.

We have to notice further that the naturalism which at first worked to the revival of art and the development of enjoyment of the beauty of the world and life tends, when it becomes supreme, to crush out æsthetic taste. The modern world is, because of this, largely a prosaic world. It is a foe to the best art. At the touch of our western civilization Japanese and Indian art shrivels like a delicate flower at the first breath of the winter wind. So far as our own artistic production is concerned, poetry has the best resisted this chilling influence. Indeed, poetry would seem to have been stimulated to nobler pro-

ductions, partly doubtless in protest against the prosaic influences that were benumbing other forms of artistic creation.

It is, however, the effect of naturalism upon the religious thought and life that we have here chiefly to consider. In this, also, we find mingled good and evil. So far as the thought of the religious community itself is concerned, the effect has been for good. So far as the general interest in religion is concerned, its effect has been for evil. In other words, while the church has offered to the world a purer religion than in the past, the world has shown itself less ready to receive the gift.

Naturalism is, as the name implies, the foe of supernaturalism. The Christian Church had accepted a form of supernaturalism so extravagant, so fantastic in certain of its aspects, and so terrible in others, that the attacks of the developing naturalistic spirit found a field for the exercise of a healthful reform. It is when, exulting in its success, this naturalism would stand absolutely alone, leaving no vestige of the power against which it had striven so long, that the ill effects begin to show themselves. What the world needs, here as everywhere, is a balance of forces. The true relation is established when naturalism and supernaturalism work harmoniously together, each furnishing at once a check and an inspiration to the other. This harmonious co-working may seem at first sight made impossible by the very nature of the two. Naturalism is, in its very essence, the exclusion of supernaturalism. How, then, can the two coexist and coöperate? The solution of the apparent contradiction is easy. Naturalism may be left to have its way so far as the succession of

concrete facts is concerned, yet the very order thus established may point to a supernatural element by which it is penetrated or in which it rests.

As was the case with naturalism in its attempt at the formation of a system of the universe, so here, in its effect upon religious thought, it is in the last generation that a certain climax has been reached. Tendencies that have been working for ages seem to have leaped suddenly to their fulfillment. As sometimes upon a mountain-side, where heat and cold, running water and expanding ice, have been for long years quietly at work, loosening the bonds that held great masses of rock and earth together, the result of this quiet working shows itself in a mighty avalanche by which the whole aspect of the region is changed; so in these later years intellectual and spiritual forces have suddenly accomplished results for which they have been quietly preparing during centuries.

I cannot help feeling that the changes that have taken place in religious thought within the Christian Church during these later years, and in the attitude of the church towards the world, are the most momentous in its entire history. These have been brought about by the naturalism which has worked out such vast results in other fields of thought and life. The facts are so familiar as to be commonplace. I think, however, that many fail to realize the marvelous suddenness of the changes that have taken place. In calling attention to this I wish also to emphasize the relation of these changes to that naturalism which has been for so many ages working towards the reconstruction of the world of thought and life. The most important of these changes in Christianity

are in regard to the idea of authority in religious belief, in regard to the thought of the relation of God to the world, and in regard to the relation of religion to life. We can do little more than glance at these three great topics; but perhaps even this rapid survey of the field may not be wholly without interest.

When we here speak of the changed attitude of the church, direct reference can, of course, be made only to that portion of the church, whatever special titles it may bear, which represents what is commonly called the Progressive Movement, or, in other words, the New Theology. How widely the church in general may be affected by this movement it would be hard to say; but there is scarcely any body of Christians that does not feel in some respects its influence, in which there is not a movement in advance. What I have to say will then not characterize the church as a whole, but will describe views which have found lodgment in the church.

In no respect has the change in religious thought been more marked than in regard to the authority of the Bible. When we seek the causes of this change we must recognize the general tendency of the age, which is, as we have seen, towards naturalism and away from supernaturalism. This tendency, which in so many ways has very suddenly come to a consciousness of itself, has been working through different channels as a quiet force, not to be detected by any special analysis. The effect of naturalism upon men's thought of the Bible is too obvious to be dwelt upon. As the monarch is seen to be a man like other men, as the priest is seen to be a man like other men, so the natural tendency is to see in the Bible a book like other books. It seems but a little while ago

that Theodore Parker preached his sermon on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity." When we recall the reception that this sermon met even in the freest of Christian sects, how this sect, based upon liberalism, stiffened into illiberalism, and then see to what an extent his thought has permeated the most conservative Christian bodies, we can only marvel at the greatness and the suddenness of the change. In former generations men have questioned the authority of the Bible; but they either stood outside the church or occupied a doubtful position within it. Now those who hold this position are sufficient in number to form a distinct wing in most Christian bodies. Let us look more closely at the change of which I speak and see what is the form under which it manifests itself.

I suppose that among those who represent the New Theology, so called, there are few who would maintain that this represents the view of Paul or any other New Testament writer. Certainly no Unitarian would make this claim for his own thought, and I doubt if any liberal theologian of any name would claim it for his. The Christology and the doctrine of the Atonement, as held by the older church, represented just as little the thought of any New Testament writer, but those who held these views believed that they thus conformed, which is all that our present purpose requires. They took, it must be admitted, great liberties in their interpretation. They looked at many of the most important New Testament passages very superficially; but even while they wrested them from their true sense, they believed that they were submitting themselves to their teaching. We moderns make no such claim. We

take the New Testament and ask what it has for us. We find the story of Jesus and of his wonderful teaching. We find the writings of persons who had been brought directly or indirectly under the influence of this personality. They tell us what they thought of Jesus and how they understood his work. While they do this they themselves utter inspiring words of religious thought and feeling. We read it all, and we make up our own minds as to the meaning of this great life, its meaning for us and for the world. In other words, the New Testament gives us a fact which we explain in our way, as the New Testament writers explained it their way. We do not even feel bound to accept as genuine all the sayings that the New Testament puts into the mouth of Jesus. It is related of Dr. Putnam, of Roxbury, that when some one once asked him how he understood a certain expression which Jesus is reported to have used, he thought a moment and then replied, "I don't believe he said it. It does not sound like him." I may be wrong, but I doubt if there is any liberal theologian of any name who would hesitate to treat some passages in a similar way. When this result has been reached, the special authority of the Bible has passed away.

This tendency exists more widely than one might at first suppose. Indeed, it is impossible to say how far the church is permeated by it. A few weeks ago a preacher came from the West to New York and thundered against the laxity of our modern preaching. He was right so far as his standard of measurement was concerned; but I did not notice that his well-meant effort called out much response except derision. I have recently seen in a newspaper from

another part of the country a sermon, in which the preacher was defending the story of the miracle by which Joshua made the sun stand still that he might finish his battle by daylight. The preacher seemed to feel the force of some of the objections that had been urged against the story, but lightened the matter by saying that there was a tremendous hailstorm which darkened the sky, and that the miracle consisted in dissipating the cloud. The good man thought that he was defending the Biblical story, but the spirit of modernity had touched him and he denied the account as really as if he had substituted another in its place.

This change of which I have been speaking is, as I have intimated, the greatest that has taken place in the whole history of the church. It came suddenly, yet so quietly that we hardly realize that anything remarkable has taken place. Those who have not yet felt in their own experience the touch of the new era recognize this aspect of modern religious life, but they do not realize its importance. They think that it is something that can be ended by a few heresy-trials. It is as if a snowbank in the spring should fancy that it could remain in undisturbed peace as soon as it could get rid of the few drops of water that are oozing out of it.

I need not recall the manner in which the faith of the church has been held in subjection all these centuries. First there was the authority of the church itself, putting down heresy by fire and sword. Then, at the time of the Reformation, the absolute and definite authority of the Bible was put in the place of that of the church. It was still the church that decided what it was that the Bible taught, but it was

the authority of the Bible that was nominally supreme. At the middle of this century there was probably hardly a Christian of any name that did not recognize the Bible as the supreme arbiter in regard to all questions of theology. The Unitarian appealed to this authority as freely as did his opponents. The Socinian was not satisfied till he had forced St. Paul to say what he wanted him to say, even if the rack had to be used in the process. In respect to his Christology Channing was more Pauline than his opponents. Now what a change has taken place in the so-called advanced portion of the Christian Church, whatever name it may bear! We have theories of the Atonement by the dozen. We have schemes of the Trinity which are constructed on a wholly ideal basis. We have teachings in regard to the future life in which little reference is made to the words of the New Testament. This, I say, is a most astounding change. It has come to its fruition in the last generation. This is one of the aspects of this period that mark it as a real epoch and one that will be recognized as such by the future student of history.

We may well pause to consider for a moment what will be the effect of this change when it shall have become more fully established. We often hear students of the Bible say how much more interesting they find it under the new conditions of study than they did under the old. This is doubtless the case. They had been perplexed by contradictions. They had been troubled by passages that, in spite of all forcing, would say what they ought not to have said. Indeed, the book seemed a formless aggregation into which they found it impossible to introduce order.

Now the Bible unfolds itself. It is seen in the unity of its historic development. In the light of this higher unity there is no longer need to force all its contradictions into harmony. Contradictions are to be expected. There is no need to find everywhere the highest truth. Error is to be expected. Even the Gospels may have failed to reproduce in all cases accurately the words of Jesus. Here is a fascinating field of study. The book still contains the highest utterances of religion. These form its climax but do not control all its teaching. No wonder that the change is welcomed and that the Bible is more interesting than it was before.

We must, however, recognize the fact that what it has gained for the student will be to a large extent lost for the general reader. As these views in regard to the Bible become popular we must expect it to lose in popular regard. When men turned to its pages to learn by explicit statements precisely what they were to believe in regard to the most momentous questions that concerned their destiny, when they sought thus to learn whether, unless they took the means provided for safety, they would suffer endless torment in another life, when they sought to know what were the means of escape provided this terrible doctrine were true, or to learn whether, after all, there were any means of escape, whether they were not in the hands of an awful destiny that would control their fate — when the Bible was approached with questions such as these it could indeed command an interest which, under the changed conditions, cannot be expected for it. Another, and perhaps even more widely spread, source of interest will have passed away as the newer view becomes more widely recog-

nized. The Bible has long been popularly regarded as a kind of fetish. To read its pages was in itself a work of merit that told towards one's final acceptance at the day of doom. It made comparatively little difference what part of it was read, if only some part of it was read. This view of the Bible is passing away in the light of the new comprehension of it.

With these two causes which have contributed to the popular interest in the Bible in the past will pass away much of this popular interest. While the book will mean more to the thoughtful and spiritual, we must expect that the more popular and superficial interest will become less, if it does not entirely pass away.

I would not speak too slightingly of the sources of interest to which I have referred. Whatever the reason for which men read the Bible, they could not wholly fail to be touched by the power of its inspiration. Religion derived help from these servants, that at first sight seem so unfitted for its use. This help it must prepare itself in the future to forego. Like other books the Bible must appeal to a constituency that is in sympathy with it. As the preacher is no longer a priest wielding supernatural authority, but a man uttering his best thought in regard to life, and doing what he can for the good of the world, so the Bible will be a book that contains an interesting presentation of the history of religion along particular lines, with some of the loftiest moral and religious teachings that were ever uttered, in their original form, and in a form to which we are indebted for much of what is best in our lives. Such interest it will always retain for those to whom it specially appeals. How different, however, is this

position from that which it so long occupied! This result is unavoidable. We cannot accept the view of the Bible which our thought has reached, and shrink from the legitimate and necessary result of this view. Already we see illustrations of this result even in our theological seminaries. It is not merely among students of certain heretical sects that the study of Hebrew and Greek, and the laborious investigation into Hebrew and Jewish history and thought, hold a position very different from that which they once held for the Christian minister. The careful study of the Bible means less for many a preacher in religious bodies widely unlike. We may lament this. Indeed, the lessening interest in the Bible is a distinct loss for the church, however this loss may be compensated by gains in other directions. The tendency towards this is, however, an unavoidable result of the naturalistic trend of the times. The preacher or teacher of genius may continue to make the Bible interesting, but to the mass of men much of the interest which formerly attached to it will more and more disappear.

Of the two scientific discoveries by which naturalism has most seriously affected religious thought, one was the recognition of the fact that the earth is not the centre of the universe. The other was the recognition of the law of evolution as controlling the development of life upon the earth, and, indeed, the development of the earth itself. The former taught this world to know its place among the mighty orbs that crowd the realms of space. The latter taught man to know his place in the great procession of life which has moved across the earth during the countless ages of its history. His place

in the great movement is a supreme one, it is true. Under him are "the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." Still his place is *in* the great procession though it be at its head. The former of these discoveries influenced very slowly the thought of the church. The dread which the church had of this great transformation in the thought of the universe seemed to have been groundless. Yet surely, however slowly, the new universe showed that with all its vastness it had no place for some of the objects of belief which the church had most cherished. The latter, the doctrine of evolution, performed its work more suddenly, yet so quietly that men were hardly aware of the great change that was taking place.

I do not here refer to the use that has been made of the doctrine of evolution to destroy belief in any positive religion, though this has been the effect that has forced itself with most vividness upon the recognition of the world. Even where this result has not been reached it must be admitted that with the introduction of the doctrine of evolution the church has lost one obvious and effective means of influence. The case is the same as we found it in regard to the new estimate of the Bible. A means of popular impression has been made less effective. From the time when men began to question in regard to the origin of the world, the marvelous ingenuity which seemed to be displayed in the myriad of fine harmonies and adaptations with which it is filled have been matters of wonder and admiration. They have pointed to the master mind, to the great mechanic, whose marvelous ingenuity had found its joy in the

invention and arrangement of all these things. The most prosaic minds were driven to the recognition of this display of power and wisdom. Now we are told that all this countless multitude of what had seemed wonderful contrivances is the result of the working of some law or principle bound up within the nature of things. The church has with right insisted that a change of method does not really change the nature of the fact, that the results are there and need an explanation as much as they did before. It remains, however, that, to many, growth and creation are too unlike to be blended in a single thought. The former view of creation seems mechanical, and growth and mechanism appear to have little in common.

This negative effect of the doctrine of evolution is referred to simply that we may recognize one important aspect of the changed conditions of the world. What I wish, however, particularly to notice is the change which this view of the development of life has had upon religion itself. By some the new view has been hailed with a certain relief. I remember the moment, as long ago as the time when I was in the Divinity School, when I felt myself mildly shocked at the thought of an ingenious and contriving Deity, and then again slightly shocked at the idea that I had been shocked at this. To such feelings as these the doctrine of evolution brought a certain relief. It would be difficult to say what is precisely the nature of this relief. The facts are what they were before. We still find these wondrous adaptations; but, after all, these at their best have no specially religious significance. I will illustrate this by reference to what has been used as a striking example of such adaptations. In certain of the

Pacific islands there are moths which are protected by their imitative forms. There are others that are protected from their foes by their extremely disagreeable taste. These are brightly colored so that they may be recognized from afar, and thus not be seized by mistake. Others still, that do not possess this disagreeable taste, are protected by their resemblance to those that have this. It is urged that the smallness of the number of those thus protected, and the difficulties in the way of the attainment of this result, make the case one of peculiar interest as illustrating the principle of design in the creation of the world, as being a special adaptation of means to ends. Even Dr. Martineau makes such use of it in his "Study of Religion." Yet when we look more closely at the matter it is difficult to find any specially religious significance in the fact that by this ingenious trick a few moths are protected from foes who are with equal, if less fanciful, ingenuity furnished with weapons for their destruction. Such illustrations of restricted teleology have, doubtless, a place in a large scientific view of the history of the world, but the doctrine of evolution has made this place a comparatively subordinate one.

More important than these examples of special adaptation is the view of the world which is given us by that naturalism which would exclude all interference from without. This shows us that from the beginning of anything that may be called the earth there has been a mighty and onward movement, stretching from the whirling ether up to the loftiest spiritual life. This brings us into the presence of a spiritual power of which the ingenious adaptations that have been referred to know little, and from

which they derive whatever significance for religion they may possess.

The thought in which religion has expressed this changed relation is that of the divine immanence. This thought is certainly not a new one, but it has become suddenly a popular one. The view of the world presented by the doctrine of evolution made it under some form or other an essential element of the religious idea. As long as it was possible to believe in the theory of special creations, each new shape and each new adaptation being a direct product of the divine contrivance and will, it was possible to think of a deity controlling the world from the outside. The world could not have been created by a single act of the divine power. Readjustments were continually needed. The divine hand must be continually introduced into the scene to add new pieces to the collection or to readjust the old. There was no continuity of movement except an ideal one; thus the whole could be managed from without. With the doctrine of evolution this view became unthinkable. Either the world must have been started on its way by a single act of divine power, a seed-corn cast into the realms of space; or there must be a divine power ever working with it and within it. The former view is impossible, for as this seed-corn develops ever more into a higher spiritual life and ideal beauty, whence could it have received these out of the emptiness of space?

The term Divine Immanence is thus one that the new condition of things, which science has forced upon our thought, has made unavoidable. The words have become almost commonplace. I imagine that many use them who have a very vague notion

of their meaning. Indeed, definiteness of meaning, in the most strict sense of the term, can hardly be given them except by the philosophic mind that has formed for itself a distinct scheme of the universe. Unhappily these complete schemes are apt to resemble somewhat the *hortus siccus* from the contents of which all real life has departed.

For one, I cannot think that this vagueness is necessarily a disadvantage. How can we expect to formulate the great realities of the world in a way that shall satisfy the acute understanding? The words, though vague, mean much. They mean much negatively. They make the thought of a mechanical relation between God and the world impossible. On the other hand, they have a distinct positive meaning. They suggest that there is a divine power at the heart of the universe; that there is a divine life of which our lives in some poor way may partake; that the end towards which the world is pressing is the divine ideal.

As was the case with the changed view of the authority of the church and of the Bible, so here religion has lost an effective instrument. The thought of a God over against the world, creating, adjusting, modifying, is one that is fitted to take hold of the popular imagination; and for this reason religion may long continue to use the less accurate forms of speech which this view suggests. Yet the other phase of thought, that of the divine immanence, is, after all, one that may come closer to the hearts of those that can receive it. It is a thought that is in accord with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which is the most profound teaching of the church.

We have seen the change that naturalism has

caused in the thought of authority in religion and in that of the divine presence in the world. We must now glance briefly at another change hardly less important than these. I refer to the change in the thought of religion itself and of its relation to life.

In earlier days religion was urged as the great end and aim of all living. By religion, as it was thus insisted upon, was meant the personal relation of the soul to God and the direct preparation for the future life. Religion, as thus regarded, was something that could be sharply defined. A line which it was easy to recognize separated the converted from the unconverted. In my youth it was the habit of the preacher to make a separate appeal to each of these classes. At least this was the habit except in the heretical churches. The sinner was bidden to prepare for death or to prepare to meet his God. The church was regarded primarily as an ark of safety. To be saved was to be safe.

Through the influence of naturalism a vast change is taking place in regard to all these relations. Religion, in the sense in which it was just defined, is not the great and supreme end in living. In a profounder and broader sense this claim may indeed be made for it; but in the special sense in which the word is generally used, religion is coming to be regarded as it was by Schleiermacher, as the music to which we march. It represents, indeed, the culmination of life, but only as it lifts to a higher plane the ordinary relations of life. The child does not live merely for the sake of his parent, or even to come into closer union with him; yet to a loving child the love of father and mother is the atmosphere in which it lives. We are not to live in this world merely to

prepare for another life, although right living in the world may be the best preparation for such a life. This life of ours, this common every-day life upon the earth, has its own worth. It, while it lasts, is the most important thing. We are not to be looking forward to the moment when time shall cease and eternity shall begin. We are now living the eternal life as truly as we shall ever live it in the ages to come. At least we may now live it, if we will lift our hearts and thoughts to the eternal realities. Love and the companionship and the service of love, truth and the search for it, beauty and the joy in it — these are always the same in this world or in any other. Religion does not merely look forward. It looks around and it looks up.

I have named the three results of the naturalistic view of the world, one after the other, as if they had no relation with one another, no bond of interdependence. A moment's thought would show that what I have put in the centre of the discussion — the thought of the divine immanence — would require the two others by which, in this treatment, it is flanked. An immanent God is an omnipresent God, and an omnipresent God means a God who cannot be bound by any one form of arbitrary authority or any one sphere of life.

However helpful to the religious life these results may be, I repeat that they have been procured at a great cost. This cost is, as we have seen, the loss of certain means of influence by which the church has to a large extent maintained its supremacy in the past. Henceforth Christianity will stand without the explicit supernatural authority by which it has compelled the allegiance of the world, without the external

God to whom it has appealed, and must be content to take a humbler place in relation to the affairs of life.

The thoughts that I have brought together in this condensed and abstract way may very easily be misunderstood. They may appear at every point to show the marks of vast exaggeration. If the words which I have used should be taken in their simple and literal meaning, they might, perhaps, be justly accused of exaggeration. I may seem to have done dishonor to the religion of the past. I may seem to imply that religion is just beginning its real life. On the other hand, I may seem to have exaggerated the extent of the changes to which I have referred. I suppose that I have exaggerated them. It is only in a small portion of the church that these changes have been consciously made, although this small portion extends through various bodies bearing various names.

What I have wished to do has been to draw with a free hand the picture of certain marked tendencies of the time which in these later years have come to a sudden and marked manifestation, and have been the result of the naturalistic tendencies of thought that to many have seemed antagonistic to any religious faith. Religion was not born with these. In every form of the religious life, in every sect of Christendom through the whole history of the church, and among many who have stood in no relation with the church, who have never even heard of Christianity, true religion has been found. Our New England church, for instance, in spite of the absurdities and horrors which entered into its teaching, has been a mighty influence in the creation of strong and noble lives.

What is passing away is largely the armor with which Christianity has clothed itself, the weapons with which it has fought its battles. Though it must forego these it may be none the weaker for the change. It has doubtless lost a certain popular power by which it has drawn to itself many whose interest has been in the form rather than in the heart of religion, but the weapon by which Christianity has won its real victories remains. This has been the sword of the spirit. Hearts aflame with Christian love and aspiration have lighted a kindred flame in other hearts. Wherever such hearts have been found, if these were connected with any touch of genius of utterance, a response has never failed. The high-churchman in the pomp of his service, the Calvinist with his iron creed, Theodore Parker with his faith that seemed to many so bare, the Quaker in his silence, even the far-off Buddhist with his creed that seems so dark—all of these, so far as their hearts were filled with human love and sympathy as well as with enthusiasm for the thought that had inspired them, have found followers enthusiastic like themselves. I do not mean that all forms of religion are alike in power, but that the form is of less account than the spirit that is clothed by the form.

Let us trust that, when the changes to which I have referred have been thoroughly accomplished, this power will remain. The spiritual power and authority of the Christ will remain. Christianity will have cast aside the cumbrous armor in which, though only in part through which, it has won its victories. Let us trust that like the youthful David it will find the simpler weapon, natural to its hand, more effective than the old, which to the superficial view may

seem more effective. It will have a less numerous following than before, but its followers will be those who are drawn to it for itself. Every such diminution in the numbers who frequent the church will tend to diminish the number still more, for the public sentiment that took church-going for granted will lose more and more of its power. The church will more and more attract those to whom it is attractive, and no one else. The church will take its place among other institutions and forces and no longer stand supreme above them all. It is possible, however, there will be no less real religion in the world than there was before. Perhaps I may draw an illustration from the university with which I am connected. A few years ago attendance at the morning religious service in Harvard College was required. It was a splendid sight, that of the young men pouring into the chapel every morning, filling every seat of floor and gallery. During the service they preserved a respectful attitude that might well have been devout. Now that such attendance is no longer required, this attractive spectacle exists no more; yet no one doubts that there is at least as much religious life in the college as there was before. Those who know most intimately the condition of things would insist that the religious life in the college is more intense than it was in the older days. The chapel service itself is transformed. Instead of being adapted to the slender patience of the attendants it has become ornate and beautiful. The illustration from university life may be extended. The elective system has transformed the method of instruction. If a teacher would have students he must not go through a bare routine; he must teach. Under the natural-

istic tendencies of the time attendance at church is no longer required by public sentiment. It can no longer be urged as an *opus operatum* by which salvation from endless torment may be secured. Religion has become an elective in the great university of the world. The church must recognize the extent and meaning of this change. Instead of bemoaning its loss of prestige it should bravely and wisely adapt itself to the new conditions. If it does this, its work, though less imposing as looked upon from without, may be even more really effective than it has been in the past. It will have cast aside the more or less theatrical adjuncts of its work, and may devote itself to the serious business to which it is called—the stimulus and nurture of the spiritual life. Perhaps, though fewer may respond to its appeal than in former times, there may be no less real religion in the world than there was then. Religion, at its best, is not the going to church under the stress of a public sentiment or of habit. It is not trust in an infinite ally who will bring help in the struggle with rivals or enemies. It is not the seeking to escape from an outward Hell or to reach an outward Heaven. It is the love of what is actually divine and the yielding one's self to be its instrument.

VII

INSTINCT AND REASON

THE terms Reason and Instinct have been used in a way to imply that instinct specially belongs to the animal and reason specially to man. The animal, it is said, acts by instinct ; man acts by reason. Indeed, such recent authorities as the Century Dictionary and the Encyclopædia Britannica in defining instinct lay the emphasis upon its relation to the animal. Such a definition of the word is perhaps correct, so far as the dictionary is concerned, for the purpose of a dictionary is to explain the meaning commonly attached to words rather than to state what they ought to mean ; but any account of instinct which makes it fill a more important place in the life of the animal than in that of man is in error. It may, indeed, fill a larger place proportionally, but so far as the actual number and significance of instincts are concerned, the animal is far behind the man. Professor James insists upon this fact in the interesting chapter on instinct in his *Psychology*. He there presents such a number of human instincts as I have no doubt has surprised many readers ; yet he does not claim to have presented a complete list, and indeed, many of the most important instincts are not named by him, and a large class of them is not definitely referred to. The principal object of this essay will be to illustrate, in a general way, the part

that instinct plays in human life and the part that reason plays in the life of the animal. In illustration of this latter I wish to bring together certain illustrations of animal intelligence that I have personally witnessed or that I have received at first hand from friends who have witnessed them.

Instincts in general may be loosely divided into two classes: those that are more superficial, the result of the experience or the habit of ancestors, and those that are more closely bound up with the life itself. The principle of development might seem to take away the possibility of such a distinction, for according to this all instincts would be thus inherited. Still I think that the distinction may be practically recognized. The very lowest forms of animal life appear to possess certain instincts by which that which conforms to their nature attracts them, and that which does not, repels. Indeed, without instincts such as these, animal life would not be possible. In these is the germ of the instinct of attack, defense, or retreat that is found in the higher animals. This was inherited, it is true, from one generation to another, but it was as life was inherited — the life which finds in this its manifestation. To man the instinct of thought is essential. It constitutes the special life of humanity, and in the very nature of thought are bound up some of the higher ideal elements to which I shall refer.

There is something curious in the inheritance of the more superficial instincts. If the act which originated the instinct was done by reason, it seems strange that it should have been inherited. If it was not by accident, the instinct would seem to be already established. The best illustration of the

matter that I have noticed is found in the fact that very rarely, when the winter is specially cold, grosbeaks appear in our streets. I remember to have observed them only once or twice, though they may have appeared more frequently. Now it is easy to suppose that if they were driven to us regularly by a succession of cold winters, an instinct to migrate might be established.

It is very interesting to notice the instincts that in many animals, in spite of the centuries of domestication, represent to us still the habits of their wild life. An obvious example is that of the turning of a dog when he lies down. All these years of domestication and of frequent petting have hardly begun, except in certain marked cases, to make the cat enter into close personal relations with us. The cat is, as of old, fond of her familiar haunt, and still lives her almost solitary life. The dog, on the other hand, inherits from the ancestral relation to the pack a social disposition which fits him to be the companion of man. The horse, when on the road, still hurries after a horse that he chances to see before him, as his ancestry used to press forward that they might not be left behind by their companions ; and he still starts at anything unusual, for it was upon this sensitiveness to anything unwonted in the environment that his wild ancestry depended for their continued existence. How many of the habits of the lower and wilder life remain even in man ! How foreign to the ideal humanity is the love of the chase and of war ! What passions easily aroused remain to testify to the fact that man is not yet humanized ! while from among these, growing out of the nature of thought and that of humanity, are slowly arising those higher

instincts which are also, in part, a matter of inheritance from men who have done good service for their home and their country, for truth and right.

I shall in this discussion assume that, so far as animal and human life is concerned, reason and instinct, with certain important qualifications, divide the field between them. One of these is found in the fact that there are certain *quasi* instincts that are the result not of inheritance but of habit. The individual acts without any conscious will or motive. I suppose that in the ordinary use of the word acts thus performed would hardly be called instinctive. The etymological significance of the word would justify the popular use of it, by which instinct describes something innate. There is also a class of abnormal acts which should be noticed in this connection — acts which cannot be called instinctive, but yet throw great light upon the feeling that prompts the instinctive act. I refer to cases in which it is impressed upon the hypnotic subject that something must be done by him or left undone after he has emerged into his normal condition. It is impressed upon a student, for instance, that the next day at a certain hour he shall call upon his professor and ask him to go to walk. The man goes at the appointed time, but he cannot tell why he goes. His going is thus an irrational or, perhaps better, an un-rational act. Such qualifications, however, and any similar ones that might possibly be found, do not practically affect the general position which I have taken, that, on the whole, reason and instinct divide the field between them. It would be possible, indeed, so to state what is meant as to guard it against such exceptions. I do not care, however, to devise

cumbrous definitions, and will leave the matter as it was first stated.

At the opening of his chapter on instinct Professor James says: "Instinct is usually defined as the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends, without foresight of the ends and without previous education in the performance." That, as Professor James says, this is the sense in which the word is commonly used, does not admit of doubt; and it certainly covers a very large number of cases of instinct. Such manifestations of instinct may be described by saying that in performing them the agent acts as though he knew something which he does not know. An example of this often referred to is that of the fly which lays its eggs in the flesh on which its larvæ will feed, though it does not itself feed on flesh. Another example often named is that of the bird of passage, which seems to know that a cold winter is coming in the North, but that if it goes South it will have an uninterrupted summer. Such acts are performed without foresight, simply because each at its fitting time seems the most attractive thing that can be done. I say that these acts are performed without foresight, because this is what every one says, especially those writers who can best claim to be called scientific. I confess, however, that this is a matter about which I know nothing, and I doubt if the most scientific know any more. Animals seem sometimes to manifest powers which we do not possess. A dog, a cat, or a bee, no matter by what tortuous paths it may have been carried, when set at liberty is able to make a straight line for its home. I doubt if human reason could accomplish such a feat, unless it were aided to some extent by the signs of the

heavens. It is not impossible that the animal may possess also some clairvoyant power to which its acts are more transparent than they seem to us to be. I would not be understood to defend such a view of instinct as I have been hinting at. I wish what I have said to be regarded simply as a confession of ignorance; and throughout the rest of this discussion if I have occasion to refer to the matter I shall use the language which is now common and approved.

What I would call attention to, however, is the fact that this common definition of instinct, which Professor James quotes as such without indorsing it, covers only a small portion of instincts — namely, those which act as means to ends that are not foreseen. Many instincts are destitute of this forward reach. Take, for instance, some of those to which Professor James refers in his enumeration of human instincts, such as jealousy, sympathy, and secretiveness. Each of these is complete in itself. The jealous person does not manifest jealousy as a means for accomplishing some unknown end. Jealousy knows very well what it is about. The acts to which it prompts have no significance which it does not recognize. Like all moods it affirms itself, to the exclusion of saner feelings; but this does not imply any blindness to what it is doing. It is simply an impulse to perform certain acts, an impulse that is roused by certain appearances or events acting upon a somewhat morbid personality; or, when facts justify it, the impulse may come from something acting upon a healthy personality. The same is true of sympathy. There is nothing occult about this. It is simply the reaction of a normal mind in the presence of suffering. Sympathy prompts to acts, and the agent knows as

well as any looker on what is the significance and tendency of these acts. It may of course blunder in its methods, just as a man may blunder in the methods by which he seeks to accomplish anything. Yet jealousy and sympathy are rightly called instincts.

From the examples thus given it will be seen that the definition I quoted covers only a very limited field. Neither in jealousy nor in sympathy does the person act as if he knew something which he does not know. It is obvious that such examples could be multiplied indefinitely.

I wish to call special attention to a form of instinct not covered by the definition I have quoted, and not distinctly recognized in any discussion of the theme that has fallen under my notice. The definition refers to acts that to the actor seem to end in themselves, while they are really the means by which unforeseen results are accomplished. The class of instincts to which I would now refer consists of those which suggest the ends that are to be sought. This form of instinct is more marked in man than in the lower animals, although it is not the exclusive possession of man. The person seeks to accomplish certain ends, but can give no reason why these particular ends are sought by him. If you ask what particular ends are here referred to, I answer: all the ends which are pursued by men as ultimates, that is, without regard to anything to which they may be instrumental. One seeks, for instance, happiness. If you should ask him why he wants to be happy, he would think the question an absurd one. In fact, the question would be absurd because it is one that admits of no answer. Sometimes, indeed, a person has a reason for seeking to be happy. It may be for the

sake of others, whom his sadness would make more sad. It may be for the sake of self-discipline, in order to correct certain morbid tendencies. In these cases it is not the passion for happiness that moves him.

The objects which he may wish to accomplish by cultivating happiness are the real ends which he is seeking and for which he can give no reason. If you should ask him why he wishes to make others more cheerful, the question would seem a foolish one. If he made any answer he would perhaps say that it was because he loved them, which would be saying the same thing in different words. To love another, and to desire the happiness of that other, amount to pretty much the same thing. At least one of these forms an element of the other. To seek happiness, then, is instinctive. It is not irrational to *seek* happiness, for this is one of the ends which our nature sets before us. One can, however, give no reason why he sees in happiness an end that should be sought. In one case of the kind it is common to recognize an instinct. We speak of the *instinct* of self-preservation. It has been denied that the animal possesses this, because it knows nothing of life or death. However this may be, in man this instinct bears undoubted sway. The other ultimate ends which men seek are as truly instinctive as this.

In saying that men seek happiness I have simply used the common form of speech. I am not quite sure that it is correct. Happiness is either an abstract term or a collective term. If we call it an abstraction we might raise the doubt whether men really seek abstractions. If we call it a collective term, we might doubt whether it is not merely the elements that are summed up in the word that men

seek. In either case the fact would remain the same. Whatever ends are represented by the term would be sought for their own sake, with no reason beyond themselves. I have said that this form of instinct, namely the seeking to accomplish results that are ends in themselves, for the seeking of which no other reason could be given, is more marked in man than in the lower animals. By this I meant simply that the ends sought are for the most part more distinctly held before the mind, that they are seen from a greater distance, and that more varied means are brought together to coöperate in the search. The animal, no less than man, has, however, ends which he strives to accomplish by simple or tortuous ways. Even if the beast had as much reason as man he could not explain why he likes to satisfy his hunger. We cannot tell why anything is pleasant and desirable. Whichever way we go we come at last upon the brute fact which admits of no explanation or justification. Thus we may say in general that a thing is not desired because it seems desirable — rather it seems desirable because it is desired.

There is one other form of instinct which is often less easy of recognition and which I name simply that we may, so far as possible, cover the whole ground. I have in mind the cases in which the animal or the man makes use of instinctive methods to accomplish ends that are more or less consciously sought. This form of instinct may perhaps be best recognized in cases where it seems to go astray. You see, for instance, a horse seeking to drink. The water is frozen. He stamps the ice with his foot, breaks it and drinks. The stamping on the ice might

seem to be an act of reason ; or at least you might think that he had done the same thing before, at first, possibly, by accident, and so understood what would be the result of his act. Suppose, however, the water is not frozen, but the horse cannot get at it for some other reason : either his harness does not allow him to reach quite far enough ; or the water is too shallow to be drunk with ease or pleasure. Now it is not uncommon to see a horse stamp the water in both these cases. I have seen a horse stamp the shallow water till it became muddy and undrinkable. The act was precisely what it would naturally be if there were ice to be broken. A domesticated horse in our part of the world would perhaps never have occasion to break ice in order to get water. The most natural explanation of the act appears to me to be that it is of the same kind as that of the dog when, before lying down, he turns round and round as though he were making a bed. In the case of the horse it suggests the time when his ancestors in their wild state may have been sometimes obliged to break the ice before they could drink, as the ancestors of the dog used to make a bed for themselves in the grass or rushes. The horse knew very well what he wanted. He wanted to drink. Instinct prompted the means of accomplishing this, though in this case it happened to be at fault. This you will notice is quite different from the form of instinct which our definitions generally recognize. According to them, an instinctive act is one done blindly without any foresight of the result. In this case the act is performed with a definite knowledge of the result to be accomplished, but with no knowledge of the manner in which the means in-

stinctively used would produce that which is desired. Something similar we may find, if I may be allowed to use so humble an illustration, in the instinct to scratch where there is an itching of the body. This instinct is so powerful that it often prevails against reason. The person knows that the act will only aggravate the discomfort. It may be a case of small-pox, where the sufferer knows that yielding to the impulse will not only increase the torment, but will leave its marks for the remainder of his life; yet so ungovernable is often the instinct that only the binding of the hands will prevent the act. Here is an instinctive act directed towards a clearly recognized result; namely, the relieving of the discomfort. The instinct persists in the face of the knowledge that it is misdirected. We cannot say that the impulse results from the memory of the relief which it has sometimes brought. It is doubtful if, in a great number of cases, in any individual human life, it has brought very great relief. Even if there were this memory of past experience, the knowledge thus attained would be completely overborne by the certainty of the unhappy results in the case under consideration. Here we have instinct working towards a definite end in spite of the knowledge that it will produce only evil.

I have thus distinguished between two forms of instinct. The one form is the response to some part of the environment, which response is the necessary step to the accomplishment of some end of which the animal knows nothing. The other is the seeking for some distinctly seen end, by methods that aim at the accomplishing of this end. The methods are consciously used. The instinct is shown in the desire to

accomplish these ends. The one form is illustrated by the act of an animal in tearing to pieces and devouring its prey when it is before it, not knowing that this is the method by which its life is prolonged. The other is the patient seeking his prey, when he has no object before him to stimulate the act.

I am inclined to think that this instinctive method of reaching recognized ends is not uncommon, though as I intimated before it is not so easy to be certain that this is the case where the instinct hits the mark and the end is accomplished. Every animal has its method of attack and defense. The bull puts down his head, and with closed eyes rushes upon the foe. The lion leaps upon his prey. The hare flees for safety. In each of these cases the creature has a more or less vague or clear idea of what it wants to accomplish, but instinct furnishes the means. It may be urged, indeed, that at first the animal may have acted blindly, and experience may have shown the natural issue of the act. I cannot think, however, that the bull, for instance, even at the first, made his mad rush without a feeling of anger and a more or less clear purpose of hostility. Besides other instincts of attack or defense, man possesses the instinct to think. As naturally, as instinctively as the lion leaps, and the hare flees, man in an emergency thinks. His thought at once leads him out of the realm of pure instinct, but it has its root in that.

Indeed, it may be said that every response to the environment is directly or indirectly the manifestation of an instinct.

From what has been said it will be seen how small a portion of instincts is covered by the definition so often given, namely, that it is unconscious teleology,

the acting in such a way as to accomplish results which are not foreseen. It is possible that this form of instinct is more developed among animals than in man. Besides these there is the instinctive selection of ends to be accomplished and the instinctive use of means to accomplish recognized ends.

We are now somewhat prepared to consider the relation between instinct and reason. The original impulse to action is instinctive. The ultimate end sought by the action is furnished by instinct. Thus the beginning and the ultimate end of our activity are to be found in instinct. Reason occupies the belt by which the two are divided, or, if we prefer the expression, are united.

I here use the word reason in the old-fashioned English sense to signify the activity of conscious intelligence. The word reason, in the more profound significance that we have borrowed from the German, would find its throne in the realm of the instincts.

The instinctive impulses to activity and the instinctive ends towards which the activity is directed are both irrational. By this I mean that the impulse acts without conscious reason, and that it would be impossible to give a reason why the ultimate ends should be sought. The word irrational would seem, however, to degrade these instincts. I will therefore call the primal impulses infrarational and the ultimate ends sought suprarational.

Perhaps we cannot better illustrate the relations to reason of these two instinctive extremes, the beginning and the end of all our activity, than by taking *thought* as an example. Thought, as we have seen, is resorted to instinctively by man. This, as a matter of course, leads at once into what I have called

the belt of reason. What is the end for which men think, or towards which they think? Some think simply in order to reach the truth. They wish simply to know. Why do men desire to know? What is the reason for seeking the truth? The truth-seeker can give no reason. The question is to him absurd. To seek truth is simply the most natural as well as the most desirable thing that a man can do. In other words, the impulse to truth-seeking bears all the marks of that which is simply instinctive. Perhaps comparatively few think merely that they may reach the truth. Most men, it is probable, think in order to discover how best to remove some more or less serious inconvenience, or how to succeed in being happier or more useful. Whatever be the purpose of their thought, the final end of their mental activity is something that they seek without being able to assign a reason why this end is desirable. Here again the desirability appears so natural and obvious that to ask for a reason seems an impertinence. Thus men seek truth or seek happiness just as the hen insists on brooding over her eggs, or as the bird of passage wings its way to some distant clime, simply because it feels that it must.

But whatever may be the object of thought, how can we tell when the result that we seek is reached? Take the time-honored syllogism, How do we know that if John is man and man is mortal, John is mortal? Prove me that if you please. To prove it is impossible. A chain of reasoning must come to an end somewhere. Like any other chain it must be attached to a staple if it is to hold; and the staple which supports the chain of reasoning is something that needs and admits of no proof. It is something

that furnishes its own evidence. In other words, it is accepted instinctively.

This line of thought could be carried on almost indefinitely. I have spoken of the ideal of truth. What I said of that is true of the ideas of goodness and beauty. Who can say why it is right to do right? There are enough, indeed, who give their answers, such as they are, to the question. Kant insists that no answer is possible. To give a reason for right-doing is to exalt something above righteousness. The Utilitarian gives his answer and the Hedonist gives his. But whatever the answer, the moral law affirms itself. It is independent of all theory. As the earth bore Ptolemaic and Copernican alike along its mighty orbit, heedless of their theorizing, so Hedonist and Utilitarian and Intuitionalist feel alike the constraint of the law of righteousness. Our reasoning did not create these great ideals. Our reasoning, on the contrary, depends upon them. These fill the space which the Germans call reason. This is that which underlies all reasoning. Our reason, in the English use of this term, is the torch-bearer. These ideals rise about us like mighty mountain ranges. We wander among them. The reason throws some little light by which their sublime forms reveal glimpses of their vastness. It shows us the way by which we may most fully attain unto them, but it finds them — it does not create them. Yet our real life is in them. It is by these that we stand in any real relation to the universe. It is in the world of the suprarational, that is, in the realm of the instincts, that our real life lies. Our reason, as we have seen, throws light upon them. It thus enables us to stand in such a relation to our instincts lower and

higher that we can compare them, that we can encourage one and repress another. Its torch is thus of great service. Only we must remember that it is some profound instinct that decides what is lower and what is higher, and thus controls our choice. We speak often of living by reason. In fact, we live by our instincts. Happy is he in whose life the lower instincts are subordinated to the higher. In this subordination, as we have seen, the reason may furnish great help.

From what has been said it must not be understood that the realm of the instincts is the same as that which is so often referred to as the unconscious. We are conscious of the high ideals which lure on our true lives. We can simply not get behind them or under them. If we did we should only come upon other finalities. We are conscious of them as we are conscious of ourselves. We cannot get behind these finalities any more than we can get behind ourselves.

It is thus obvious that from the very nature of things men must have far more instincts than any other creature. If all natural impulses and all final ends of activity are instinctive, then the more concrete organism must have more of these than others, for the multiplication of these impulses and ends is what gives concreteness; and man is the most concrete of all the dwellers upon the earth.

After thus considering, so far as is necessary for our purpose, the part that instinct plays in the life of man, we have now, by a sudden change of our point of view, to consider the part that reason plays in the life of the lower animal. We find at once certain great differences, though these may not be

so radical as some suppose. The most prominent of these differences is found in the fact that in the animal the belt of reason is much narrower and that the infrarational impulses appear to be much more numerous than the suprarational ends. So far as the quality of the rational activity is concerned, the principle commonly laid down is that the animal cannot think by general concepts. This is the view taken by Locke, Schopenhauer, and others. This position seems to me reasonable if not taken too literally. The fact that language is so slightly developed among the animals would seem to indicate that the power of thinking by general concepts, if it exist at all, must do so to a very small extent. If any one is jealous for the reputation of the brute in this matter, his suspicion that there is in this statement some unfairness toward the lower animal may be allayed by the suggestion that some philosophies practically leave very little space for general concepts in the mind of man himself; and I am inclined to think that a large part of man's mental processes is carried on without them. Hume, for instance, recognized no connection in thought and no basis in reasoning but the power of association. In the present day many assume that men think merely in pictures or by similar presentations, and have no recognition of the pure concept as such. Man's thought, according to them, consists of a series of more or less distinct imaginations. Thus the account presented just now of the thought of the lower animals gives them, in fact, all that the philosophers just referred to claim for themselves. Practically, as I have just intimated, the general concept plays a comparatively small part, so far as amount is concerned,

in our ordinary thinking. Practically, we pass at once from particular to particular. If, for instance, a man sees a mad bull rushing for him, he does not consciously reason about the matter. He simply runs. Of course he has in his mind the general notion expressed by the word bull, but this probably is simply in the background of his mind. If a laborer in the field hears the bell ring for dinner, the sound probably simply suggests to him the idea of dinner, not of dinner in general, perhaps not what in our modern use of words we should call an idea at all. It is difficult, however, to reason confidently about these mental processes, because we have the general concepts in the form of words and cannot wholly get rid of them. With the young child it is different. We say that the burnt child dreads the fire. The young child has no conception of fire as such. The one fire simply by its resemblance to the other fire recalls so vividly the smart of the burn that the child shrinks from approaching it. Some persons are inclined to give the young child credit for great power of generalization. It is possible that at first what is called generalization is simply a failure accurately to notice differences. If in a farmer's yard you were introduced to a sheep named "Bo-peep," the next sheep that you saw in the yard you would probably speak of as "Bo-peep." This would not be because you had great power of generalization, but because of a lack of power of discrimination. However this may be, association depending upon resemblances great or small would appear to be the controlling influence in the mental processes and the activities of the child, and the same is probably true of the animal. Once when I was sitting in a buggy

in Washington Street in Boston, the driver of one of the red omnibuses common in those days happened to hit my horse with his whip. After that the animal continued to stand quietly as before, except that whenever a red omnibus passed he made a nervous start. I refer to this as a simple example of the kind of association of which I have been speaking. The horse probably did not consciously reach the general notion of an omnibus, that is, of the omnibus as it appeared to him — he did not reason that those big red things were dangerous. Rather we must suppose that the resemblance of the other omnibuses suggested so strongly the touch of the whip which he had received from the first that he shrank from each.

The kind of identification thus described did not in the case of this horse result from failure to note differences. Some of the higher animals, notably the horse, have a power of acute observation which the savage alone among men can claim at all to equal, and probably in this regard the savage is very far behind.

I once had an opportunity to watch a dog take his observations. He did it apparently with a full sense of what he was doing. I was driving, in a sleigh through a city, with a dog that had never been in the place before. He stood with his fore feet resting on the dasher, turning his head from side to side as rapidly as he could. When we were coming back he lay down quietly in the bottom of the sleigh; but the moment we came upon a street where we had not been before, his fore feet were on the dasher again and his head was turning from side to side as rapidly as at first. The animal does not ordinarily, so far as

I have noticed, learn his lesson in this obviously conscious manner. In general, like a well-trained lady, it sees everything without seeming to see anything. It is amazing how much the higher animal is able to take in, in this quiet and apparently purposeless way. I once was driving through a street in Boston where I intended to make a call. The houses were so much alike that I ordinarily had to observe carefully the numbers on the doors. This time, while I was watching for the numbers as well as I could, the horse suddenly drew up to the side of the street and stopped. I looked and saw that it was the house I wanted. The horse had been on the street only once before, and a year had passed since then. The same horse I was once driving through a wooded road in Maine, looking out for the place where, the year before, we had gone into the woods to get berries. Here again the horse suddenly stopped. It was some minutes before we realized that this was the place we were seeking. When we were there before we had noticed a pile of wood at the spot, and had taken that as the mark by which we should recognize it. This year the wood was gone, and thus we failed to know the place. By what subtler marks the horse distinguished it, I do not know. I refer to these facts, not as specially remarkable, but as showing the marvelous observation and memory of the higher animal, which the horse possesses in a very marked degree. I do not suppose the acts of the animal were performed with any conscious purpose or act of reasoning. I suppose they were the result simply of association and of habit—if that can be called habit which is the result of a single experience. The horse sometimes shows great discrimination.

The first time I drove out a certain horse, we happened to call at two greenhouses. Naturally, the next time as we passed them the horse proposed to stop. What is more remarkable is, that as we came to a third greenhouse, which we had not visited the day before, the horse proposed to stop at that. It was probably the greenhouse fragrance that suggested it. He seemed to have made up his mind, brute fashion, that greenhouses were our specialty. That drive convinced him that we were not people that did the same thing every day; and he never troubled us again, so far as I now remember, by stopping wherever we had stopped before.

While the horse is, perhaps, more than most other animals, a creature of habit, yet I suppose the same principle of association lies behind a great many acts of seeming intelligence on the part of the brute. Certainly, however, the intelligence of the animal seems very often to go beyond anything that could be thus explained. The animal strikes out in new ways, doing what it had never done before, and what it had never been taught. It adapts itself to circumstances, and invents new ways of reaching its ends. This I conceive that it does by no act of conscious reasoning, but the acts and their results suggest themselves to it. Take a simple case as it was told me by a friend. A horse ordinarily puts his foot forward when he wishes to reach anything. To put the foot forward to draw something towards him seems a natural and instinctive act. My friend's horse, wishing to get at his bedding in order that he might improvidently devour it, put his fore foot back and drew the bedding forward. It would seem as if his ancestors in their free state could rarely, if ever,

have had occasion to use the fore foot in this way. It was thus an act of intelligent adaptation of means to ends. A still more complicated process of the kind was carried on by a dog of mine named Tiny. I give the name because I shall have occasion to refer to him again. He was a black-and-tan, by no means a glutton, but something of an epicure. One evening a paper was laid on the floor ; a biscuit was broken up for his supper, and the pieces laid on the paper. The supper did not quite suit him. He carefully took the pieces one after another and carried them away from the paper. He then returned and sat on the paper, waiting till something more attractive should be offered him. One would be safe in saying that neither he nor any ancestor of his had ever done an act like this. It was an original act of intelligence performed on the inspiration of the moment.

Still greater intelligence was shown by a dog that did not belong to me but was owned by a household that I knew not less intimately than my own. The dog I knew very well. The grandmother of the house was taken ill one evening. There were only ladies there, and, on account of ill health or some other reason, no one of them could go for the doctor, though he lived not far away. While they were wishing most earnestly that he would come, to their surprise he walked in. It seems that the dog, who was a mongrel, had gone to his door and barked till he was admitted. He found the doctor and made such unmistakable signs that he wished to be followed that the doctor did follow him and was greeted very gladly. The dog was not in the habit of going to the physician's house. How he knew that the doctor was wanted could only be conjectured. Like Mrs.

Browning's Flash, he was very sympathetic in illness. Whether on this occasion he had heard the doctor's name spoken in a way which showed that he was wanted, or whether he remembered that in such cases the doctor had generally been summoned, one could only guess.

The same dog, named Spot, was very fond of two young men, neither of them belonging to the family with which he lived. The young men left town together, and not till the end of two years did one of them return. Spot received him with great delight, and then suddenly disappeared. After some time he returned evidently tired and downhearted. It was later known that after greeting the returned wanderer he hurried to the home of the other young man, some two or three miles away, taking it for granted that, as the two had disappeared together, together they had returned. A simpler illustration of like intelligence was given by a Boston terrier that I now own. He had tried to persuade me to go to walk with him ; but failing, as he probably fancied, to make me understand what he wanted, he finally brought me the leash by which I was in the habit of leading him.

It would be very interesting, if it were possible, to determine the indirect effect which is sometimes produced in the animal, as in the dog, for instance, by living in close community with beings so far above him as we generally conceive ourselves to be. I do not refer to any result of training, but simply to what I may call the expansion and elevation of the mind. It is difficult to do this because we are so little familiar with the animal in his wild state. There does seem to be, however, an intensity of personal affection that must have come in the manner which I have

indicated. At least the regard that the ancestor of the dog has for his pack seems to have concentrated itself upon one or more individuals. The animal, further, is so dependent upon these, so obedient to them, and so cared for by them, that the relation is elevated, and the animal seems to enter more or less into sympathy with the feelings of those with whom he lives. There is sometimes developed in the dog, for instance, something that I can hardly venture to call by a lower name than a sense of duty. It may have been developed by a series of rewards and punishments, though this is by no means always the case. Whatever may have been its method of development, it stands independent of hope or fear. It is this finer sympathy, as well as a larger intelligence, that is noticeable in some of the incidents that I have related. We find also in the dog a self-control which sometimes goes beyond the direct result of training. One of the most marked illustrations of the kind that I remember occurred in the case of the dog Tiny, to whom I have already referred. I should premise that he never had a canine friend during his life. He was, indeed, at swords' points with his race. He would allow no dog on the premises, and, if one ventured to pass the time of day with him on the street, Tiny would promptly teach him to go about his business. One evening however, a Gordon Setter pup was brought to the house. Tiny at once recognized it as adopted by the family; but, though he never harmed it all the time they were together, he never showed it any friendliness. In fact, he preserved what might be called an armed neutrality. To this reserve there was but one exception. When the new-comer committed any act for the like of

which Tiny had been punished in his puppyhood, Tiny would fly at him and give him a vigorous boxing. He thus spontaneously assumed the part which trained elephants in India are taught to perform, to assist in the education of his kind. In Tiny's case — so far as one could judge from the manner of the act — there entered into it a feeling of special satisfaction. He appeared to welcome an opportunity of displaying his real feeling. Beppo, as this new-comer was named, slept in the cellar, while Tiny had his bed upstairs. One evening, as I was coming up from the cellar, I found Tiny waiting for me with an expression that seemed to me at the time to have something mysterious about it. He led me to his bed, and in it was Beppo, who had not only invaded the sacred place, but had unearthed, or rather unbedded, Tiny's favorite bones, which he had hidden under his rug, and was actually gnawing them. It must be remembered that Tiny had never been trained to abstain from ill-treating Beppo. There had never been occasion for this. He had simply felt the proprieties of the case and recognized his duty and accepted it. Knowing the dog as I did, the self-restraint that he exercised under these most trying circumstances was something marvelous. Indeed, his whole relation to Beppo was extremely interesting. When the latter, who was something of a rover, was tied in the garden, Tiny would often sit on the steps and watch him with apparent complacency. He would pay not the slightest attention to any of Beppo's expressions of desire that he would come and lighten his confinement by a little play. Every now and then, however, he would start and career madly around the garden in a way not usual with him. I cannot say what was his

real motive, but the appearance was as if he wished to exhibit to Beppo his own freedom.

In all these cases we see something quite different from instinct. They show real intelligence. At the same time there is no reason to believe that the acts were prompted by a conscious process of reasoning, though perhaps we have no right to deny this. It seems most probable that the animal was moved by an impulse towards a certain result, and, to accomplish this, took the steps that the impulse suggested. I will illustrate my meaning by reference to a theory of the will maintained by Professor James. This is to the effect that we exercise the direct power of will only over our ideas, but that the idea of an act firmly held sets the act in motion, by a certain reflex power. In order that this result should be accomplished the idea must be very prominent. If the idea of a murder drove every other idea from a man's mind, the murder would be accomplished. Something like this may possibly be the process in the life of the brute, when by means not before tried it seeks to attain some greatly desired result. The longing to have his bedding within reach so that it could be eaten might, according to this view, of itself move the limb of the horse in an unwonted way. The longing to see something on the paper instead of the undesired biscuit might itself impel the dog to remove it.

If such suggestions as these may seem to any to set animal intelligence too low in the scale, I will put what is substantially the same thought in a form more flattering. The mental activity of the animal, according to the view that has been presented, may appear to foreshadow in its small way the method of

the highest genius. A physician who is really an expert does not, I suppose, always reason out a case, does not consider this or that possible disease, or this and that proper remedy. The condition of the patient at once suggests the nature of the disease and the appropriate remedy. In regard to a similar case the tyro would compare symptoms, and cudgel his memory in order to recall and to consider medicines that might be appropriate. So in literature the genius, by a certain divination, sees what is to be accomplished and how it is to be accomplished. In the case of the animal and of the genius alike, I conceive that impulses such as we are considering resemble instinct in the directness and spontaneity of their activity; though they are not, in fact, instinctive, because they meet perfectly new relations by ways that never have been tried before.

It is interesting thus to see how extremes meet; how the beginning foreshadows the end. What a long stretch of experience, what struggles, what intellectual strain, lie between the instinct and the insight of the animal, and the insight, let us say, of the architect who builded better than he knew; and yet these animal endowments suggest the highest form into which genius can gather up its powers and its acquirements; just as the self-forgetting, self-sacrificing, unquestioning and unhesitating love of the lion mother for her whelps suggests the ideal of the natural, unquestioning devotion of the patriot to his country, and of the philanthropist to his kind. The truly virtuous man is one in whom virtue has become a kind of instinct, or as Aristotle put it, a habit. Indeed, as we have seen, the sense of duty and the recognition of the other high ideals of life are funda-

mentally instinctive. They are instincts so overlaid and entangled with other and lower instincts that they do not often stand out in their full power.

It may seem as if under the name instinct had, in this paper, been brought together elements too heterogeneous to be called by a common name. It is to be noted, however, that the higher instincts to which I have referred stand in a relation to the organism that possesses them similar to that in which the lower instincts stand to the organisms with which they are united. In both cases they represent the impulses and the ends by and for which the activity of life is manifested. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is the impulse and the end characteristic of the higher spiritual life, just as to hunger and thirst for flesh and blood is the characteristic of the tiger. It is the life that has changed, not the nature of the instinct. As the life becomes higher and nobler, the instincts are higher and nobler. Indeed, the elevation of the life and the elevation of the instincts are one and the same thing.

When I accepted, more or less literally, the position of Locke, Schopenhauer, and others — that the difference between the thought of man and that of the lower animal is that man can think by means of general ideas, while in the lower animal, if general ideas exist at all, it is in an extremely rudimentary state — it may have appeared to some that the difference between the mental equipments of man and the brute was reduced to a minimum. It is well to notice, in conclusion, though in a most general way, the significance of this distinction. By the use of general ideas and of language, which alone makes their larger development possible, man enters upon a

career of indefinite progress. By these he stores up his own past experience and much of the past experience of the race. Thus an indefinite number of experiences may be united into one. By this power not only are philosophy and religion possible, but also the enlargement of the material life. By this power man invents complicated machinery by which he is able to master the world. By this come plans and ideals; by this comes the thought of sin and of holiness; by this even the comic finds free recognition. Indeed, at that point of the development of life in the world at which there is a beginning, in any real sense, of thinking by general ideas, man begins. He begins, furnished with an instrumentality in which are bound up all the higher possibilities of his nature. By the help of this he enters upon a career of advancement to which is attached no limit. No such change of form is necessary as has marked the successive stages reached by the lower life of the animal, for to him as man the possibility of measureless achievement is thrown open.

VIII

THE DEVIL

ALMOST all peoples have recognized malignant or at least harmful spirits. Among many savages, indeed, the only spiritual beings believed in are of this nature. The religious rites of such peoples seem designed as a defense against evil rather than as an attempt to win what is good. One writer has suggested that the fact that these spirits can be reached by such rites, and that their anger or ill will may be thus averted, shows that, after all, there is in them a certain element of goodness. In a certain sense, it is urged, the person who approaches them with these rites shows thereby that he has confidence in them. This reasoning would be correct if it were believed that these spirits could be moved to pity by the tears or supplications of their worshipers. This, however, does not seem to be the feeling with which they are in general approached. What is offered is of the nature of a bribe. The criminal does not show a recognition of goodness in the judge, when he seeks to turn aside the stroke of justice by some gift.

These early rites are often even further removed from an appeal to compassion. They are usually believed to have a certain magical power. It is supposed that if they be properly performed the spirits, or the divinity, will be compelled to grant the desire of the worshiper. Professor Roth derives the San-

skrit word for prayer, from which come the terms Brahman and Brahma, from a root meaning to constrain. Prayer, he says in effect, had not the nature of a petition so much as of a controlling force which, if properly applied, the gods could not resist. Other derivations of this word have been suggested, but the view of prayer to which Professor Roth referred is not uncommon. Those who have become familiar with the life of certain modern savages have recognized a similar fact. The savage seeks to control supernatural beings by rites akin to magic, just as by magical rites he seeks to affect the lives of men.

The element of religious faith which some have sought to save by exalting as much as possible the worship of these savage peoples is found rather at the opposite pole of their thought. The belief is often held that no sickness or death can occur except by the interference of some supernatural power. All the troubles of life are traced to a similar source. This shows a real, though perhaps unconscious, faith in the goodness and trustworthiness of nature. The world is in itself a source only of good. If the supernatural powers would only hold themselves aloof and not interfere with the natural processes of the world, there would be no sickness, no death, and no sorrow. This certainly shows a faith in the beneficence of nature, in which may be found the germ of a positive religion, though this religion, when it appears, may adopt the form of supernaturalism.

If we rise above the level of the lowest savage tribes, and reach a form of life in which at least a few, perhaps many, supernatural beings are regarded as well disposed towards man, the malevolent or harmful spirits still exist by their side. The Vedic

divinities were on the whole very friendly towards men. The Vedic hymns show that the worshipers had towards them a feeling of trust which sometimes allowed the use of the most familiar forms of expression. These hymns show, at the same time, that there yet existed for the worshipers a substratum of demoniacal activity. We find witches and incantations, and to the imagination of at least some of the Vedic singers the air was filled with demons. I will quote an illustration of this belief from one of the hymns. It should be premised that Indu represents the fermented juice of the Soma, which was the favorite offering to the gods, by which they were not only induced to serve the worshiper, but were strengthened to perform mighty works in his behalf. Indra is the god of the thunderbolt, who procured rain from the serpent demon that held it in the clouds; and Agni is the fire god, who is here manifested in the lightning. The passage referred to is as follows:—

“Joined with thee, O Indu, Indra with might swiftly pressed downwards the wheel of the sun, which was rolling far away upon the lofty peak, and he destroyed the life-force of the mighty witch.

“Indra smote, and Agni burned down, O Indu, before the hour of noon, the spirits who magically wander in house and wilderness; many thousands of them smote he with his dart.

“Thou, Indra, madest lower than all else the wicked, the accursed demon stock; ye both thrust down, ye both smote the foes; vengeance ye wreaked through strokes of death.”¹

A differentiation, similar to that which is mani-

¹ *Rig Veda*, iv. 28; Grassmann's German translation.

fested in the Vedic hymns, between the spiritual beings that were, on the whole, friendly to their worshippers, and those that were hostile to them, may be traced in nearly all the historical religions. The line, however, is not one sharply defined, for there were recognized spirits that it would be difficult to classify. Thus in the Vedic hymns we find worship addressed to the god Rudra, a being so terrible that some have thought he must have been adopted from the native tribes that the Aryan stock had conquered in their descent into India. The same divinity appears in later times as Siva, the third person in the Hindu Trinity. Though he is called Siva, the mild, yet he represents the terrible forces of destruction. The most tender expressions were addressed to Rudra, but the worshippers evidently approached him more in fear than in love.

It would be interesting to bring together the negative deities — the supernatural beings that were regarded as hostile to man — in order to compare them with one another, and seek their origin. Even the fair mythology of Greece had a place for these dark forces. When, in the second part of Goethe's poem, Faust insisted upon a pilgrimage to Greece, Mephistopheles went with him most unwillingly. He doubtless fancied that amid the beauty and the grace of the classic Pantheon he should feel very little at home. He was, however, most agreeably disappointed. He found companionship that was very much to his liking. The Lamiaë tormented him, it is true, changing their form beneath his very hands; but they attracted him, and he seems on the whole to have enjoyed his game of romps with them.

Perhaps the Norse religion offers this realm of the

negative supernatural under its most awful form. The Midgard serpent, the wolf Fenrir, and all the elements that were to be united in the terrible catastrophe in which the gods should be overthrown, impress the imagination most strongly. Here, too, we find those intermediate beings that it is not easy to classify as either good or evil. Such were the giants, who were not necessarily bad because they were antagonistic to the gods. Most problematical of all was Loki, who belonged half to the race of the gods and half to that of the giants. So fitful and capricious was he that we might fancy the two elements which were embodied in his nature to be at war within it. The later legend dealt hardly with him, and he seems to have grown more malicious with his years. At first he was a god in good and regular standing. He was one of the creators of man, furnishing the blood and the glow of his complexion. He accompanied Odin as his fellow-traveler through the earth. Even after he had brought about the death of Baldur, he claimed his seat at the table of the gods, and his claim was at last allowed. Angry at his lack of welcome, he began to revile the gods. He would attack one, and when another turned to the defense he would direct his venomous shafts against the new-comer, beginning with "Shut up now," and going on to tell some scandalous story which concerned his opponent. Unhappily what he said seems to have been entirely true. The gods turned against him, pursued him, caught him, and put upon him chains which bound him till the end of the world, when they would be shaken loose by the earthquakes, and after the terrible Fimbul winter he should steer one of the ships that were to bring

destruction to heaven and earth. It must be remembered that it was partly for speaking the truth that Loki was pursued and bound by the gods. He did not speak the truth in love, it is true, but it was the truth after all. Loki was more terrible in his children than in himself. The wolf Fenrir, the Midgard serpent, and Hel were his offspring. It is possible that two beings became mingled in the legend. If this is so, all the more may he stand as the representative of the intermediate characters of which I have taken him as an illustration.

It is not necessary, however, to go through the dark catalogue of beings whose nature may be considered more or less devilish. We find them in almost every nation at almost every time. Perhaps the ancient Chinese, during the period covered by the "Kings," were as free from them as any other people has ever been. With them the spirits representing the various aspects of the natural world filled, under certain circumstances, the place occupied among other peoples by more thoroughly malevolent beings. When the Emperor ruled justly and kept his human subjects in order, these spirits of nature were also under restraint; but when vice and injustice prevailed among men, these spirits became turbulent and wrought harm. The Emperor had thus to keep both worlds in subjection — that of men and that of nature.

When we seek the sources of the belief in malevolent supernatural beings, we find them to be exceedingly various. The idea of death has been fertile in such conceptions. The dread and shrinking which are so naturally associated with death were projected into that realm to which death was the entrance.

Among the lower peoples the spirits of the dead were regarded as objects of terror. As there is a natural shrinking from a dead body, so there is a shrinking from the other element of the living man when it is divorced from its fellow. Thus we find measures taken to prevent the spirits of the dead from finding their way back to the homes that they had left. They were sometimes besought not to come back. The offerings that were made to them were doubtless in part the expression of a tenderness which death could not wholly extinguish ; in part they were designed to secure the good offices of the departed ; but to a very large degree, especially among the lower peoples, they were designed to prevent disturbance of the life of those who offered the gifts by the spirits of those who were a little while before numbered among their dearest friends. It is a sudden and inexplicable change that takes place in the feeling of the living towards the dead. So soon as the spirit and the body are separated, these isolated parts of the once loved and cherished whole become objects of horror. The body from which the spirit has fled, the spirit which has left the body and which may reappear as a ghost, have been, and to a large extent still are, alike objects of dread.

Besides the spirits of the dead which have often been supposed to exert a baleful influence, other forms of evil-disposed beings are created by the nameless dread that is associated with death. As children through fear of the darkness create forms which threaten evil, so the sense of the uncanny that is connected with death takes shape in beings which raise to a more intense terror the fear that created them.

Other evil-disposed spirits are those which are created by certain natural phenomena. If all the changes in the world are believed to be the product of supernatural beings, then the beings which produce the effects that are the most dreaded must be supposed to be in themselves malevolent. Thus from the diseases and the external forces that work harm arise a multitude of diabolical spirits. The sun is the great bringer of blessing. When his light is hidden by what we call an eclipse, how can the ignorant savage help believing that this disappearance of the sun is the work of a demon, against whom he must use the weapons that promise to be most efficient, even though these be nothing more powerful than hideous noises that shall scare the demon from his prey?

The deities connected with the religions of hostile peoples, or with religions that have been outgrown, have often been regarded as devils. Thus the early Christians looked upon the gods of Greece and Rome as demons. So the deities of the Teutonic religion became demons to the descendants of those who had once worshiped them.

While the existence of the diabolical host may thus be explained in part by the dread of death and by certain processes of nature or history, we must also recognize the working of an imagination that has been simply stimulated by these. Give this imagination a field and stimulate it to activity, and we need not be surprised to find that its creations can be measured by no principles or laws. It may be difficult in many cases securely to discriminate between demons that are the product of an unbridled imagination, and those that spring from some special sugges-

tion of the kinds that have been referred to. This is difficult because we often know too little of the mental processes that gave rise to such spectres; and perhaps if we could trace them back to their source, we should find it to have been some outward suggestion. Yet from the very nature of the imagination we should expect that, once excited, it would work to a certain extent without rule. Thus we can hardly avoid assuming that the thousands of demons which we have seen recognized by the Vedic hymns were to a large extent the product of an imagination stimulated, doubtless, but not controlled, by definite outward phenomena; though had the Vedic singer known as much as we do of the germs of disease that fill the atmosphere, he could hardly have furnished them with more fitting embodiment. Given the notion of a hell, for example, and the imagination will take a strange pleasure in peopling it with shapes of its own free creation.

I have not spoken of the sense of sin as one of the sources from which the notion of the devil has been drawn. The sense of sin has often given to the devil his most terrible aspect; but the world of demons would seem to have been formed before this sense had differentiated itself from that of ceremonial impurity or ritualistic error or neglect.

We have thus glanced at various forms and degrees of beings that may be considered to possess a nature more or less diabolical. When we look back upon them, however, we find that if they can indeed be considered as belonging in the ranks of the devilish host, they are all demons of a comparatively low order. This expression, like any other that can be used in the connection, is somewhat ambiguous. In

speaking of the class of beings under consideration, all our terms and thoughts must be inverted. We are like Alice behind the looking-glass, where everything goes by contraries. The worse the personality may be, the better is the demon as such. The lower any one of this host may stand judged from an ethical point of view, the higher does he stand viewed from the diabolical point of view. The more improper he may be, the more does he fulfill the ideal of what we may call the devil proper. In other words, the kind of personages we have thus far considered are very imperfect specimens of diabolical beings. They have been believed to work harm to men, but from this it does not follow that they were even malignant. The New Zealander believed that his chief divinity was a cannibal. This sounds badly; but when we look more closely we see that it affirms nothing very bad of the divinity. Cannibalism in a god is not like cannibalism in a man. If the divinities devoured one another, the case would be different; but for a divinity to feed upon a man implies no greater depravity than for a man to eat mutton. From the human point of view the things look very different; but how would it look from the point of view of the sheep? To the fly the faithful housemaid might well appear to be a sort of devil. To the ox the butcher, and to the fox the hunter, might naturally appear to belong to the race of demons. Yet the servant may be a "perfect treasure" to her mistress; the butcher may be a respectable member of society; and the fox-hunter may be a parson. We see, then, that while the acts of the supernatural beings may be troublesome to ourselves we cannot pronounce upon the nature of these beings until we know something

of the motives that prompt to these acts. Wherever man stands in a negative relation to the supernatural powers, they are regarded by him as more or less diabolical in their nature, although he may veil this feeling under a decorous phraseology. This may be illustrated by the fact already noticed that the gods of one religion are sometimes regarded as devils from the point of view of another religion. This shows that it is the relation of men to these beings, and not the nature of the beings themselves, that constitutes the difference.

The devil in the highest sense of the word, that is, the lowest, should be a tempter ; and none of the beings at whom we have glanced appear as tempters. They may have brought harm to the bodies of men, but they carried on no war against their souls. Even the fact that a supernatural being performs the part of a tempter would not, however, necessarily show a strictly diabolical character. In the religion of India the gods appear as tempters. The sage, through ascetic practices and meditation, was able to reach a salvation more to be desired than any which the gods could offer. In attaining this he passed beyond the realm of these divinities. He thus brought to them no more offerings and no more adoration. It was for the interest of the gods to prevent this consummation. They therefore assailed him with temptations that might divert his thoughts and break down his purpose. The tempter that sought to turn aside Buddha, just as he was reaching the point from which he could bring salvation to men, is sometimes spoken of as a demon. Really he was a god, the ruler of one of the heavens of desire.

The devil in the full meaning of the word must be

malignant as well as harmful ; must tempt to sin as well as produce physical harm ; must do wrong, not by the way, but for the sake of wrong-doing ; must love evil because it is evil and must hate the good because it is good. No being can be imagined as thus consciously and wholly evil who does not stand in the presence of an ideal of holiness which he hates, and against which he makes war. In other words, in order that there may be a devil worthy of the name there must be a sharp differentiation between good and evil. There must be a divinity who is not merely more or less kindly disposed, but is good in himself, and would have men good ; who, in a word, is holy.

Holiness implies the possession of a conscious ideal of goodness and the love of it. The divinity representing this ideal must be in a sense supreme. The devil then, as such, could not be found in a polytheism representing the various forces of nature. He must be in the presence of a god who loves good as he himself loves evil, and who is the head of a good creation. It is obvious, however, that if there is to be a devil the deity cannot be, in the strictest sense of the term, absolute ; if he were, there would be no place for the devil. The kingdom of the devil is a hostile realm existing over against the divine realm. If the divinity were absolutely absolute, there would be no place for such a hostile realm. We may find an illustration of this in the different degrees of blackness which shadows assume under different circumstances. In the presence of the electric light shadows have a blackness which they have neither in the gaslight nor in the daylight, at least in that of our temperate zone. The gaslight

does not give light enough for such shadows; the sunshine reflected from the heavens and from all surrounding objects gives a too pervasive brightness. That there may be in the world that black shadow which we call the devil, the divine must shine with sufficient but not with too much light. It will be seen that the religions which have a place for such a devil are very few. Furthermore it does not follow because a religion is adapted to the recognition of a devil that it necessarily possesses one. The old Hebrew religion was fitted to support such a conception, but it did not develop it. In the story of the Garden of Eden, as we find it in the Old Testament, there is no hint of a devil. The notion that the serpent was "possessed," or was himself a demon, finds no justification here. The story is accounting for many things. It explains, among the rest, the prone position of the serpent, and the horror with which it is so often regarded. To it the serpent was simply the most cunning of beasts.

The conditions under which the idea of a devil, in the full sense of the term, could be developed existed also in the Mazdean religion. This religion, like that of the Hebrews, was profoundly ethical. The highest divinity that it recognized was wholly good. Like Yahweh, he was regarded as the author of a complicated ceremonial law; but I recall no expression that detracts from the essential goodness of his nature. Over against this power of goodness was placed another being who was wholly evil. These two beings we commonly call, by their later names, Ormuzd and Ahriman. These are, however, corruptions of the earlier names as given in the Avesta, — Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu. One of these

names means the "wise lord," and the other the "destructive spirit." One represented the light and the other the darkness. Each had a creation and a kingdom of his own. These were respectively the kingdoms of light and of darkness. Good men and women belonged to the kingdom of Ahura Mazda; wicked men and women belonged to that of Angra Mainyu. The world, as we see it, is the mingled creation of these two powers. Cold and snow, snakes, insects, and vermin generally were the creation of Angra Mainyu. The principle of division would naturally have led to giving to him all the evil and destructive forces of nature. It was, however, obviously impossible to draw such a line. The Avesta worshipers were scientific enough to know that they could not separate in this way creatures of the same class. The power that made the dove, for instance, must also have made the falcon. A later Parsee book represents Ormuzd as apostrophizing the falcon to this effect: "O Falcon, thou wilt cause me a great deal of trouble. Thou wilt destroy my creatures; but if I had not made thee, Ahriman would have made thee as big as the body of a man." Another difficulty that these later books recognized occurs in relation to such things as silk and honey. The silkworm and the bee are both creatures of Ahriman. Ought a good Parsee to wear or to eat their productions? The question was settled as the Parsees settled many questions, that is practically. In this case they decided that it was right for the faithful to get what good they could out of the enemy. Such difficulties are similar to those that attend all dualistic theories of the world. Our classifications soon fail us.

So far as the fundamental principle of the Persian religion, abstractly considered, was concerned there was no difficulty. Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu stand over against one another in sharp contrast, and their kingdoms are as distinct as they. Here, as everywhere, we find different interpretations, but according to the view that has most to commend it and is generally adopted, they were, so far as their past history was concerned, like light and darkness, coeternal. In the earliest poems of the Avesta they are spoken of as twins — also as Heavenly Ones, meaning that they possess spiritual natures. They were absolutely in antagonism. Thus we read in the earliest part of the Avesta: “Yea, I will declare the world’s two first spirits of whom the more bountiful thus spake to the harmful: ‘Neither our thoughts, nor our commands, nor our understanding, nor our beliefs, nor our deeds, nor our consciences, nor our souls are at one.’”¹

Ahriman was somewhat stupid. He was troubled with what we call after-wit. He would make his choice or his decision, and then look about to see what was to be the outcome. In contrast with him, as we have seen, Ahura Mazda was the Wise Lord. He foresaw the end from the beginning. He chose his course knowing precisely what would be the result. This stupidity on the one side and this knowledge and foresight on the other fit in very naturally with the darkness and the light which each represented.

It is probable that the Jews received from the Persians the questionable gift of the devil, or developed the conception under Persian influence. One

¹ *Yasna*, xliv. 2, translation of L. H. Mills. *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxi. pp. 126 f.

thing is absolutely certain. Asmodeus, who figures in the apocryphal book of Tobit, is none other than the Mazdean demon, *Æshma Dæva*, with hardly a change of name. This shows that a way was open by which the Parsee devils could enter into Judea; and if one member of the evil host found his way thither, there is no reason to think that he came alone. Before the captivity, indeed, the Jews recognized demons of a certain sort. Thus there were those beings called satyrs in our English versions. But these satyrs that haunted the wilderness, whatever they may have been, were not devils in any strict sense of the term; nor before the captivity is there any trace of the powers of evil.

The first appearance of Satan is in the Book of Zechariah. In the third chapter of this prophecy we see Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, clothed with filthy garments; and "Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan: even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Then the filthy garments were taken from Joshua and he was reclothed, and a fair mitre was set upon his head.

In this passage Joshua the high priest is assumed to be the representative of the Jewish people, or at least of the righteous portion of it. The Satan who figures in it is regarded by some scholars as being more diabolical than the Satan of the Book of Job. This view is based largely upon the fact that the angel of the Lord rebuked him. Perhaps the mention is too brief to allow any dogmatic statement in regard to this matter. The presence of Satan with

a being spoken of at first as "the angel of the Lord" and later simply as "the Lord" would show that he has not yet become the real devil.

Satan makes his next appearance in Jewish literature in the Book of Job. It is now claimed by some of the best authorities, such as Budde and Cheyne, that this book was written after the time of the captivity. It is possible, in that case, that Job as well as Zechariah may have been influenced by Mazdean thought. Certain phenomena, indeed, at first sight lend plausibility to the view that Satan was indigenous to Jewish thought. In the first place the name has no foreign suggestion. In the second place the Satan of Job is not at all satanic in the later meaning of that term. He is still an angel, or if he be the evil one, he has entered the Jewish thought disguised as an angel of light. As an angel he is skeptical, not of righteousness in general, but of the righteousness of certain individuals. This doubt may very well go with a zeal for holiness that would be satisfied with nothing less than complete devotion to the highest. In no sense was he a tempter. The wife of Job could bid him "curse God and die," but Satan was only an interested spectator. Such a being, it might be thought, could be corrupted by later mythology into the Satan of the infernal host, but could hardly be at this time identified with him either by nature or derivation.

When we look more closely at the matter, however, in spite of, or rather on account of, the facts referred to, the difficulty is to a great extent removed. In the first place, the name Satan is very suggestive. In the Mazdean sacred books Angra Mainyu and the host of evil are often spoken of simply as "The Opposi-

tion." We often find that in the story of a war written in the interests of one party the other party is spoken of as "The Enemy." We read that the enemy did this or that. In like manner in the Parsee books we read that "The Opposition" did this or that. Now Satan, "The Adversary," may very well stand in the place of "The Opposition" of the Parsees. Dr. Davidson says in a note on Job, speaking of Satan, "The Hebrew is *the Satan*, where the presence of the article shows that the word has not yet become a proper name. The word Satan means one who opposes another in his purpose, or pretensions and claims, or generally." The word is thus precisely what it would be if it had been suggested by the Parsee phraseology.

We cannot suppose that the Jews could at once admit the idea of an opposition to their God. It would take time for their stern monotheism to relax sufficiently to permit them to conceive even the possibility of this. We can more easily understand that they should grasp at the notion of a power working more or less successfully against themselves. We can hardly realize what an overthrow of their national and religious faith and pride was involved in their defeat and captivity. They must have been ready for new points of view and new notions of the relations between man and God. What was more natural than that they should have caught at the words "The Opposition," which they heard used so freely in respect to the highest relations of life; and what more natural than that they should find in the idea of an opposition, directed not against Yahweh but against themselves, some hint towards the explanation of their mysterious experiences.

Some scholars have supposed that Job, like the high priest Joshua in the Book of Zechariah and the Servant of the Lord in the later Isaiah, may be regarded as representing the Jewish people. Whatever may be thought of the probability of this view of the Book of Job, it is certain that the Jews could not consider their own situation without considering at the same time the larger problems of life with which this was connected; and that they could not consider these general problems without a reference to themselves. Without formulating any special theory of the intention with which the book was written, we can imagine the comfort and the hope which it would bring to the despondent Jew, and the sense of relief with which he could throw off at least a part of the responsibility of his situation upon an adversary at whose suggestion these calamities had come upon Israel, not as penalty for its sins, but as a test of its righteousness.

In the Book of Chronicles we find the development completed. We read that Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. In this passage he appears at once as the enemy and the tempter. The change through which the ideas of the Jews had passed is clearly seen, when we observe that in the passage before us the temptation is ascribed to Satan, which in the Book of Samuel was ascribed to the Lord.¹

We may here notice that though the notion of Satan may have come to the Jew in part from without, it came at a time when he was just ready to receive it. We have observed how the defeat and captivity of the Jews must have aroused speculation that was some-

¹ 1 Chronicles xxi. 1; 2 Samuel xxiv. 16.

thing more than a mere intellectual exercise in regard to the mystery of suffering. At the same time another transformation was taking place in their thought. Their ideal of the divine ruler of their nation had been gradually becoming more exalted. We find this exaltation already indicated by the utterances of the prophets. In the Persian Empire the Jews were brought into contact with the worshipers of another name, whose ideal of the divinity was no less exalted, was in some respects perhaps more exalted, than their own. We can imagine how these two peoples would be attracted towards one another amid the grosser forms of idolatry by which they were surrounded. We can understand that through this contact the religious thought of the Jew should become more clear and the process of the purification of his faith should be hastened. However this may be, he had reached a point where he could no longer ascribe to the Lord some of the acts which before had not seemed foreign to his nature. To the Hebrew his God had been everything. He had been the source of evil and of good. He could tempt to sin as well as punish it after it had been committed. All this had been accepted with unquestioning submission. It is obvious that, with the higher ideal of the divine being, these things should suggest difficulties that, before, the Jews had not dreamed of; and that Satan should thus have come as a relief to the strain on their religious thought, freeing their divinity from much that had begun to seem unworthy of him. Thus, though the thought of the devil came partly from without, it struck a line of natural cleavage. The phenomena of life divided themselves. What was evil was seen as the work of the evil one, and the ideal of the

divinity was surrounded by nothing that could mar its beauty.

The Jewish and Christian thought, it is true, never developed a dualism like that found in the Mazdean religion. In this latter the good spirit and the evil spirit were together the creators of the universe. The Jewish and Christian devil was in no sense a creator. He was the author of evil in the sense that he tempted to sin, and that he used against man that which God had created. While in the Mazdean religion the good spirit and the evil spirit had existed side by side from eternity, the devil had a beginning. He was himself created by God. On the other hand, the wicked spirit of the Mazdeans was to come to an end, while the devil was to live eternally. In the past eternity the lives of the good and the bad spirits of the Mazdeans ran parallel to one another. In the eternity to come the lives of God and the devil were to run parallel to one another. The devil's eternity to come, however, was to be one of suffering and shame. He is only so far a conqueror that many of the souls that God had created were drawn away from God by him and abide in his kingdom of woe.

The fact that the notion of the devil was gradually evolved has been generally overlooked. This oversight has introduced a singular confusion into the later thought of him. It has been assumed that the various characteristics that he possessed at different times belonged to him permanently and collectively. Thus the most contradictory functions have been ascribed to him. While he has been believed to be the tempter to sin, and the tormentor of the sinner, and to have a court and a kingdom of his own, it has

been assumed that he appears before God, as in the days of his comparative innocence, to bring accusations against the sinner or perhaps the saint. This view is found in the Book of Enoch, where the Satans are forbidden "to appear before the Lord of Spirits to accuse them who dwell upon the Earth."¹ We find it also in the Book of Revelation, in which we are told of "a great voice in Heaven" which announced salvation and the kingdom of God, adding: "for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accuseth them before our God day and night."² This view has maintained itself so well that we find it in the Bible dictionaries of the present day. This part of the creed, however, in regard to the devil has long been a perfunctory repetition of what was once believed, rather than something that has entered into the actual experience of the religious life.

In the New Testament the Powers of evil are fully recognized. It would be interesting, were there space, to examine the different forms which these Powers assume here (comparing, for instance, the devil of the Fourth Gospel with that of the Synoptics). I will simply refer to one of these forms. "The dragon, the old serpent which is the Devil and Satan," has commonly been supposed to be identical with the serpent that tempted Eve. That the two serpents may in time have become identified is not unnatural; but the serpent of the Book of Revelation bears so striking a resemblance to one of the most terrible of the Mazdean demons that we can hardly doubt that it is primarily the same being. The demon to which I refer is Azhi Dahaka, whose history furnishes one of the best illustrations of the

¹ xl. 7.

² xii. 10.

tenacity of life which the myth may possess. The meaning of the name is "the destructive serpent." This serpent makes his first appearance in the Vedic hymns, where he is the three-headed monster that keeps back the water in the clouds until he is overpowered by a divinity favorable to man. From this, or a similar source, he passes into the Parsee mythology. In the poems of Firdousi, who was born about the year 950 of our era, we find him existing with unimpaired vitality. Here he appears as Zohak, a wicked king, whose name is simply a contraction of Azhi Dahaka, and who further shows his identity with this monster by the fact that a serpent's head grows out of each shoulder, so that he has three heads like his prototype. In some of the histories of Persia, Zohak figures as a veritable king, the serpent's heads being regarded as symbolical of his cruelty, or otherwise similarly explained. Nevertheless, as Professor Roth has shown,¹ not only he but all the characters that figure in his story are taken from the cloud-land of the mythology of the Vedic hymns. The destructive serpent of the Mazdean sacred books was conquered and chained and kept thus a prisoner till the time of the last battle, in which he was to be slain. In the Book of Revelation we are told that "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan," was imprisoned in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, but was let loose for a time just before the final consummation. The resemblance between the two stories seems too great to be merely accidental.

We may notice one or two other points of resemblance between the Mazdean eschatology and that

¹ *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, ii. 216.

of the New Testament, which are less striking than the one just referred to, but have an interest in connection with that. In the last act of the Mazdean eschatology we read that "the serpent is burned in the molten metal." In the Book of Revelation we read that the devil, who, a few verses before, had been spoken of as "the old serpent," "was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." There is a certain vagueness about "the serpent" that was burned in the molten metal of the Mazdeans; but none the less it is a striking coincidence that the two eschatologies should each end with the picturesque spectacle of a demon serpent cast into a lake of fire. In the Mazdean story of the last things Hell is burned out so that it becomes clean and pure. In the Book of Revelation Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire.

While the resemblances between the eschatology of the New Testament and that of the religion of the Parsees are so close that they point to a common origin, it should be noted that the Bundehesh, in which these details are found, cannot, in the form in which it at present exists, be regarded, according to Dr. West, the translator of this work in the "Sacred Books of the East," as earlier than the seventh century of our era. Indeed, he is disposed to put it still later. The same authority insists, however, that it is very probable that we have in this work "a translation or an epitome" of a work that existed before the time of Darius, but is now lost.¹ Thus while it cannot be proved that the statements that have been quoted are ancient enough to have influenced Jewish and Christian thought, yet the

¹ *Sacred Books of the East*, The Bundahis, vol. v. pp. xli f., and xxiv.

probabilities are that they may have been. A comparison of the forms which the story assumes in the New Testament and in the Parsee tradition shows, I think, that if there was a transfer of mythology from one religion to the other, the original is to be sought in the account as given by the Parsees. In this, each event forms a part of a long story in which the incidents are connected; while in the New Testament we have isolated fragments. This relationship may be illustrated by an incident of a kind different from those that we have considered. We read in the Second Epistle of Peter that the earth "shall melt with fervent heat." This affirmation stands alone. Neither cause nor result of this catastrophe is suggested. In the Bundeshesh we are told that the earth shall be struck by a comet and be melted by the heat produced by the blow. After the resurrection both the good and the evil shall be plunged into this molten mass. The wicked shall be purified by the bath, though with great torment. The good shall find the experience a pleasant one. As the result of this melting, the mountains and the ice, which were believed to form the home of the demons, shall disappear, and the earth shall be left fair and smooth.

The fact that the devil, in his developed form, was not indigenous to Jewish thought is illustrated by the various and sometimes conflicting stories of the origin of Satan and other demons. According to one account Satan was created simultaneously with Eve. According to another, as Sammael, he was the head of the heavenly host and fell through an ambition to make upon the earth an empire for himself. Other stories relate how angels were drawn from Heaven through love of the daughters of Eve. Some demons were

directly created by God ; some sprang from the union of Adam or Eve with devils.¹

Although the myth of the fall of Satan was the most natural method by which the devilish element could be introduced into Jewish thought, it yet disturbs somewhat the ideal of this element. The rebel angel is not, like Angra Mainyu, a being whose sole essence is hatred of the good. He is a being who has within himself possibilities of goodness. This inner contradiction in the nature of Satan has troubled some persons in reading the "Paradise Lost." Milton, as the exigencies of his poem required, emphasizes particularly the rebellion and the fall of Satan. Satan is really the hero of his poem, and is so much like the heroes that men generally agree to honor that we can hardly help giving our meed of praise to him. An angel high in rank, with power to lead into rebellion a large part of the heavenly host, he could hardly have been painted by Milton as a being less proud and noble than he is drawn. After his fall he is still, as Milton tells us, an archangel ruined. So far is he from the purely devilish, that we are somewhat shocked when we find him doing the meaner work of his new position, crouching in the shape of a toad by the side of the sleeping Eve.

It should be noted further that the element of the archangel which is embodied in the Jewish myth, and which Milton so accentuates, shows itself as something more or less foreign to the fundamental notion of the devil by the fact that it has, to a great degree, passed out of the common consciousness.

¹ Weber's *System der Altsynagogalen oder Palästinischen Theologie*, pp. 242 ff.

In the general thought of the devil in Christendom the angelic position which he once occupied has been largely left out of the account. He has been taken as the devil pure and simple, if these words may be used in regard to a being so artful and so impure, and his previous history, for the most part, has been ignored.

The mediæval devil differs in many respects both from that of the Mazdeans and that of the New Testament. The sources from which, in part, at least, he drew his fundamental being are sublime. There is a certain sublimity in the power of darkness and sin that in the Mazdean thought set itself to destroy the creation of light and holiness. There is something sublime in the idea of the three-headed serpent that, uncounted ages ago, sought to retain for himself the water of the clouds, and then in the Mazdean belief became the most terrible monster that assailed men. There is something sublime in the conception of the archangel who dared to rebel against God, and who could lead with him a part of Heaven's host. But the mediæval devil is terrible and grotesque rather than sublime.

This later demon is a *mélange* of various elements. "He is," says Grimm, "at once of Jewish, Christian, Heathen, heretical, elfish, gigantic, and spectral stock."¹ He might have added Mazdean and I know not what beside. I have been unable to satisfy myself whence come his limp and his cloven foot. Grimm derives his lameness from the fall of Lucifer from Heaven.² Simrock explains it from an accident that happened to one of the goats which Thor was in

¹ Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie*, Zweite Ausgabe, ii. 938.

² *Ibid.* p. 945.

the habit of driving. One night as he was traveling with Loki, he stayed at a peasant's house. He struck the goats with his hammer, skinned them, feasted on the flesh, and gave the skin and the bones into the care of the peasant. The peasant broke the bones of one of the legs in order to suck the marrow out of it. The next morning the skin and the bones were restored by Thor to life; but one goat limped ever after. The gods were sometimes represented under the emblem of the animal most associated with them. As the world became Christian the Teutonic gods became demons, and thus Thor's limping goat suggested the cloven feet and the limp of the devil. The horse's hoof, so commonly associated with the devil in Germany, Simrock derives in a similar manner from the horse of Odin.¹ I have seen an engraving of a bas-relief not later than the third century of our era, in which, already, a demon was represented with cloven feet.² This bas-relief was in the province of Numidia.

The grotesque form of the mediæval devil fitted him well for the place of buffoon which he sometimes filled in the Mysteries. For this his stupidity fitted him still better. In spite of the sublimity which we may associate with the great prototype of the devil, Angra Mainyu, there was in him, as we have seen, a certain stupidity which might suggest something of the buffoon. The devil is cunning, but he is not wise. This recognition of the foolishness of the devil grows out of a robust faith in God. The devil continually seeks to circumvent Him, and in spite of

¹ *Deutsche Mythologie*, pp. 240 f.

² *Ephemeris Epigraphica corporis inscriptionum Latinarum supplementum*. Edita jussu Instituti Archæologici Romani, vol. v. p. 441.

unnumbered failures believes that he is going to succeed. With all his cunning he simply outwits himself. In this the devil stands simply as the symbol of the craft of wicked men. Consider, for instance, the arts of the small politician. Consider his intrigues, his demagogism, his corruption. Consider how he looks upon the governmental service as a machine designed to subserve his petty ambitions. All this he calls "practical politics." In spite of all his shrewdness he is not practical enough to know that the country to-day demands pure and intelligent patriotism, and that she stands ready to reward it with the highest honors. Thus the devil is always "penny wise and pound foolish."

A symbolic illustration of all this is found in the devil of the early Christian theology. He seized the Christ, thinking that he held a man, and was amazed to find that he had to do with a god. By thus overstepping his rights he lost his claim on man, and his empire was overthrown. As Peter Lombard expressed it, Christ set his cross as a trap, and used his body as a bait; and the poor foolish devil was caught thereby.

Another symbol of the confidence that wickedness has in its own arts is found in the expression that speaks of the devil as "the ape of God." This form of speech has a striking application to Angra Mainyu, who imitated the creation of Ahura-Mazda piece by piece. The devil seems to fancy that if he will imitate in any way the divine methods he will share the divine omnipotence. The ape that turns over the leaves of a book as it has seen a man turn them hardly realizes, we may suppose, that it is not doing what the man did. The devil of superstition

had his sabbaths, and his convocations at which he received the homage of his followers. So sin strives to imitate or to use the methods and the machinery of righteousness. The kingdom of the devil is simply an inverted kingdom of God, in which selfishness is the uniting power instead of love, and to the upholders of the kingdom this seems to furnish the strongest bond of union.

This stupidity of the devil, this shrewdness so sharp that it defeats itself, this sight that is without insight, this assumption of omnipotence by one who is a vanishing element in God's universe, may be associated with an inner contradiction that underlies the entire notion of the devil. He seems to be something, yet he is really nothing. The most profound theologians have insisted that sin is a lack rather than a presence. Nothing is sinful in itself. The sinful act is such because it fills the place of a higher and better act. No tendency is wrong; it becomes so only when it is left alone by the failure of other tendencies which should complement it, and, on occasion, overpower it. Sin, then, is negative and not positive. This is well illustrated by the fact that originally the devil was the incarnation of darkness, while darkness is only the absence of light. I once heard Emerson illustrate in a lecture this aspect of sin by the fact that while men use the name of God to strengthen a positive affirmation, the name of the devil is used to strengthen a negation. He illustrated the point by the familiar lines :—

“The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;
The devil was well, the devil a monk was he.”

When we consider that Goethe recognized fully this aspect of the devil, the personality of Mephistopheles,

the incarnation of a negation, is seen to be one of the most marvelous creations of genius. Of course this inner contradiction must at last become recognized. A mere negation cannot exist. Thus the devil has always carried within himself the elements of his own destruction.

A familiar proverb bids us "give the devil his due." It would be unfair to close this sketch of so remarkable a personage without calling attention to the one virtue which he appears to have possessed. It may occasion surprise when I state that this virtue is that of fidelity. My familiarity with devil lore is not sufficient to enable me to give him a certificate of absolute honesty; but, so far as my memory goes, the devil could always be trusted to keep a bargain. This was true of Ahriman, who held fast to an agreement that he made with Ormuzd as to the conduct of the war between them, though it led to his defeat. In all the stories that I recall in which a pact was made with the devil, it was not he who tried to squirm out of it. We all remember the many questionable methods which have been adopted by those who had sold themselves, or others, to him to escape making the delivery by some technical subterfuge, even after they had received the price. In all these transactions it has not been the devil that has appeared to greatest disadvantage. So far as I can recall the various narratives, if the devil makes a promise he always keeps it, even to his own loss. The serpent in the Garden was, as we have seen, not the devil, but he was performing the part of one, and may illustrate, at least, this trait of the devilish nature. By eating the forbidden fruit men did become as gods, so far, at least, as the knowledge of

good and evil is concerned ; and this is all that was promised. We have, indeed, high authority for the saying that the devil is "a liar and the father thereof." What I have claimed may be true without practically contradicting this statement. The devil could change the truth into a lie. His words could have the effect of falsehood, and still remain, so far as the letter was concerned, true. The fruit that he promised might prove to be "apples of Gommorrah," but it would certainly be delivered. The same is more largely true than moralists are sometimes willing to grant of the wages offered by sin, of which the devil is the personification. Jesus said of hypocrites, "Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward."

It must further be admitted that, while the devil has done much evil, he has also been a potent element in the moral development of the world. We can hardly realize how the abstraction and personification of evil has tended to produce a profound recognition of sin. When the devil has not been known, men have been in a state of comparative innocence ; and so far as they have done wrong they have been like disobedient children. When the devil is recognized as a hostile force over against the power of the good, what was before simply disobedience has become the act of a traitor.

Furthermore, sins in general are simply concrete. They are the yielding to this passion, the failing to yield to that impulse. So soon as their common element of sinfulness is abstracted, is put over against the separate acts and embodied in a real person, then the idea of sin, as such, is aroused as it could not be aroused under other circumstances. See, for exam-

ple, how different our thought of the world is since we have reached the idea of matter which is simply the abstraction of all objectivity. The world has thereby become mechanical as it never was before. Spirit being recognized as the element of life, we speak of matter as dead. As the abstraction of matter brings to consciousness the material aspect of the world, so the abstraction of sin, in the form of the devil, brings to consciousness the sinfulness of the world.

The influence of the devil in the development of man may be illustrated from another point of view. In the struggle with sin there is a certain help in having the power of sin set over against the spirit. To have an enemy to deal with gives point to the struggle and definiteness to the blow. While sometimes the indolent soul has been glad to throw off its responsibility for evil and put it on the shoulders of the adversary of souls, the struggles of many another against sin have been helped by having a real and concrete foe to deal with. I have no doubt that after Luther had flung his inkstand at the devil, though the wall was stained, his soul was the cleaner.

“The evil one is gone,” said Mephistopheles, “but the evil ones remain.” Well will it be for the men and women of a more enlightened age if they fight the battle for righteousness with anything of the vigor which their forefathers showed in their warfare with the devil.

IX

THE POEMS OF EMERSON

WE may find an illustration of the greatness of Emerson in the fact that his admirers differ so widely among themselves in regard to the quality of his genius. Matthew Arnold would seem to have praised Emerson sufficiently when he said: "As Wordsworth's poetry is the most important work done in verse in our language during the present century, so Emerson's 'Essays' are, I think, the most important work done in prose;" yet the lecture in which this judgment was announced was received by many with an indignant protest, not so much because they would praise Emerson more highly, as because they would praise him differently. To some he is, first of all, a philosopher, dealing with the most profound problems of thought. To others he is chiefly a preacher or moralist. While to some he is a poet everywhere but in his poems, others draw from his poetry a delight which the verses of few other poets can afford. To these the genius of Emerson appears to find in his poems its most complete and worthy expression. When I think of the essays on "Spiritual Laws," "The Over-Soul," "Compensation," and the rest, this last judgment seems a bold one; but when I think of "The Problem," the "Each and All," the "Ode to Beauty," the "Threnody," and others, I feel that it is just.

Before directly considering the poems of Emerson it may be well to cast such a hasty glance as our space may permit at his philosophy and his ethics. In this way we shall learn something of the habit of his mind, and of his attitude towards the world. We shall know, for instance, whether his poetry is the poetry of a philosopher, or his philosophy is the philosophy of a poet.

The most formal statement which Emerson has made of his philosophy is found in his early work entitled "Nature." In this he enumerates the various relations in which nature stands to us. The great charm of the book lies in its enthusiasm for nature. We shall hardly find anywhere a more rapturous hymn uttered in her praise. The catalogue of special relations which nature bears to us is but an expansion and justification of this enthusiasm. We are at present concerned only with whatever in this treatise throws light upon Emerson's philosophy. We find him taking distinctly the idealistic view of the world. I do not know whether at the time of writing this work he had been brought into contact with the thought of Fichte, but the position taken bears a very marked resemblance to that of this philosopher. The world, we are told, has no existence except for and in ourselves. It is "the apocalypse of the mind." Yet it is not the product of our own mental activity. "The Supreme Being does not build up nature around us, but puts it forth through us." Of such theorizing we find little trace in Emerson's later writings. Two ideas, however, are insisted upon in this essay which form the basis or inspiration of all his works. One is that the mind of man is open to the Infinite Mind. "Man," he tells

us, "has access to the entire mind of the Creator." The other is that nature in its completeness and its detail is symbolic. "Every natural fact," he says, "is a symbol of some spiritual fact." These two thoughts, one in regard to the mind of man, and the other in regard to nature, form the most important elements of his philosophy. From the first come that boldness and that humility which in beautiful union mark his mental attitude. He is bold to trust his thought because it springs from this infinite source; he is humble because it is God himself that sends the thought. His appeal to self-reliance is really an appeal to return to the source of the life that is manifested in every one, so far as each will suffer it to reveal itself. The second of these thoughts explains the loftiness of his speech towards nature as a whole and the minute carefulness of his observation of each slightest phase of the life of nature. One would sometimes be tempted to think him a mere dreamer; but no student of science could have more regard for the delicate and accurate study of nature than he. If nature is a symbol, we must, if we would catch its meaning, take it as it really is. Two subordinate thoughts are connected with this general one of the symbolism of nature. One is that the poetic imagination is the power by which the world's riddle is to be guessed. We may quote as a single illustration of this position the following passage from the essay on "The Poet." Emerson here says: "We are symbols and inhabit symbols. Workmen, work and tools, words and things, birth and death, all are emblems; but we sympathize with the symbols, and being infatuated with the economical uses of things, we do not know that they

are thoughts. The poet, by an ulterior intellectual perception, gives them a power which makes their old use forgotten, and puts eyes and a tongue into every dumb and inanimate object. . . . As the eyes of Lynceus were said to see through the earth, so the poet turns the world to glass, and shows us all things in their right series and procession."

The other of these subordinate thoughts is that in fact the riddle never has been guessed. Hints and glimpses we have, it is true. When some outward beauty suggests a lofty image to the soul, so far it has fulfilled its end. But hints and glimpses are all that we have reached :

" Our brothers have not read it,
Not one has found the key ;
And henceforth we are comforted —
We are but such as they."

In the poem on Monadnoc it is even implied that when her secret is guessed nature herself will disappear. The mountain is represented as saying :

" And when the greater comes again
With my secret in his brain,
I shall pass, as glides my shadow,
Daily over hill and meadow."

Thus nature stands before us as a great mystery, of which its beauty is the truest revelation and the poet is the truest seer. We watch and listen and wait, seeing just enough of the meaning of the whole to inspire us with a larger hope. Obviously this, so far as it can be called a philosophy, is the philosophy of a poet.

If we turn, now, to the ethics of Emerson, we shall reach a somewhat similar result. It cannot be questioned that Emerson was a preacher of the most

exalted type. It cannot be doubted that he taught a pure and lofty morality. At the same time, an examination of his writings shows that he was not primarily a preacher or a moralist, unless we give to these words a sense quite different from that in which they are ordinarily used. We can, indeed, only admire the pure moral purpose that controlled the life of Emerson. He gave up his profession on account of conscientious scruples in regard to administration of the communion service ; and we may find an illustration of the sanity and serenity of his mind in the fact that, so far as I now remember, no allusion to this matter, which cost him so dear, is to be found in his writings. In the days of slavery he did not hesitate to take his place by the side of the most active reformers. I am told that when he spoke upon this theme he stood upon the platform in the face of the infuriated mob as serene, to all appearance, as if he had been standing at the desk of the Freeman Place Chapel. When the yells of the crowd interrupted him he would wait in perfect quiet until silence was restored, and then would take up his sentence at the precise point where it was broken off, and proceed as calmly as if no interruption had occurred. This he could do ; but I am told that he did not like it. He felt that somehow his higher life had been invaded. Perhaps his spirit was more disturbed than it appeared. He himself says of nature : "When we come out of the caucus, or the bank, or the abolition convention, or the temperance meeting, or the Transcendental Club, into the fields and woods, she says to us, 'So hot, my little sir?'"

In his teaching he would summon us to beauty of living rather than to rightness of living. This was

not because he underrated the moralities, but because he wanted to take some things for granted. What he taught was a strong, self-reliant life that can afford to be self-forgetful because it is so absorbed in the contemplation of the beauty of the highest ideal. Not so much virtue as *virtus* was the object of his teaching. Expressions continually escape him to show how irksome he found moralizing of the common sort. He seems to feel that our moral nature is vitiated by any interference of our will. He has no patience with the idea that the man who strives with temptation is better than one who is above temptation. "Either God is there, or He is not there." "When we see a soul whose acts are all regal, graceful, and pleasant as roses, we must thank God that such things can be, and are, and not turn sourly on the angel, and say, 'Crump is a better man, with his grunting resistance to all his native devils.'"

Emerson has been called a Franklin and a Hafiz, but he was a Greek no less truly than an American and an Oriental. He was a Greek in his love of beauty, of health, of elegance, of good manners. "I could better eat," he tells us, "with one who did not respect the truth or the laws than with a sloven and unpresentable person." "If you have not slept," he says, "or if you have slept, or if you have headache, or sciatica, or leprosy, or thunder-stroke, I beseech you by all good angels to hold your peace and not pollute the morning, to which all the housemates bring serene and pleasant thoughts, by corruption and groans." This whole aspect of Emerson's nature is well expressed in the short poem called "The Park," which begins :

“The prosperous and beautiful
To me seem not to wear
The yoke of conscience masterful
Which galls me everywhere.”

Perhaps the following lines express most consciously the trait that we are considering :

“‘A new commandment,’ said the smiling muse,
‘I give my darling son : Thou shalt not preach.’
Luther, Fox, Behmen, Swedenborg, grew pale,
And, on the instant, rosier clouds upbore
Hafiz and Shakespeare with their shining choirs.”

These passages, and many others that might be quoted, show that, however lofty was his moral ideal, and however inspiring his moral teaching, primarily Emerson was a lover of the beautiful. This is not to imply that he would sacrifice morality to beauty, but that morality was with him rather a means than an end ; that as his philosophy is the philosophy of a poet, so his ethics is the ethics of a poet.

Emerson seems himself to have felt that poetry was his vocation. He modestly said, “I am not a great poet,” but he added, “Whatever is of me is a poet.” He wrote indeed to Carlyle : “I do not belong to the poets, but only to a low department of literature, the reporters, suburban men.” I do not conceive that this statement is in any sense a contradiction of the other. The very self-depreciation of the phrase “I do not belong to the poets” shows in what direction his aspiration pointed. It implies that he felt his place to be among them, even though he did not seem to himself strong enough to reach their height.

His mental structure thus indicates that he ought to be a poet. His ambition and the impulse of his genius point in the same direction. The question

now meets us, Was he a poet? To reach such answer as we may to this question, we must now turn to the poems themselves.

It is impossible to explain the charm of a poet's verse. The crowning grace, which is the gift of genius, like all life, defies our analysis. The most that we can do is to recognize the influence of certain elements which contribute to the general result. In briefly indicating, in advance, such elements in the poetry of Emerson, the first that I will name is strength. It is to put this same quality in another form if we say that there is something in the poems of Emerson, in the mingled grace and force, in the simplicity, in the movement of the lines, and in the choice of words, that reminds us of what is best in the older English poetry. Few modern poems would be found so much in place in a choice selection from the earlier English verse. An extreme example of this relationship is found in his habit of making of the terminations *ion*, *iar*, and the like, when they occur at the end of a line, two syllables instead of one, as in the following example :

"I see thee in the crowd alone,
I will be thy companiön."

This habit is not to be commended ; yet in the case of Emerson it is so in keeping with his style that it does not look like affectation. It seems as if the poets with whom he had been familiar were in the habit of speaking in that way, and he knew no other form of speech that a poet should use.

I name as a second characteristic of the poems of Emerson the fact that in conjunction with this kinship with what most charms us in the older English verse we find the best results of our modern life.

These passing years have not been in vain. They have been years of scientific investigation and theory, years in which philosophy has striven to sound the abyss of being, and in which spiritual insight, if not more clear and far-reaching, is yet, in its sweep, more broad than it has, in general, been before. What may be called the subjective world has been developed more fully, and yet the world of nature, in and for itself, has come to have a peculiar charm.

So far as this spirit of our modern life is concerned Emerson stood in the forefront. If not, in any systematic sense, a student of science or philosophy, he yet, so far as the mental attitude is concerned, succeeded in somehow appropriating the largest results of both. The most delicate shadings of the inner life, and the most fleeting beauties of the external world, are given by him with equal truth; and his spiritual life was so lofty and pure that those who knew not what else to call him have spoken of him as in some special and high sense a seer.

To the two elements that have been named, one being the strength of the old, and the other the fullness of the new, must be added a third, that, indeed, which can alone give to any poems the right to be so called — I mean the power of the imagination. The intellectual suggestions of the time do not exist as such in these poems. Everything is fused and shaped by the imagination. We do not have a kernel of thought which the imagination has wrapt in a tissue of its own devising. The form and the content are one. The imagination has re-created the whole, and made it into something of its own substance, just as the imagination of Shakespeare re-created the historical personages of his dramas, and

made them as truly its own products as are the characters with which history has nothing to do.

If after this general view of the characteristics of Emerson's poems we look at them in more detail, we must confess that the strength of his verse sometimes becomes rudeness. There is sometimes a lack of finish that jars upon the sensitive ear. No reader of Emerson can fail to regret that his lines are so often marred by imperfections. It seems a pity that some one could not have done for him what he is said to have done for Jones Very, even to the reminding him that the Holy Ghost surely writes good grammar. Dr. Holmes, in his brilliant and sympathetic chapter on Emerson's poems, gives a single example of what might have been effected in this way :

"At morn or noon the guide rows bare-headed."

"It surely was not difficult to say," suggests Dr. Holmes :

"At morn or noon, bare-headed rows the guide."

Some of Emerson's work, however, is not appreciably affected by such faults. The "Threnody," for instance, is not without imperfections, but it overpowers these by its great beauty. The "Problem" utters lofty thought and sublime imagery in a music that is worthy of them.¹ Had Emerson written no-

¹ Among other poems in which form and content alike charm us may be named *Each and All*, *Uriel*, *Good-Bye*, *The Rhodora*, *The Humble-Bee*, *The Snow-Storm*, *Monadnoc*, *Merlin I.*, *Étienne de La Boëce*, *Forbearance*, *Forerunners*, *Ode to Beauty*, *To Eva*, *The Amulet*, *The Day's Ration*, *Blight*, *Dirge*, *Concord Hymn*, and some of the introductions to the essays. There are others, more open in parts to criticism, in which great poetic beauty and music of rhythm are shown, for the sake of which imperfections may be forgotten or forgiven. Among these may be named *The World-Soul*, *Woodnotes*, *Initial*, *Demonic and Celestial Love*, *Hermione*, and *The Sphinx*.

thing else, his fame as a poet might rest securely on this. Like all great poets he should be judged by his best work. Upon how few of his poems does the fame of Wordsworth rest! We read the others largely in the light of these. The difference between the poorer work of Wordsworth and that of Emerson is found in the fact that when Wordsworth falls below his highest level, his poems, however perfect in form, become prosaic. With Emerson, however imperfect the form, the content is almost always poetical.

But though the best work of Emerson is not seriously marred by metrical faults, the reader must not expect to find in his poems any elaboration of form for the form's sake. If there are those who demand that a poet must have a mastery of various metres, that in his poems rhyme and rhythm shall turn and return upon themselves, as if in the mazes of an intricate but harmonious dance — these must deny to Emerson the name of poet. Such mastery nearly all the great poets possess, and it must be confessed that Emerson has little of it. Now and then we have a bit of alliteration, as in these lines :

“ Star adoring occupied,
Virtue cannot bend her,
Just to please a poet's pride,
To parade her splendor.”

Such examples are probably the result of chance rather than of purpose, and of other arts of metrical composition there is little trace. We find, further, little of that sweet and liquid melody that gives such

In the *Earth-Song* and *Terminus* the very irregularity adds a charm. The *May-Day* has passages of great beauty. These may serve merely as examples.

a charm to much of the poetry of our time, and which the simple measures of Emerson's verse would admit. Now and then we have a strain or two of such music, as when he sings :

"Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhymes the oar forsake."

Such examples are, however, rare.

I would not underrate the charm of an elaborate metrical structure, when it is the work of a master. Perhaps Emerson cared too little for mere form. He says of the bard :

"He shall not his brain encumber
With the coil of rhythm and number."

But Shakespeare and Milton did not disdain to encumber their brains with the coils of the sonnet, an encumbrance vastly less, probably, in their case than it would have been in that of Emerson. Yet it must be remembered that however beautiful are the sonnets of Shakespeare, and however grand those of Milton, each of these poets achieved equal if not greater triumphs in simpler measures. If there is a charm in elaborateness of metre when it is the work of a master, there is also a charm in simplicity when it is a poet who sings. In the simpler structure the beauty of spontaneity may replace the beauty of art. It may have the freedom of nature, and compare with more artistically constructed works somewhat as wild flowers compare with the products of the conservatory. We may admire the one without thereby condemning the other. This comparison, obviously, applies only to the form. The simpler poems may represent a mental and spiritual training

that is careful and complete. One of the things that charm us in the poems of Emerson is to find a man who is the product, in a special sense, of the best culture of our civilization singing with a free spontaneity, as if the elaboration of metres had not yet been invented.

I would not speak slightingly of the wonderful charm of that melodious flow, to which, as we have seen, the poems of Emerson can rarely lay claim. At the same time we must recognize the fact that there is a music of strength as well as of sweetness, and to this Emerson aspired. Thus he sings :

“ No jingling serenader’s art
 Nor tinkle of piano strings
 Can make the wild blood start
 In its mystic springs.
 The kingly bard
 Must smite the chords rudely and hard,
 As with hammer or with mace.”

The element of strength in Emerson’s poetry is displayed in the movement of the lines, in simplicity of speech, in the preference for homely words, though the more ornate have their proper place, in the fact that, in general, every word tells, and every word is so chosen as to express just the shade of meaning required. With this mastery of words goes the insight without which no great result can be accomplished ; just as, in the case of the archer, accuracy of sight is no less essential than obedience of hand.

As a single example in which these qualities are united, take the following lines from the “ Each and All : ”

“ Over me soared the eternal sky,
 Full of light and of Deity.”

What words could so well express the sky’s retreat-

ing height, its solemnity, and its glory! The depth of the insight may be seen from the fact that, as a friend¹ once suggested to me, in bringing together light and the Deity, as having a common manifestation in the heavens, the poem expresses precisely the sense from which sprang what was highest and most essential in the early Aryan religion. This characteristic may be further illustrated by the condensed and almost epigrammatic strength of many expressions. There are not a few lines or couplets that, were Emerson a more popular poet, would have passed into the common speech as proverbs. A few such expressions are :

“Beauty is its own excuse for being.”

“He builded better than he knew.”

“Things are in the saddle
And ride mankind.”

“The silent organ loudest chants
The Master’s requiem.”

“When half-gods go
The gods arrive.”

“The traveler and the road seem one
With the journey to be done.”

Not a few such lines have become proverbs on the lips of the lovers of Emerson; while one or two, at least, are not strangers to the columns of the daily press.

If we take passages that are a little longer we find many perfect pictures painted with a few strong

¹ Professor William G. Hale, of Cornell (now of Chicago), who has since, I believe, expressed the thought more publicly.

touches. The poem called "Each and All" is a series of such pictures. Without multiplying examples, the following from "The World-Soul" may be quoted for its beauty and its large suggestion :

" Yon ridge of purple landscape,
Yon sky between the walls,
Hold all the hidden wonders
In scanty intervals."

It will be hard, I think, to find in any poet a condensed description so large and picturesque as that in the first of these lines. Form and color and stretch are all there, while the whole passage is profound in its suggestions. It is this quality in the poems of Emerson that makes him one of the most quotable of poets. His words spring to our lips, taking us almost unawares.

When I said that many of the pithy lines and couplets of Emerson's poems would become proverbs if the poems were only popular, it may have appeared to some that in the admission that the poems are not popular their final condemnation had been uttered. The truest poetry, it is sometimes assumed, must possess that large human element which permits men of all grades of culture to find something in it for themselves. This assumption contains a certain amount of truth, but a truth that has very narrow limits. One must have a certain grade of culture, or must be born with an insight that is the equivalent of this, to enjoy even Shakespeare. A work may be thoroughly human and of the highest genius, and at the same time require some special fitness or discipline for its comprehension.

Many find the poems of Emerson obscure. This obscurity results very largely from their strength.

So far as the content of the poems is concerned, this consists of the thoughts and images that would present themselves to a poetic nature that had caught the fullest intellectual and spiritual impulse of his time. To the comprehension of these the poet, if he be indeed such, can furnish little help. If he utters a thought it is not simply as a thought that he utters it. As we have seen, the ideas in the poetry of Emerson rarely present themselves except as creations of the imagination. In other words, the poet deals with pictures. If one recognizes what is placed before him, well and good ; if he does not, he must study it out for himself. Emerson speaks in one case of "leopard-colored rills." When I first read these poems in my youth, I remember that I was troubled with this phrase. I had never seen enough, or had never observed enough, to recognize the beauty and truth of the epithet. I could only wait till the thing recalled the words. If Emerson had supposed that any reader would not recognize the meaning, he could have explained it and told how the effect was produced. He could have said that, given a bottom of reddish sand with shadows or ripples playing over it, we should have something that might suggest the skin of a leopard ; but in this case we should have an approach to prose. So if Emerson had explained the spiritual imagery of his poems, he might have made them more clear, but with a like defect. It is the province of the imagination to gather up into single living forms whatever is offered to its view. The horizon will vary according to the position or the insight of the poet. If what it presents be familiar, all will recognize and comprehend ; so far as it is less familiar, there will be obscurity. The

question to ask in this latter case is whether the thought of the poet is fantastic or fanciful ; that is, whether it is his private thought, or, on the other hand, whether it lies in the pathway of the race. If when we reach it we find it human and normal, then it is not the fault of the poet, but to his praise, that we have found it at first obscure. It is, I repeat, because he is a poet that he appeals not directly to the understanding but to the imagination of the reader, which he assumes to be in harmony with his own. Even the essays of Emerson were at first found obscure. One writer compared the reading of them to the making one's way through a swamp. You put your foot upon some little hummock that bears its weight, and then look about you to find a resting-place for the next step. Rarely now are his essays found obscure. Indeed, we can scarcely understand to-day the difficulty that beset their first reading. The difference is that at the time the style and the range of the thought were new. Now, thanks largely to Emerson himself, they have become familiar. In the poetry the difficulty is greater, partly because the thought is higher and subtler ; partly because, as has just been observed, poetry appeals to the imagination rather than to the understanding. To this it must be added that because the style of Emerson is so strong and epigrammatic the thought is doubly barred. So far as the expression is concerned, we must pronounce our judgment, not according to the degree of the difficulty in comprehending, but according to the fitness of the expression as felt when comprehension has been reached. It will often be found, when the meaning flashes upon the mind, that the very difficulty is the beauty of the phrase.

It may be said that without formal explanation a truer artist might so have arranged his materials that the way to the comprehension of the thought would have been prepared. If we apply the test just suggested, I think it will be seen that in this case we should have more diffuseness and less strength. Comprehension would be easier; but the effect, when comprehension was reached, would be less marked. In some cases this effect may be purchased at too great a cost, but the general rule still remains true: the greater the difficulty the greater the reward.

So far as obscurity may be due to carelessness of structure, so far it is a fault. This may sometimes be the case with Emerson; but in general the difficulty, I conceive, arises from the elements indicated above, and if there be a fault it is the excess of strength. At the same time, I must say that I speak of these difficulties rather from hearsay than from very much personal experience.

It should be noted, in this connection, that something of the abstractness that is found by some in the poems of Emerson may result from the characteristics that have just been referred to. If one translates from the language of imagination into that of the understanding, what was originally the soul of a form becomes an abstract thought; just as the *motif* may be extracted from a drama and considered by itself as a proposition of the understanding. If the reader does not reconstruct the poem with a power akin to that by which the poet at first constructed it, the two elements remain over against one another in the thought, and the poetry has become prose.

This whole matter can be best made clear by an example. In the "Ode to Beauty" we read:

“ Guest of million painted forms,
Which in turn thy glory warms !
The frailest leaf, the mossy bark,
The acorn’s cup, the raindrop’s arc,
The swinging spider’s silver line,
The ruby of the drop of wine,
The shining pebble of the pond,
Thou inscribest with a bond,
In thy momentary play,
Would bankrupt nature to repay.”

These lines may, by some, be considered obscure. To find the source of the obscurity, if it exists, let us compare them with a short poem by Tennyson, that deals with a somewhat similar theme. No one, I trust, will suppose that I am here comparing Emerson and Tennyson as poets. I wish merely to show by these two bits of composition that the obscurity in Emerson’s poems sometimes results from the strength of his imagination ; that is, from the fact that they are so truly and wholly poems.

The poem of Tennyson is as follows :

“ Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies ;
Hold you here, root and all in my hand.
Little flower, but if I could understand
What you are, root and all and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.”

The lines of Tennyson form a charming little poem. The “flower in the crannied wall” is in itself a pretty picture, while the slightly dramatic form, the hint of a personification in the fact that the poem is not merely about the flower, but is addressed to it, adds to the charm. The personification is all the sweeter because it is that of the heart and the imagination alone, without the distinct recognition of the intellect, so that it affects our attitude towards

the flower rather than the flower itself. But when the poem comes to utter the thought that is in it, then it is pure prose. If I could understand, says the poet to the flower, what you are, I should know what God and man are. It is all obviously a pure matter of the understanding, and it is therefore clear. Any one that is familiar with the great thought of the interdependence of all things, sees in a moment what is in the poet's mind. One who has not this thought is put in the way of acquiring it.

If the lines of Emerson are obscure to some to whom those of Tennyson are clear, the reason is that they appeal directly to the imagination. It is not merely that Emerson uses a metaphor, which the lines of Tennyson lack. Behind and in the metaphor is felt the presence of the thing itself, while the other poem deals merely with the knowing about the thing. The poem of Tennyson might serve in some respects as an introduction to the lines of Emerson; for it is easy to see that if through understanding the flower one could understand all nature, then all nature would be implied by the flower, and if all that is implied by the flower were demanded of nature, all that she has would be taken.

But Tennyson goes so far as to say that if we understood the flower, we should know what God is. God, then, is in the bond that is inscribed in the flower. God is beyond the realm of nature. Nature then would not only be exhausted, she would be bankrupt.

Perhaps, having reached the meaning of the lines in this roundabout way, the reader might call them abstract, whereas if he would let them flash upon him in their simple unity he would see that what had

troubled him was not their abstractness but their concreteness. It is the statement of Tennyson that is abstract ; that, of Emerson is concrete with all the vividness of the imagination.

We have not yet reached the full meaning of the lines of Emerson. They have a further claim to a preëminence, so far as the imagination is concerned, in that they emphasize the element of beauty. It is this that has written the bond upon, let us say, the flower. This element would of course be included in the statement of Tennyson, but the reader is left to supply it for himself. Let us now compare the lines of Emerson with a passage from his prose which touches upon the same theme. In this, because it is prose, Emerson attempts to make the matter clear. Even in his prose, however, he can rarely address himself directly to the understanding ; so possibly his prose may not be quite so clear as Tennyson's verse. The extract is as follows : " The new virtue which constitutes a thing beautiful is a certain cosmical quality, or a power to suggest relation to the whole world, and so lift the object out of a pitiful individuality. Every natural feature — sea, sky, rainbow, flowers, musical tone — has in it somewhat which is not private but universal, speaks of that central benefit which is in the soul of nature, and thereby is beautiful." In this extract he speaks of a certain universal element in beauty, and this throws light upon the poem. This hint the poem could not give, simply because it is a poem.

There is another element hinted at in the prose extract that might furnish a more profound explanation. The reference to " that central benefit that is in the soul of nature " might suggest what seems to

me the truth, that beauty represents in a special manner that supernatural element which is behind and through all nature, which, however, nature does not hold, so that as we have already seen, she would become bankrupt if it were required of her.

It is obvious that in all this there is nothing far-fetched or fantastic. In the expression, also, there is no obscurity or indirectness. The whole is a product of the imagination, as natural and real as those creations which move upon some lower plane.

We may compare also with the poem of Tennyson, as dealing with the same theme, the flash of poetry in Emerson's lines :

" Who telleth one of my meanings
Is master of all I am."

We must not forget that if the concreteness of the imagination is an element of obscurity in unfamiliar regions of thought, it becomes luminous in regions that lie to a larger extent within the ordinary reach of the mind that is to be affected. What light does a happy metaphor throw upon some confused maze of speculation ! The poet may, further, have a certain freedom and directness that come to him because he appeals to the insight and not to the understanding of men. This fact the poems of Emerson also illustrate. One may read his essays and lectures and be uncertain as to his position in regard to the great questions of human life and destiny. How often has it been asked whether he was a theist or a pantheist, and whether he believed in immortality ! In his prose writings he speaks cautiously, for in his aphoristic manner he is on the whole not free from a certain sense of duty to the understanding, and he perhaps shrinks somewhat from making statements

which might need qualification and justification. In his poetry, at least, he is free from even a hint of this bondage. Thus we find clear and ringing affirmations which are the utterances of his inner life. In a grand passage in the "Woodnotes" he cries :

" And *conscious* Law is King of kings."

If one demands his creed, here it is. In the loftiest of all his poems, the "Threnody," he utters himself yet more freely. His heart was wrung by sorrow, and yet was inspired by the fire at once of faith and of genius. I used the word "faith" as suggested by our common speech ; but the spirit of Emerson had risen above the region of faith and had entered that of insight :

" Past utterance and *past belief*
And past the blasphemy of grief."

Here he tells us, in one of those condensed and almost epigrammatic utterances of which I have spoken :

. . . "What is excellent,
As God lives, is permanent ;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain ;
Heart's love will meet thee again."

A striking illustration of the imaginative power of Emerson is found in the poem called "Uriel." I confess to having been somewhat startled when Dr. Hedge suggested to me that this poem probably grew out of the discussions between conservatives and radicals in the Boston Association of Ministers. The thought that caused the banishment of Uriel —

" Line in nature is not found " —

was one not infrequently expressed by this early radicalism. At first this explanation seems some-

what to cheapen the poem, but the more we study it the more do we find that it heightens our admiration. The thought that there is no straight line in nature, that the finite, pushed beyond a certain limit, tends to pass into something different from itself, is one that seems at first sight to unsettle all the boundaries of life and speculation. It was something like this which caused the Darwinian theory to be received with horror by men of science, no less than by theologians. All limits and classifications seemed upset. Emerson saw the immense sweep of this principle, as well in the upheaval that it would cost as in its positive results, and taking it out of the limits of a local and temporary discussion, he embodied it in a poem that seems to take its place among the sacred myths of the past :

“ As Uriel spoke, with piercing eye,
 A shudder ran around the sky ;
 The stern old war-gods shook their heads,
 The seraphs frowned from myrtle-beds.
 Seemed to the holy festival
 The rash word boded ill to all ;
 The balance-beam of Fate was bent ;
 The bounds of good and ill were rent ;
 Strong Hades could not keep his own,
 But all slid to confusion.”

The notion that the poems of Emerson lack passion is as wide of the mark as the complaint that they are abstract. We have, indeed, few poems suggested by personal relations, but of these, two, at least, are of great power and beauty. One is the poem suggested by the death of his brothers, entitled “ A Dirge ; ” the other was inspired by the death of his son, and called “ Threnody.” It must be admitted that personal relations were of less account in the thought

of Emerson than in that of most of those who possess his tenderness of spirit. The closest ties were regarded as a preparation for something higher. "There are," he tells us, "moments when the affections rule and absorb the man, and make his happiness dependent on a person or persons. But in health the mind is presently seen again, its overarching vault bright with galaxies of immutable lights, and the warm loves and fears that swept over us as clouds must lose their finite character and blend with God to attain their own perfection. But we need not fear that we can lose anything by the progress of the soul. The soul may be trusted to the end. That which is so beautiful and attractive as these relations must be succeeded and supplanted only by what is more beautiful, and so on forever."

This quotation suggests, what we feel to be true in reading so many of Emerson's poems, that there is another, if not a higher, passion than the personal. Wordsworth has taught us that there is a passion for nature at least as strong as that by which one person is bound to another. Emerson had a passion for beauty, under whatever form it might be found. He had a passion for the ideal, which presented itself to him, not as some barren and inaccessible peak, but warm with the shapes and hues of the imagination. In the "Threnody" the personal passion and the passion for the ideal are found engaged in a mighty struggle. The personal passion would drag him down into the gloom and despair of a great grief. Where is sorrow expressed with more intensity of feeling? Where is the revolt against the mighty power from which this sorrow had come uttered with more terrible intensity?

"There 's not a blade of autumn grain
 Which the four seasons do not tend
 And tides of life and increase lend ;
 And every chick of every bird,
 And weed and rock-moss, is preferred.
 O ostrich-like forgetfulness !
 O loss of larger in the less !
 Was there no star that could be sent,
 No watcher in the firmament,
 No angel from the countless host
 That loiters round the crystal coast
 Could stoop to heal that only child,
 Nature's sweet marvel undefiled,
 And keep the blossom of the earth,
 Which all her harvests were not worth ?"

But a grander passion is awakened, that which, for the lack of a better name, I have called the passion for the ideal. Its strength and its reality are shown by the fact that the personal passion is overpowered by it :

"Revere the Maker ; fetch thine eye
 Up to his style and manners of the sky,
 Not of adamant and gold
 Built he heaven stark and cold ;
 No, but a nest of bending reeds,
 Flowering grass and scented weeds ;
 Or like a traveler's fleeing tent,
 Or bow above the tempest bent ;
 Built of tears and sacred flames,
 And virtue reaching to its aims ;
 Built of furtherance and pursuing,
 Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
 Silent rushes the swift Lord
 Through ruined systems still restored,
 Broadsowing, bleak and void to bless,
 Plants with worlds the wilderness ;
 Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
 Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow.
 House and tenant go to ground,
 Lost in God, in Godhead found."

We have in these lines the supreme manifestation

of that passion for the ideal which in various forms inspires so many of the poems of Emerson, and is perhaps their most marked characteristic. We have also an illustration of the fact that however high his thought may soar, it never passes beyond the warm and life-giving atmosphere of the imagination.

I have spoken of the strength, the imagination, and the passion manifested in the poems of Emerson. One further mark of a great poet is a certain catholicity. Such a poet sings not one emotion alone, and is moved by no single aspect of the world. This catholicity is preëminently the quality of these poems. Where could we find a more solemn gloom than in the "Earth-Song"? Where lines more steeped in sunshine than the "Humble-Bee"? Sometimes we have the simplest and most realistic picturing of nature, as in the "Snow-Storm." Sometimes is placed before us the dependence of nature on our moods :

"Stars flamed and faded as they bade."

More often, perhaps, the spiritual interpretation of nature is given us. Who has interpreted so sweetly the music of the pines, who so sublimely the silence of the hills? Sometimes we have opened before us all that is darkest in human life. A while ago a critic in one of our reviews condemned a preacher for the blackness in which he had draped human nature. The burden of the charge was that the preacher had introduced into a sermon the following quotation :

"But man crouches and blushes,
Absconds and conceals ;
He creepeth and peepeth,
He palter and steals ;
Infirm, melancholy,
Jealous glancing around,
An oaf, an accomplice,
He poisons the ground."

The critic seems not to have suspected that he had to do with the representative optimist of the age, behind whom the preacher had shrewdly entrenched himself. Elsewhere we find expressed with wonderful power the sad *ennui* which is felt so profoundly by many souls even in this age of life and eagerness, an *ennui* so deep that life,

“ Even in the hot pursuit of the best aims
And prizes of ambition, checks its hands,
Like Alpine cataracts frozen as they leaped,
Chilled with a miserly compassion
Of the toy’s purchase with the length of life.”

At another time, in the charming poem called “The Day’s Ration,” he sings of the embarrassment of riches ; the day is crowded with goods, but our little cup is so soon filled and all that remains is lost. Most often his song is one of hope and courage. It is the voice of a spirit all the more confident in its optimism, because it had been bold enough to gaze down into the darkest chasms of life. Perhaps no poem is more characteristic of Emerson, of the breadth of his sympathies and of his independence, than “The Problem.” In this is uttered, as I believe nowhere else, the sacredness and the inspiration of temple and ritual :

“ These temples grew as grows the grass,
Art might obey but not surpass.
The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o’er him planned,
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt therein.”

Yet, for himself, he could not be one of the ministrants at the sacred shrine. Perhaps the problem was one that he could not himself answer :

“ Why should the vest on him allure
That I could not on me endure ? ”

To illustrate the catholicity of Emerson's poetry we should, however, be forced to name nearly all of his more finished poems. Each one stands distinct from all the rest. Few of them could be confounded with the work of any other poet, not from any trick of manner, but from a certain fineness of touch and depth of vision, from a mingled delicacy and strength — in a word, from that mysterious something which we can feel in the work of any great master, even though we may not be able to express it.

It is related, I know not how truly, of a distinguished teacher of mathematics, that when a student brought to him some passage in the text-book for explanation, he would simply read the statement slowly to the student, and then, without adding a word, look him full in the face. That is, after all, the only way in which one can justify a poet's claim to the title. One can only bring forward the verses themselves and await the response. Gladly would I thus introduce, on these pages, one and another of these poems that have such a nameless charm. I have, however, space but for a single specimen, which I must leave to speak for itself. It is entitled

DAYS.

“Daughters of Time the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet, saw the scorn.”

X

THE "FAUST" OF GOETHE

PROBABLY no literary work of modern times, unless we except "The Divine Comedy" of Dante, has been the object of so much commentary as the "Faust" of Goethe. Much of this critical work is worse than worthless. Goethe is said to have had as he grew older a love of mystification. If that was a fault, it has been well punished by the contradictory and absurd ideas that have been put forward as to the meaning of his greatest poem. Some of the commentaries on the "Faust" are of a very different nature, and have really helped the comprehension of the work.¹ Even the best critics have, however, sometimes failed in insight, or have followed some clue that promised guidance to the heart of the mystery, but has really led astray. The student of Goethe may feel that the last word on the "Faust" has not yet been spoken, and be inspired by the hope of contributing something to the general result.

The work richly deserves such study, from whatever point of view it may be regarded. For mere literary merit, for poetic beauty apart from any other

¹ Of the many works upon the *Faust* which I have read, the most important and interesting appear to me to be Kuno Fischer's *Goethe's Faust* (Stuttgart, 1887) and Friedrich Vischer's *Goethe's Faust* (Stuttgart, without date). The *Vorwort* is dated 1875. In the following essay I shall refer to certain positions taken by these writers with which I cannot agree.

consideration, it is one of the great masterpieces of the world. It is the only dramatic work of modern times which can reasonably be put in the same rank with the dramas of Shakespeare. Goethe, in general, is not to be compared with the great English dramatist. He once showed a very accurate perception of his position as an author. He said in effect that it was foolish to place Tieck by his side — as foolish as it would be to place himself by the side of Shakespeare. While Goethe was an objective poet as compared with Schiller, he was subjective as compared with Shakespeare. Goethe's own criticisms of Schiller tend to make one feel perhaps too strongly the difference between the two. Goethe could not, indeed, have introduced such a character as the Marquis of Posa into such a play as the "Don Carlos;" but those of his own dramas that have a historical basis do not, like Shakespeare's, present the theme in real historical relations. His Goetz von Berlichingen is a splendid character that stands out with a life and reality of its own; yet it cannot be the Goetz of history. How far it is from the original may be judged by the shock that we feel when this man of high thoughts and kindly feelings makes ready to go out to rob some traveling merchants, and speaks of the good catch that he is going to make. Of course this trait had to be introduced because Goetz was a robber knight; but the fact that the trait surprises us shows that, in other respects, the character as drawn belonged to a milder generation than his own. But though Goethe stands thus for the most part below Shakespeare, there is no other modern poet that stands so near him. In the "Faust" the Shakespearean height is at times

reached, while the whole play has a fullness of meaning and philosophic suggestion which are foreign to the works of the English dramatist. In the union of a dramatic power that is unsurpassed with this wonderful depth of significance the "Faust" stands alone in literature. It may then well be studied for its own sake.

Besides this interest which is due to it as a work of the highest genius, the "Faust" has a borrowed interest from its relation both to its author and to its age.

The life of Goethe was one of the fullest, and so far as inner experience is concerned, one of the most varied with which we are familiar. He began his literary career as the dominant spirit of the *Sturm und Drang* period. He ended, as a poet, by becoming enamored of classic beauty, and, as a man, by becoming a courtier and, at least so far as external relations were concerned, an aristocrat. Through all these changes the "Faust" went with him. Begun in his twentieth year and finished in his eighty-second, it may stand as the representative of his whole life. When it was finished he felt that his life-work was done, and that what remained to him was of the nature of a free gift. He, in fact, lived but a few months longer.

It is an interesting question why Goethe suffered the completion of this work to be so long delayed. Vischer, one of the latest and most brilliant of the commentators on the "Faust," has made this a matter of special discussion. The consideration which he develops most fully and with most effect is based upon the change in Goethe's taste, which has been already referred to, the passage from the romantic

to the classic period of his life. The "Faust" was begun in the height of the romantic enthusiasm of his youth. It is thoroughly German. The legend, the mythology, the method of treatment, are of the North. The poem expresses the boundless aspiration, the intense passion of a spirit that had, as yet, subjected itself to no limits in art or in life. As Goethe was brought face to face with the wonderful creations of classic art, a new ideal took possession of him. He felt the power and the beauty of form, and form implies limit. Form is limit. From this time his works are so different from the products of his youthful genius that they might almost seem to have sprung from another personality. In this change Vischer finds one of the most important causes of the long delays in the completion of the "Faust." This work was in its nature so opposed to all Goethe's later habits of feeling and of artistic creation that he dreaded to put his hand to it, and in fact found it difficult to place himself so in the spirit of it as to carry it on to its consummation. Goethe, in fact, speaks of it as a "barbarous composition," and expresses very distinctly his shrinking from the task of completing it. When he did undertake this work, it was in a spirit foreign to that in which it was at first conceived. The portions of the first part which were the latest composed Vischer finds to a great extent incongruous with those first written; while the second part he regards as showing little else than the weakness of old age. He admits that Goethe in other respects, even in other forms of literary and intellectual labor, had preserved the strength of his maturity; but in this, he insists, are found only the marks of senility. He maintains that

by the artificialness of the style of this work Goethe did much to corrupt the German language, and he finds in its substance much that is simply ridiculous.

While ground is not wanting for some of the criticisms of Vischer, others seem to me wholly without basis; for instance, when near the close of the second part the Chorus of Blessed Boys sing of Faust: "He has learned, and he will teach us."

Vischer finds in the words a most absurd suggestion. His only notion of teaching is that of a schoolmaster. The idea of Faust's becoming a schoolmaster in the next world strikes him as very funny, as well as that of his going to school. Even the wish of Margaret that she might be a guide to Faust in his new career affords matter for similar mirth. Indeed, in much of his criticism Vischer writes like one who is determined to find faults at any hazard. Yet one can almost pardon the violence of his attack upon the second part of the "Faust" for the sake of his enthusiasm for portions of the first. He says, indeed, in effect, that if one should profess to admire the second part and at the same time to enjoy the first, he would not believe him. This is a subjective proposition, and doubtless expresses the truth, so far as Vischer's belief is concerned. This belief is, however, mistaken. I, for one, have the greatest delight in the second part of the "Faust;" yet that I can pardon the unreasonableness of much of Vischer's criticism of it because he loves the first part so thoroughly—this shows what love I have for that part also.

In regard to the cause by which Vischer would so largely explain the hesitation in carrying on the work, it may be said that this must have had its weight.

Yet I cannot but think that here also there is some exaggeration. In one place Goethe speaks of a shrinking from taking up either the "Faust" or the "Tasso." The two are referred to in the same terms. The reasons which Vischer urges could not have existed in the case of the "Tasso," and this fact shows that we may easily make too much of similar expressions in regard to the "Faust." Many a one shrinks from placing his hand upon a work which has been long neglected, even when no such mental revolution has taken place as that which marked the development of the inner and the artistic life of Goethe.

However we may explain the fact that the completion of the "Faust" was so long delayed, and however we may judge this delay to have affected the work itself, the fact remains that thereby the work becomes identified with Goethe's entire life. It represents it in its varied phases. Some find this element of unity in it when they can find no other; and however great the charm that the work, in itself considered, may have for us, this added charm remains.

The "Faust" derives even greater interest from its relation to the epoch in which it was written than from that in which it stands to its author. It is one of the most characteristic creations of the modern or romantic literature. Indeed, no literary work strikes its roots so deep into our modern thought and life as this. The characteristic of the modern drama, as distinguished from the ancient, is the predominance of the individual. In the Greek drama we see the great social forces of the world contending together. In the modern the relation is to a much greater extent between individual and individual. The age of chivalry formed the most picturesque introduction

to this later development. In the age of chivalry personal honor assumed the most important place in social life. This honor, with its ambition, its sensitiveness, its jealousy, and its devotion, is the exaltation of the individual. In the modern drama and romance this individualism is seen under two aspects, and these two aspects have furnished a large part of its material. The first of these that I will name is that of love. Love, in its romantic sense, is the devotion of a person to a person. Two individuals stand apart from the world. They demand each the whole devotion of the other. If they are separated the world seems empty. The whole plot of the drama or the romance consists in the bringing these two together, or in presenting the sadness of their final and hopeless separation. In the "Romeo and Juliet," for instance, we have simply the glowing portrayal of such a relationship. To this all else is subsidiary. We have a background of family hostility. This hostility has no basis that can be called epic. The two families do not represent different forces of life or of history. Their antagonism is, so far as appears, accidental and personal. It is a collision that sprang out of the predominance of the individual. The tragic collision consists, on the one side, in the love of these two persons for each other, each of them being willing to sacrifice life itself rather than live without the other; and, on the other side, in this family feud, which in itself is without significance except so far as the families themselves are concerned. I do not say this in criticism of the play. The development of the individual, the worth which every individual, as such, is seen to possess, is the chief characteristic and the greatest glory

of our modern world. It is not strange that drama and romance should image this.

The second aspect that I would name is that of sin. The villain holds as prominent a place in modern fiction as the lover. One of the most important elements in the development of perhaps the larger proportion of the plots of our modern fiction is actual wickedness. This element of sin in its personal and specific sense, which fills so small a place in the Grecian drama, is thus one of the chief instrumentalities in the hands of the modern writer of fiction. Sin is simply the extreme and absolute result of the development of the individual. It is the abnormal aspect of this development, abnormal because it is excessive even to measurelessness; while love is its normal development. Sin is the complete assertion of himself by the individual, as love is the surrender of himself by the individual. This absolute self-assertion that is manifested in sin is, however, destructive of the true self. We thus find a deep meaning in the saying, "He that saveth his life shall lose it." The self, seeking itself alone, becomes destitute of all true content, and shrinks to a point.

Since the individual as such holds so prominent a place in modern fiction, this exaggeration of individualism which we call sin must have full recognition. Thus it is that sin, almost of necessity, takes its place by the side of love as one of the chief factors of the modern drama and romance. In the works of Shakespeare, for instance, there is hardly one in which wickedness is not a chief element in the working out of the plot. We need do no more than name "Macbeth," "The Tempest," and "Othello."

The "Romeo and Juliet," consecrated to the opposite aspect of the individual life, bears few marks of this which is the degradation of the individual. In the "Faust," while love is portrayed with a power that could hardly be surpassed, sin in its nature and effects is pictured as nowhere else. It is not the sinner merely; it is sin that is made prominent, without the sacrifice of dramatic interest. Indeed, to the great heightening of this interest, the problem of evil is placed before us, and the abysses of the spiritual life are thrown open. Matters that are for the most part treated abstractly, and that seem to require to be so presented, are here manifested in their concreteness. The depth to which the roots of the life that is portrayed strike into the mystery of being gives it only a more intense reality. Thus it is that the "Faust" may stand as the work which is the type and expression of the epoch to which it belongs; that is, it may stand as the most perfect type of the romantic drama.

The importance of the problem of sin in the play may, however, be easily exaggerated. The Prologue in Heaven would seem to make this the one central and essential element of the work. It is, indeed, the most salient element of the play and the one which in the prologue most needs explanation. Whether or not it is the essential point is, however, chiefly a matter of words. The problem of sin cannot be presented except in connection with some theory of the true life, just as, on the other hand, the theory of the true life cannot be presented without giving an important place to the question of sin. This latter element furnishes the most profound tragedy of life, and thus, in a drama, would naturally

be most conspicuous. It matters little, then, whether we say that the play deals with sin in its relation to the true life, or that it deals with the true life, in the picture of which sin is shown in its real relation to this life. Although these two forms of expression really amount to the same thing, in my own judgment, taking the drama all together, the latter expresses in the truest perspective the subject-matter which the poem presents.

After this glance at the "Faust," considered in relation to its author and to its age, we will look more in detail at certain of its parts.

The Prologue in Heaven opens with the hymn of the Archangels. This hymn, to which, as to so much of the poetry of Goethe, no translation can do justice, is full of the richest melody. If one doubts whether the German language can be musical, says, in effect, very truly Professor Boyesen, let him read this song of the archangels, and he will be convinced of his error. The song praises the regular and majestic movement of the heavens. Raphael exalts the glory of the sun; Gabriel, the movement of the earth, with its changes from light to darkness and the mighty beating of the ocean. Michael sings of storm and devastation, yet shows that the tempests are God's messengers, and are subject to the great principle of order which controls the universe; and then the three together utter the grandeur and mystery of the whole.

There is a striking antithesis in the song by which it is brought to a sublime climax, which is obvious enough; but, so far as I have seen, is distinctly recognized in no translation. Raphael sings of the sun that its sight gives to the angels strength, even if no

one may fathom it. In the chorus at the close, with reference to all the grandeurs that had been the theme of this utterance of praise, we read that the sight gives the angels strength *because* no one can fathom it. There is a change of but a single word, but this brings a new meaning into the whole. At first we are told that the sight gives strength in spite of its mystery; at last, that it gives strength because of its mystery. As the angels gazed upon the works of the divine creation, at first this mystery had a certain repellent effect. What they could understand gave them inspiration in spite of what they could not understand. As they continued to gaze, this mystery so profound and awful became itself an inspiration, and their final utterance is in exaltation of it.

Vischer happily calls attention to the fact that this hymn of the archangels, in which we are made to feel the magnificent harmony of which even the lightning and the tempest form a part, is designed to prepare the reader to feel that the same order must extend over the moral world, and that passion and sin must have also their appointed place.

When the song of the angels is ended, we hear the dissonant and mocking voice of Mephistopheles, who appears like the Satan of Job among the sons of God. He cannot use lofty words. His pathos, he tells the Lord, would move even him to laughter. He can see only how men plague themselves. They use the gift of reason only to be more beastly than any beast. The high aspirations of man seem to him only like the springing of a grasshopper that falls back, ever to sing in the grass his old song. When the Lord reminds him of Faust, his servant, Mephistopheles finds him more absurd than the rest. The

contrast between the song of the angels, praising the calm majesty of nature, and the picture of human life which Mephistopheles presents may remind us of a like contrast in Emerson's Sphinx; only the poem of Emerson lacks the element of mockery which gives this peculiar character to the words of Mephistopheles. Both pictures are true. The world of nature is majestic in its grand order, while the world of man is distorted by contradictions and defiled by sin. With Goethe, as with Emerson, the question pressed, Is there beneath or within this apparent chaos of human life a principle of order like that which controls the external universe? So far as Faust is concerned, the Lord is represented as recognizing such a principle. Faust, in spite of his faults, is still the servant of God. If his service is now confused, yet he shall be soon led into the light. So confident is the Lord of this inner integrity of Faust that he puts him into the hands of Mephistopheles as Job was put into the hands of Satan. He is confident that Mephistopheles must at last confess with shame that a good man, through all his wandering in the darkness, is yet, in his heart, conscious of the right way. Later, the Lord extends to the whole race of man this statement of the place of evil in the world of man. The activity of man can too easily fall asleep; therefore the Lord gladly gives to him as a companion one who is ever restless, who must, through his very nature as devil, be always active and inciting to activity.

I have spoken of the poem as dealing with the problem of evil. We can too easily exaggerate the fullness of the answer that is given in it. We must in this prologue distinguish between the two state-

ments that have been referred to. One is that the good man, in spite of faults, in spite even of sins, through his very wandering finds himself at last at the goal which was appointed to his life. The other statement is the general one in regard to the part which temptation and sin play in the world by stimulating to an activity that might otherwise be lacking. Whatever opinions we may have in regard to the matter under discussion, we must recognize the fact that Goethe is very careful in his statements. That sin is, in every case, a stepping-stone to the better life he does not say. It is only the man who is good at heart whose ultimate victory is prophesied. Indeed, in the drama itself, Faust and Margaret seem to be exceptional cases. There is a whole world where Mephistopheles reigns supreme. The revelers in Auerbach's cellar, Martha, all the superficial and common characters represented in the Walpurgis night, — these seem content in the midst of the sensuality and emptiness of their lives. Faust and Margaret are exceptional, because, though they fall into like sin, they are conscious ever of a higher and purer life. The statement of the prologue is, then, that to a soul that is possessed of this higher consciousness even the sins into which it may fall will become helpers; while, so far as life in general is concerned, the incitements of the devil prevent that stagnation that would otherwise be inevitable. The one class of spirits must find help from this power that seems most opposed to the true life; the other class may find such help.

The first part of the "Faust," at least, is probably so familiar to most readers of this essay that the details of the drama need not be presented. I shall

make only so much reference to them as is needed to illustrate the inner life and meaning of the whole. Faust, at first, appears before us like his prototype in the older legend, filled with despair at the impossibility of reaching absolute knowledge. "I find," he cries, "that we can know nothing;" and this thought consumes his heart. He had given himself to the pursuit of knowledge. He finds that this is unattainable. In his eagerness for this he had neglected the outer goods of life, and now, as the shadows of age fall about him, he finds himself utterly empty-handed.

Those fail to understand the true meaning of this despair who seek to account for it by some peculiarity of the nature or position of Faust himself. He never, says one, could have sought knowledge in the true spirit of a scholar, or he would have found contentment. The trouble with him was, however, that he had sought knowledge so earnestly. To know was the passion of his heart. To find knowledge to be unattainable was the real source of his anguish. His other regrets were but secondary. The great aim of his life had failed; and in his sorrow for this disappointment there comes into his mind the thought of the lesser things that he might have gained had not this greater search absorbed his strength. Another writer thinks that the theory of development as it is at present held would have satisfied his longing. He was seeking, it is urged, for the principle of unity of which all things are the manifestation, and this unity the development theory gives. The suggestion is worthy of Wagner himself; and we can almost hear the mocking answer that Faust would make to it. It would be such an answer as he made

to Wagner when the latter exclaimed: "How pleasant it is to see what some wise man has thought before us and then to see how gloriously we have advanced!" "Yes," cries Faust in bitter satire, "yes, to the stars." Herbert Spencer may stand perhaps as the best representative of the development theory taken in its full extent; and yet he is the foremost to tell us, though without the pain that filled the heart of Faust, that we can know nothing. From this height of knowledge he looks down into the abyss of the unknowable.

If I understand the play aright, the position of Faust is not a mere accidental or personal one. The quest of one who would be a mere knower is a quest that from its very nature can never reach its end. Mere knowledge is something that has no real existence. If the play has any lesson that it would teach, it is that one should strive, not to know, but truly to live. Mephistopheles, in his conversation with the student to whom he appeared in the professorial robes of Faust, teaches from his standpoint the same view, and enforces it by example and analysis. Logic, he urges, is such a preparation for thought as Spanish boots would be for running; philosophy shows how things are done, but it does nothing; science analyzes, but the life has escaped before the analysis has begun. The commentators have maintained that such criticism was meant to apply to one system or another. It was meant to apply to all systems. "Gray," cries Mephistopheles, "dear friend, is *every theory*, and green the golden tree of life." The devil, we are told, is a liar, but he is a liar that is very apt to speak the truth; only the truth from his lips becomes a lie. Even in the Garden of Eden the ser-

pent spoke the truth. Adam and Eve, after they had eaten forbidden fruit, did know good and evil. The knowledge, it is true, did not bring the joy which they had expected, but none the less did the promise prove true. Mephistopheles, I think, always speaks the truth, or at least what he holds to be the truth. The sentence which contrasts theory and life contains the inmost teaching of the whole poem. Of this teaching the beginning of the first part of the play illustrates one side, and the end of the second part illustrates the other. Gray is all theory, and green is the golden tree of life. Mephistopheles would have the student understand by life what the word means in the speech of the fast youth who is eager to see life. His words, however, have their truth in regard to that life which alone is worthy of the name. The knower in the "Faust" is as imperfect as he is represented by Browning in the character of Paracelsus. In seeking merely to know, the spirit seeks to place itself outside the world and over against it, that it may study it the better.¹ In truth, there is no knowledge save through life. The mere spectator can never divine what is at the heart of things. What Longfellow sang of the sea is true also of the sea of life :

"Only they who share its dangers
Comprehend its mystery."

Now and always the saying remains true that "the life is the light of men."

All this Faust is beginning to perceive. There already begins to stir within him a longing to share that life upon which, in the search after pure know-

¹ Perhaps the best statement of this position may be found in Fichte's *Vocation of Man*.

ledge, he had turned his back. He longs with a desire that is half despair for the breasts of the infinite nature, from which he may draw life that shall refresh his languishing soul.

I am not sure that this longing of Faust for life was not, after all, for the sake of knowing what life really is. Having failed in his search by means of mere thought, he would now learn by experience. However this may be, it was the desire to know that first drove him to magic. He would see whether thereby many a mystery might not be made clear.

In this also we have a close following of the original legend. The first great change in the story is found, however, in the fact that the earliest magical incantation that was used by the Faust of Goethe was intended to summon, not the devil, but the earth-spirit. The spirit appears in a flame and utters the song which is one of the sublimest passages in the poem.

Faust was filled with a lofty joy at finding himself in this great presence. He seemed to be near that infinite source of life and knowledge for which he longed. "Busy spirit," he exclaimed, "how near I feel myself to thee!" The spirit harshly repelled this drawing into a closer companionship. It answered: "Thou art like the spirit whom thou comprehendest, not like me."

This apparition of the world-soul, the rebuff which Faust received from it, and the pointing to another spirit, which he in some sense could comprehend, all this, I confess, was long an enigma to me. So far as I have studied the commentaries, they throw no light upon it. It is not sufficient to conjecture what the passage might possibly mean if it stood by itself.

No loose relation to the movement of the tragedy can satisfy us. It is so solemn and so sublime, it contains such a pointed exclusion of Faust from any companionship with the world-spirit, and points him so definitely to some other spirit, that it must have a very close and organic relation with the movement of the whole. It is not enough to say, as is often said, that Faust could not comprehend this spirit because it represents the undifferentiated whole, that he was pointed from it to other spirits, fragmentary like himself, which because they were partial were comprehensible. This does not help sufficiently the working out of the plot. It contains no hint as to the cause of the sternness with which he was repelled, nor, in fact, of the repulsion itself. Why could not the spirit, the source of all life, welcome to itself any of those forms of life which are its manifestation? This central power is the source of all activity. It is the great mother of all existences. Why should it not welcome any one of its children to its bosom? Why should it cast off any one of its children in scorn?

Kuno Fischer would make of the scene with the earth-spirit a survival from an early plan which Goethe began to carry out, but relinquished. According to this plan, Fischer maintains, Mephistopheles was brought into relation with Faust, not by the Lord, but by the world-soul. The world-soul was the controlling power of the poem in this earlier plan, and its appearance was not accidental but essential. This theory is defended and, to a superficial glance, justified by one or two other passages of the poem. In one Faust evidently apostrophizes this spirit. It is the passage that begins, "Sublime spirit,

thou gavest me, gavest me all for which I begged. Not in vain didst thou turn to me thy countenance in fire." This reference to the apparition in fire leaves no doubt in regard to the object to whom this utterance is addressed. Faust goes on to thank the spirit for all his gifts, but finally exclaims: "Thou gavest me, in connection with the bliss that brings me near and nearer to the gods, this companion, whom I cannot do without, although, cold and shameless, he lowers me before myself, and with the breath of a word changes all thy gifts to nothingness." This passage stands in perfect contrast to the Prologue in Heaven. That represents Faust as given over to the companionship of Mephistopheles by the Lord; this represents the same result to have been accomplished by the world-soul. The two views are irreconcilable. Therefore, says Fischer, Goethe must have begun his poem with the idea of making the world-soul the power that bound Faust to Mephistopheles; later he changed his plan, made over and completed the play, and wrote the Prologue in Heaven; but, in working over his old material according to the new idea, one or two passages remained in their earlier form, and these testify to the change. I have seen no attempt to explain how such a consummate artist as Goethe could have overlooked this contradiction, or, if it were perceived, have suffered it to remain. Fischer, indeed, goes so far as to analyze still further the parts of the poem in which Mephistopheles figures, and to discriminate between the Mephistopheles that represents the first plan and the one that represents the second. The latter alone is devilish. That this more delicate contradiction could remain is conceivable, but that the coarse and

obvious contradiction which forms the basis of this criticism could remain, is to my mind incredible. The veriest bungler in literature would have felt the discrepancy to be too glaring to be endured.

The contradiction, however, between the two views of Faust's relation to Mephistopheles, as these are represented in different parts of the poem, does exist, and must have existed with the full knowledge and consent of the author. What does it imply? It implies, simply, that Faust himself had not read the Prologue in Heaven, and that he knew nothing of what, according to the poem, had taken place in the councils of Heaven. Of the devil's wager with the Almighty he had never heard. I do not know how Fischer supposes that Faust ever had heard of this transaction, or what reason he imagines why he should shape his words in accordance with it. Faust had met the world-soul face to face. This had represented itself to him as the active agent in the great processes of the world. It stood to him in the place of God. What could be more natural than that he should have ascribed the shaping of his own destiny to it? The passages which have been the source of so much speculation show simply that Goethe was so good an artist that he suffered his creations to speak from what was naturally their own point of view, and did not make them give utterance to the sentiments that were suitable to his own point of view alone. They walk in the shadows and speak of what they do not comprehend. He is the providence that watches over all, and sees both the beginning and the end.

Kuno Fischer cites several passages, besides that already referred to, to prove the change of conception

in regard to Mephistopheles. He contrasts, for instance, the different terms in which Mephistopheles, in different parts of the poem, speaks of the reason. In the Prologue in Heaven, addressing the Lord, Mephistopheles says of man :

“ A pity 'tis Thou shouldest have given
The fool, to make him worse, a gleam of light from Heaven.
He calls it reason, using it
To be more beast than ever beast was yet.”¹

On the other hand, after the bargain with Faust has been struck, Mephistopheles, left for a moment alone, moralizes about the matter, saying in effect that so soon as a man begins to despise reason he is lost. In the one case reason is spoken of as the enemy of man ; in the other as his best friend. I can find here no trace of the difference of view of which Kuno Fischer makes so much account. According to the picture which Mephistopheles draws in the Prologue in Heaven, it is the intermittent following of reason that brings evil to man. It is not the spring to Heaven, taken by itself, that does the harm ; it is the sinking back into the mud of earth. In the second exclamation of Mephistopheles we are pointed to this second stage of the process. Faust had taken the grasshopper's spring ; now he was to plunge into depths into which he would not have fallen had it not been for the leap.

Of all the passages that have been referred to in this connection I find but one which would be more easily understood by the assumption of a change of plan. It is the passage in which Mephistopheles — after the bargain has been made, and while Faust is absent, preparing to go forth with him, and just be-

¹ Brooks' translation.

fore the young student enters — exults over his prize. He says of Faust :

“ He shall through life’s wild scenes be driven,
And through its flat unmeaningness
I’ll make him writhe and stare and stiffen,
And, ’midst all sensual excess,
His fevered lips, with thirst all parched and riven,
Insatiably shall haunt refreshment’s brink.”¹

It certainly is somewhat strange that, just after having pledged himself to satisfy Faust, Mephistopheles should triumph in the thought of the dissatisfaction which was before his victim. I have been in the habit of regarding this passage as implying a time in which Faust should become wearied and disgusted, so that at last he would gladly accept what the devil should give him. I do not claim that this is altogether satisfactory. On the other hand, this single passage seems insufficient to support the theory of such a radical change of plan as is assumed by Fischer. Especially is this the case when the plan itself involves many and great difficulties. The force of several passages, in which Mephistopheles speaks of himself as the devil, and of others, in which he makes allusions which imply that he is the devil, is not at all weakened by the special pleading in which Fischer indulges in regard to them. In the very next lines to those just quoted Mephistopheles speaks of Faust’s bargain with him as a giving of himself to the devil. “And even if he had not given himself over to the devil he would go to perdition.” In this very passage, then, equal difficulties face us on either hypothesis, so it may be counted out. This being so, there remains nothing which in my judgment favors the theory of Fischer. The theory in

¹ From Brooks’ translation.

itself considered has everything against it. Fischer speaks of the enthusiasm for nature that marked the time when the "Faust" was begun. It was an awakening to a new life. Rousseau had contributed largely to this awakening. Goethe was filled with the spirit of it. Fischer calls it, in effect, the revolt of the natural against the unnatural.¹ It was the insight "that the direct, original face-to-face with nature, and a life founded upon this, is the best that man can wish for himself." Out of this feeling towards nature sprang the passion with which Faust is represented as turning to the earth-spirit. What is there in this enthusiasm for nature that should lead to the idea that the world-spirit should reward Faust's appeal by giving to him a companion who should lead him to destruction? Why should Mephistopheles, a representative and instrument of the world-spirit, pass himself off for the devil? If it was by way of joke, as Fischer would imply, it is certainly a more inane, unsuggested, and purposeless joke than he elsewhere indulges in. These questions present themselves, and from Fischer's position they seem to be unanswerable. If Goethe had meant to satirize the enthusiasm for the natural, he might have written such a play as Fischer imagines; but Fischer presents him, truly, as himself filled with this enthusiasm. "But," says Fischer, "it is nature that Faust invoked with passionate longing;" and he would imply that Mephistopheles, appearing in response to this appeal, must be a messenger of nature. It is true that Faust first turns to the spirit of the earth, but, repulsed here, he seeks elsewhere. "Oh," he cries, "if there are spirits in the air, who hover, bearing sway between heaven

¹ "Urnatur gegen Unnatur."

and earth, oh, descend from the golden haze; and lead me to a new and varied life. Oh, if I had only a magic mantle!" It is this invocation of the spirits of the air and of the powers of magic to which Mephistopheles responds.

It is, then, not possible to explain the vision of the earth-spirit, and the rebuff that Faust receives from it, as a survival from an earlier plan of the poem, at least not from the plan which Fischer suggests. At the same time its prominence does not allow us to regard it as a meaningless episode. Its solemnity shows that it fills an important position in the development of the play. We have now to seek its true meaning.

The view which I have already stated, of the significance of the opening of the poem, makes easy the interpretation of the passage that we are considering. Faust had sought to know. He was a spectator of the universe. He wanted to see and to understand. It was because more knowledge was found by him to be impossible that he was in despair. He felt himself outside of the great world to which he belonged. He would draw from the breasts of nature life, but he knew not where to find them. He turned to magic to see if in this manner the end for which he longed could not be attained. There appeared to him that spirit which is the active principle of the world. He saw before him the very heart of things, from which could come the solution of all mysteries. "Busy spirit," he cried, "how near I feel myself to thee!" The word used by Faust suggests the contrast between himself and the spirit which he addressed. The spirit was busied. Its very essence was labor and accomplishment. It was simply the

Doer. It existed only for the accomplishment of the true ends of the universe. In the great work which formed its being Faust had no part. We have the Knower and the Doer face to face. It is a contrast that may be compared to that in Browning's "Paracelsus," in which one who lived to know and one who lived to love stand over against one another, and we see the imperfection of each. Here we are made to feel the imperfection of Faust alone. The work of the Doer was moving on in magnificent accomplishment. The attempt of the Knower had proved an utter failure. The search for truth as something apart from life had ended in negation. Life to Faust seemed hollow and empty. "Thou art like," cried the world-soul, "the spirit thou comprehendest, not like me." The world-soul represented the positive and solid reality of things. In the negative state which Faust had reached he had no kinship with this soul. The spirit he resembled was the spirit of negation. This he could comprehend. The cynicism, the mockery of Mephistopheles were to him as a familiar speech. Mephistopheles became to him a companion that he could not do without. His own secret thoughts and longings were by him brought into consciousness and helped towards their realization. Thus the appearance of the world-soul, its rejection of Faust, its pointing him to a companionship more congenial, all fill that place in the working out of the plot which the dignity of the scene requires.

There is another aspect of the relation of Faust to the world-spirit which must not be overlooked. He was not only the disappointed seeker after abstract knowledge. In his disappointment he had begun to long for life. Why did not this longing

bring him nearer to the working principle of the life of things? The words "busy spirit" still suggest the relation between the two. Failing to know, Faust begins to long for enjoyment. He would be the receiver, not the giver. He would draw in life, which he had no care to communicate. He would be an end, not a means. In his thought of life he stands as much alone, over against the world, as in his thought of knowledge. Over against the busy spirit he is still the idler. He has not the faith in the great activities of the world that would make him long to share them. Mephistopheles, with his isolation and his negations, is still the being that he can comprehend. This is seen in the readiness of Faust to curse the world when it failed to give him what he demanded of it.

The words of Faust, as he feels the bitterness of his repulse, are suggestive: "Not like thee? like whom, then? I, the image of divinity, and not even like thee!" Faust is conscious that he is in some sense the image of God, and thus he cannot understand his rejection by one of God's instruments, by the power that shapes the living garment of divinity. The phrase reminds us how different is the attitude toward Faust of the Lord, as represented in the prologue, from that occupied by the world-soul. The difference results from the fact that the one was the Lord, and the other was merely his instrument. The instrument is finite. It is a part. It can comprehend nothing beyond itself. It must do its work, no matter what stands in its way. The Lord is infinite. He is not busied. Himself the source of all activity, his own repose is undisturbed. He is not partial or one-sided. He has a place for all. He that is

striving to know and he that is striving to do have each his recognition, for he sees that great unity of life and knowledge which is the goal towards which each is aiming. Even the newly wakened hungering of Faust, which now seeks only selfish satisfaction, he sees will not be appeased till it has sought and found more worthy food. Thus while the world-soul rejects Faust with scorn and points him to that world of negation which was his temporary resting-place, the Lord still stretches over him his watchful love, and knows that these negations are but a stage in his endless pilgrimage.

At the moment when Faust's whole nature is in tension, when hope and joy, pride, disappointment, and a bewildered shame are struggling together in his heart, comes the knock of Wagner. This character has, I think, had scant justice done it by the critics, and its place in the drama has not been quite clearly recognized. Wagner, in fact, represents the shell which Faust had just cast off. He holds fast to all the hopes and faiths which Faust had found to be delusive. He is the scholar who has implicit faith in scholarship; the student who believes that, if he studies long enough and rightly, he will come at last to some real knowledge; that in fact bit by bit real knowledge is being attained by him. It is the object of the play to make such a position ridiculous, and some degree of caricature is introduced into the picture. The caricature is slight, however, and I have sometimes wondered how many of the critics who laugh at Wagner have really a secret sympathy with him. If he is literal and prosaic and narrow-minded, all this is the natural and logical result of the faith that is the inspiration of his life; namely, that in

books is to be found the source of real knowledge. He is one who thus takes the world at second hand. He expects one day to preach, but he knows nothing of life; so he thinks that the player might teach him how to reach the hearts of men. As he would thus get into practical relations with the world through the art of the player, so books take with him the place of the living realities of the universe. The kinship of which I have just spoken, between Faust and Mephistopheles, may be illustrated by the fact that Faust uses with Wagner precisely the same sort of speech, half argument and half mockery, which Mephistopheles uses with the student who had come, full of faith, to the university as the source of all knowledge.

Wagner departs and Faust is again alone. It was easy to show the folly and blindness of the book-worm. Faust sees through the delusion of Wagner. That is a stage of development that he has already passed through. This, however, is gone and there is nothing to take its place. He was disgusted by the entrance of this honest-hearted student, but now that he is gone he feels himself none the happier. He is alone in the great emptiness of the universe. He finds nothing solid which his hand can grasp, or upon which his foot can rest. He is overwhelmed with despair, and seeks the flask by the aid of which he may leave this earthly scene, which has nothing for him, no matter into what new realms of untried evil his soul may enter. As he raises the fateful cup to his lips, the Easter-song breaks upon his ear, and checks his hand. This song, the first of those melodies of wonderful beauty which Goethe scatters through his work, does not touch the heart of Faust

so as to awaken it to new faith and hope. It speaks to him not of the future or of the present, but of the past. It brings back the sweet peace of his childhood. He recalls what it was simply to live. Then the great breach between knowing and being had not opened. Then he was not looking at the world from the outside; he was himself a part of it. He rested on the bosom of nature as only a little while before he had rested upon his mother's breast. This sense of life, even though it is now only a memory, comes to him with a power of salvation. He has become again for the moment as a little child, and there is the possibility that he may yet enter into the kingdom of heaven.

In the next scene we are taken out of the study, with its faiths and its despairs, and brought into that world of life which finds in the study its reflection. This scene, in which one group after another passes us in lively or varied conversation, is of its kind one of the most pleasing and realistic that the drama affords. I dwell upon it, however, merely to notice an interesting literary resemblance. Wagner, who is with Faust, shrinks from the noise and confusion, from the dance and the merry-making. He is willing to be there in such respectable company as that of Faust, but would not willingly trust himself there alone. Faust, with his larger spirit and freer thought, justifies his sympathy with these people in the hour of gladness which has come to them in the midst of the weariness and constraint of their every-day life. There is a singular parallel to this in the history of Confucius. He, too, found himself with a disciple in a like scene. It was the joy of the harvest festival, and the disciple thought that less merry-making and

more prayers of thanksgiving would be better. Confucius showed the same sympathy with the life of the people that we find in Faust. He explained to his disciple that their joy was their thanksgiving. It would be interesting to know if Goethe was familiar with this scene in the life of the Chinese philosopher. In any case the resemblance is very striking and suggestive.

Never did Faust appear more interesting than in this ramble. His sympathy with the people and their joys, their gratitude to him for his service, which he regarded as purely imaginary, the poetic form which his unrest put on in the longing to follow the setting sun in its endless course, and thus to see the day ever awakening to a fresh life, all this throws about his nature an air of sweetness and greatness that we hardly find elsewhere. Yet it was in the course of this very stroll that he came in contact with the dark power that was for a while to control his life.

Mephistopheles is one of the most marvelous creations of human genius. It is marvelous because in it that is a fact which in advance we should have said to be an impossibility. Mephistopheles represents the central element of sin; but sin in the thought of the poet is wholly a negation. In Mephistopheles, then, we have that paradox, an embodied negation. The work is really performed. There is in Mephistopheles no trace of that which gives substance to other lives. The only principle which is active in him is that of destruction. At the same time, he is one of the most real of the characters of fiction. It is only our philosophy which teaches us that he is at heart a nonentity. Further, this power of destruction as thus embodied, instead of being harsh and

fierce, is almost genial and has a fascination peculiar to itself. This fascination is not like that which we feel in respect to the Satan of Milton. The hero of Milton's epic — for such we may call him — was an archangel fallen. We find in him still something of the archangel. There is a certain nobility about him which, under the circumstances, is sublime. Mephistopheles possesses no vestige either of nobility or of sublimity. He is never the hero. What gives to him a personality, and a personality that fascinates, is his wit. The wit of Mephistopheles is absolute. It is free from any other element. It is never humor. It is never, in the strict sense of the word, bitter. Humor on the one side and bitterness on the other imply a certain real or possible substance to the world. They imply on the one side a certain kindness, or on the other a certain disappointment. The wit of Mephistopheles is a simple play as of a lambent flame. He finds contradictions everywhere; and the greatest of contradictions is the manifestation of anything like earnestness in this empty world. All enthusiasm, all that is heroic, all that is despairing, excites only his mirth. Such was the companion with whom Faust was to be bound in the closest intimacy.

The fact that Mephistopheles announced so distinctly as he did to Faust his nature and his plans has excited some surprise. We might explain it as an archaic touch wholly in keeping with the play, according to which the character announces himself as he enters. We may recall what I have already remarked, that the devil is a truth-speaker. In the play of Marlowe and in Widman's "Life of Faust" Mephistopheles is just as frank and outspoken. In

truth, however, the matter needs little explanation. In the mood in which Faust was, no credentials could have been more welcome than those which Mephistopheles brought. He found in him the very companion that he needed. The earth-spirit was right: here was one whom he could comprehend, and whom in his present condition he resembled. The utter unbelief of Mephistopheles seemed but the echo to his own faithlessness. The aim of Mephistopheles, which would content itself with nothing else but the complete destruction of the universe, fell in completely with his own view of things. To him, also, the world had no worth that should reserve it for a better fate. Thus he greeted Mephistopheles as the sufferer greets a physician who he feels understands his case. He poured into his ear all his *ennui* and his despair; and when Mephistopheles reminded him that on a certain night he had not drunk a brown juice, he uttered a curse upon whatever there may be of love and nobility in life, ending with the cry, "A curse upon hope, a curse upon faith, and above all, a curse upon patience!"

So far in the connection between Faust and Mephistopheles we have been following what might have been the old story of a compact with the devil. According to the familiar course of things, the devil should bind himself to serve man upon the earth, and the man should pledge his soul to the devil after death. This was indeed the pact which Mephistopheles proposed. The story, however, at this point, leaves the beaten track, and enters upon a course which will lead through regions of thought that are wholly foreign to the original legend. Faust made a change in the bargain by which its whole nature was

transformed. If ever Mephistopheles can bring to Faust contentment, if he ever comes to such a point that he can say to the moment, "Stay, thou art so fair," then he is willing to fall forever into the power of the devil. The bargain is one that hardly needed to be made. The soul that is content with lower joys shows thereby that it has no hungering for the higher. So long as this hungering remains, the soul is free from the grasp of evil. Such dissatisfaction is the pain which shows that in spite of disease, life — and with life hope — remains.

Mephistopheles seems not to have noticed this change in the terms of the bargain, or, if he did, he was so sure of victory that he did not think it worthy of remark. He, it must be remembered, had no faith in the soul. Nothing was more amusing to him than anything that showed any belief in its existence. Whatever was not of the earth earthy was either hypocrisy or delusion. He was going to bring before Faust such solid and tangible joys that all his romantic longings would disappear like the visions of a night.

Kuno Fischer continually speaks of the agreement of Faust with Mephistopheles as a wager, and wonders that Faust was not on his guard against the possibility of losing it. It was not a wager; it was a bargain. Faust really hoped that Mephistopheles would perform the work, and was ready to pay for it the full price.

We here enter upon the second stage in the history of Faust. The first was that in which he sought for knowledge as apart from life. This attempt wholly failed. He found himself in a world of emptiness. That world he has now left. He has passed over to its opposite, and will now begin to

live. He enters a world that is fresh and real, and is to seek what this, in its turn, has to offer him. As before he would have all knowledge, so now he would have the whole of life. Whatever is allotted to all humanity he would experience in his inner self. He would heap the weal and the woe of all mankind upon his own bosom, and thus broaden himself to itself. Mephistopheles explains to him that this is impossible. It would be to bring together the most opposite qualities — magnanimity and cunning, the wildness of youth and the calmness of age. Thus already was Mephistopheles at his wits' end. The first wish of Faust it was beyond his power to gratify. He does not suspect, however, that this shows that he is dealing with an element that is vaster than his calculation. Nothing less than the absolute life, the life that is common to all, will satisfy Faust. This infinite longing is the expression of an infinite nature. Faust has not yet learned how this longing is to be met. He thinks that it is by expanding his individual self into the infinite that his end is to be gained. This is the first experiment that he is to make in the world of life. He will later discover his mistake, and will find that there is another and a better way to accomplish his purpose. At present he simply feels the force of the reasoning of Mephistopheles, and humbled and disappointed he goes forth to take whatever the devil has to offer him.

How little Mephistopheles understood his man may be seen by the first attempt which he made at his amusement. He took him into Auerbach's cellar. We find ourselves in a scene of merrymaking which forms the sharpest contrast to the former life of Faust. It is a wonderful picture, brilliant through

its very stupidity. Nothing could be more inane, yet the very inanity is a triumph of the poet's art. We have pointless jokes and songs, the moral of which, if there be one, is hardly perceptible through the silliness within which it is wrapt. This is the first selection of dainties which Mephistopheles has to offer. We are not surprised that Faust exclaims in the midst of it, "Now I should like to go."

Mephistopheles evidently thinks that the trouble is that Faust is too old. If he were only a little younger he would feed joyously on the devil's pasture-land. So we have the scene in the witch's kitchen. This scene, of course, has to do only with the machinery of the play. Fantastic, grotesque, absurd, stimulating at every point our curiosity to know whether, beneath the nonsense, there is any grain of sense, tantalizing us with suggestions that, when we fairly look at them, seem after all pointless, or with follies that we suspect are not quite so stupid as they seem, it has a charm which only the highest genius could impart. The witch brews a drink which restores to Faust his youth.

We here begin what might almost be considered as a new play. What goes before has little more direct connection with that which follows than the Prologue in Heaven has with the whole play. With the exception of one or two hits by Mephistopheles, as where he tells Faust that the Professor still sticks in his body, there is no apparent identity between the Faust of the earlier part of the play and the Faust of the later. The unity is purely ideal. The second Faust is a gay youth not without the germs of nobility of soul. This remark is important in regard to the relation between the first and second parts of the poem, and I shall have occasion to refer to it again.

Faust being thus made over, Mephistopheles thought that he had him wholly in his power. "With this drink in your body," he murmured, "you will see a Helen in every woman." Here again he showed that he did not know his man, and that he had no conception of the spiritual element in life. Faust did not wait his move. We shall see later to what sort of company Mephistopheles would have brought him. Faust chose for himself. He chose the last person under the last circumstances that Mephistopheles would have wished. He met Margaret on her way from church, and his whole future was colored by the meeting. He saw her only as a beautiful woman. Though he was doubtless hardly conscious of it, the beauty that charmed him was that of a beautiful body transfigured by a beautiful soul. Without the spirit that gave to it its special charm the beauty would have had little power over him.

So much has been written about Margaret that one can hardly venture to hope to add anything fresh to the theme. If, however, there has been an error in regard to her, it is to be found in the tendency to make of her too much of a heroine. The stately dame that figures in the opera of Gounod is hardly less like the original of Faust's play than the Margaret who is presented in some of the eloquent criticisms of the poem. The charm of Margaret is in her simplicity and innocence, in her childish piety, and in the self-forgetful goodness of her heart. Except, perhaps, in one or two of the songs that are put into her mouth, she does not pass beyond the limits of the class to which she belongs. It was a fine touch by which, after her long conversation with Faust in Martha's garden — a conversation in which

she had been the chief talker, pouring out all her history with the simple garrulousness of a child — she is made to say, “Thou dear God, how such a man can think of everything! I could only stand ashamed before him, and say to everything, ‘Yes.’” This shows the most complete lack of vanity and of self-consciousness. Of all that she had said she could remember nothing. She thought that she had said nothing; all that she could remember was the presence which had overmastered her spirit. A like unconsciousness we find in her religion as she sat in church — half child’s play, half God in her heart.

The purity of her nature shows itself in her anxiety about the religion of Faust. She questioned him, and he answered with that sublime creed of the philosopher which has become so renowned. Vischer has well indicated the lack in this creed. There is no recognition of the moral element of the great power that is in and through and over all. God is the good. Had Faust really felt this and uttered it in his statement of his faith, the interview might have had another ending. As it was, this vague though sublime utterance of Pantheism only smoothed the way for the descent into the gulf that yawned beneath Faust and Margaret. Margaret knew that Faust put the matter in a different way from that used by the Priest. The words, however, expressed a lofty faith in something, and she had faith in Faust, and was content.

Such was the simple-hearted maiden for whose ruin Hell and Earth and Heaven seemed to unite. There were the schemes of Mephistopheles, the devil incarnate. There was the neighbor, Martha, cut out to be his instrument. There were jewels; and, above

all, there was Faust, with the nobility that his sin and his passion could not wholly obscure. It was this lofty nature of Faust that was the representative of Heaven in the strife. It was this that won Margaret's heart, just as it was the sacred innocence of Margaret that had won the heart of Faust. These elements of a higher nature were strong enough to bring them together in heartiest love. They were not strong enough to control the course which this affection took. They even kindled the flames of the passion that was to destroy Margaret and blacken Faust.

When Faust bade Mephistopheles procure Margaret for him, the latter confessed his inability. It is not necessary to suppose with Vischer that he pretended to find difficulty merely to whet Faust's appetite. Rather must we understand that here as always he spoke the truth. Margaret did not belong to his sphere, and over her he had no control. This was only the second demand that Faust had made of him. Neither of these demands could Mephistopheles meet. When Faust took the lead, Mephistopheles was forced to confess his weakness. When he himself took the lead, Faust was disgusted and would not follow.

The struggle in Faust's heart is portrayed with terrible reality. He saw the evil that he was bringing upon Margaret, and fled. Mephistopheles followed him and strove to bring him back to complete the work of destruction. Here he was obliged to bring into play forces which for the most part he ignored. Nothing would move Faust but the picture of the sad loneliness of his beloved. The better elements of his nature were here again made to accomplish the

work of the lower. It was the divine element within him entangled in the meshes of the sensual.

In the Walpurgis night Mephistopheles showed what he had to offer when left to his own devices. In this we have, under the vivid picturing of the witches' Sabbath, represented by symbol or illustration, whatever is false and empty, selfish, sensual, and devilish in human life. We are taken into the devil's realm. We see his creatures separated from whatever of nobler and purer may in common life be mingled with them, and sometimes half conceal them. This is the signification of the Walpurgis night; and its place in the drama is thus seen to be a central and essential one. Here again Faust was not at home. When he left the fair witch with whom he was dancing, Mephistopheles expressed his surprise. Faust said that it was because a red mouse had of a sudden leaped out of her mouth. This may symbolize the vulgarity and sensuality by which Faust was simply disgusted. He, too, might fall for a moment into sin, but, as we have seen, the active power was, after all, the spirit which was manifested in the flesh. Suddenly, in the midst of the wild scene, appeared, in a tragic contrast hardly equaled, the form of Margaret with pallid face, and with a red line about the throat that suggested the headsman's axe. Thus was the conscience of Faust awakened in the midst of the revels which had already given him nothing but disgust.

The scene in the prison cell, with which the first part of the "Faust" closes, is of wonderful power. The madness of Margaret, in which she was haunted by the sin which she had unconsciously or in frenzy committed; the human love and the pity that made

themselves felt through her madness; the love, the despair, the fruitless strivings of Faust, and the cold cynicism of Mephistopheles, all unite to make a picture the equal of which has hardly been given us by Shakespeare himself.

Here we see again, at the last, the mistake which Mephistopheles has made all along in ignoring the higher spiritual realities. He has seen nothing but flesh and sense, sin and penalty. Of love and the inspiration which it brings he has had no conception. He heard nothing of the spiritual harmonies which accompanied the clangors of the earth. Now, at last, when the sin was committed and the retribution had fallen, he fancied that his victim was wholly in his power; but here also he had started into action spiritual forces which were mightier than suffering and sin. There is a power in repentance which lies outside of all human calculation. Often men have no faith in the higher spiritual realities, no faith in the great law of righteousness, until by wrongdoing they have hurled themselves against these eternal realities. With repentance or remorse comes a consciousness of that eternal law against which they had sinned, but in the existence of which they had before possessed no faith. Thus sin itself may contain the elements of the better life. This is the paradox of life. It is a truth that is considered dangerous; all truth is dangerous. One who would play with life is wounded by any verity which he may seek to use as a toy. Mephistopheles thought that, as Margaret died in shame, his victory was won. "She is condemned," he cried; but a voice from on high answered, "She is saved." Mephistopheles calls to Faust, "Come with me," and the two vanish together;

f but a voice dying away in the distance calls to him, "Henry, Henry." It is the voice of Margaret. With this the first part of the play closes. Faust is left between the two voices. On the one side is the devil, who would drag him into new sin; on the other is Margaret, who calls to him from the spiritual heights of the new existence into which she had entered. This close of the play — for the first part may be considered as a play in itself — seems, at first sight, to leave undecided the wager which the Prologue in Heaven set before us. Faust is left between the forces of good and evil which seek to control his life. The result is not, however, so void of significance as might appear. Mephistopheles had employed his arts. So far as his real purpose was concerned they had been unsuccessful, although to outer seeming they had wrought all which he had designed. We have seen that the soul may preserve something of its integrity even in the midst of sin. We have seen that sin itself may be the inspiration to a higher life. It is much that we have seen this, even though the future of Faust may remain still uncertain. The cry of Margaret, which ends the piece, holds out a hope that he will at some time follow her into the better life which she has attained.

We thus see that the first part of the play has a certain completeness. At the same time we see that there is space for a second part, in which the victory of Faust himself shall be presented to us. To this second part of the play we will now turn.

In the opening of the second part, Faust appears lying upon a bed of roses. Ariel and his attendant fairies hover about him and sing to him songs of wonderful sweetness. The scene is ordinarily spoken

of as symbolizing the healing and purifying power of nature. Doubtless this is to some extent true. It really stands, however, in antithesis to the scene in the witch's kitchen. Here also is an element of magic. The fairies bring to him a draught of "Lethe," which washes away all memory of his past life. The magic is as real as that of the witch's kitchen, though from the nature of the case it is beautiful and exalting in its form, instead of being grotesque and hideous. Faust awakes to a new life. We find as little trace of the tragic history which has thus far occupied us as we find in the period just closed traces of the Professor's study and striving. Here as there the interest that carries us forward is ideal rather than personal.

Faust watches the light as it creeps down the mountain-side, until at last the sun appears above the summit and dazzles him with its brightness. He turns his back upon the sun and sees its glory reflected in the rainbow that hovers over a plunging cataract.

He finds in this experience a hint and symbol of the true method of seeking the truth. Not in its absolute unity, which no man can comprehend, which by its very sublimity blinds the eye that would gaze upon it, is to be found the object of his contemplation. This absolute truth is to be studied as it is reflected in human life. In this reflection we find life itself, and to this we turn.

The peculiarity of my interpretation of the second part of the "Faust" is that it regards the poem as symbolizing chiefly the development of history, instead of that of the individual. This has been more or less recognized by others, but, so far as I remem-

ber, only by the way. Of course, as the story is in the form of the life of an individual, this appearance must be preserved. There must be enough of this to give consistency to the whole.

The life at the court represents in its extreme form the devil's world—the world of worldliness, above which humanity is eventually to rise. In this Mephistopheles is at home, and he aids in its degradation. This is the starting-point of the biographical side of the poem, and the central one so far as the historical side is concerned. From this we pass to the great symbolical representation of past and future. First comes the masquerade. This gives us the picture of the rise and fall of the state in its merely political and social aspect. As it goes on, we find that it is Rome that is especially taken as the representative of this.

The closing scenes of the play belong to the individual life of Faust. In truth, they belong no less to the symbolic part. In these closing scenes both portions of the play find their consummation. The reader who will keep in mind the distinction between these elements in the course of the play, and their blending at its close, will have gone far towards a clear comprehension of the whole.

This is, however, obviously but an approach to such comprehension of the play. It is not the comprehension itself. This requires a clear idea of what is signified by the parts of the play that I have called symbolical. These form, indeed, to a very large extent, the substance of the second part of the "Faust," and everything depends upon getting the right conception of these.

The other method of explanation would make these

symbolisms refer to the individual experiences of Faust. He went into politics; he studied art; and these stages of his development are presented in this grand and indirect way. This method has been most generally followed by the commentators.

My method would make these symbolic representations wholly transcend the limits of Faust's personal experiences. They place before us the development not of the individual but of the race. We have certain great and typical moments in the history of humanity presented under the only form in which this was possible, that of symbolism. This latter method of interpretation I regard as unquestionably the true one. It alone gives a meaning which is worthy of the sublime machinery. Even under the guidance of this clue there remain many difficulties unsolved, but a general harmony is obtained; the great masses fit themselves together, and the reading of the play becomes a delight and an inspiration. From this point of view we can understand what Goethe meant by affirming that the second part of the play was objective, while the first was subjective. The first gave the inner development of a single spirit; the second gives the great movement of the history of man.

I said that the closing scenes of the play form the consummation of both the elements of which the second part consists. We can now see the possibility of this. These closing scenes represent the final triumph and redemption of Faust. The redemption of the individual, however, can be nothing peculiar to him. Under the same form may be presented the highest moment in the life of the individual and in the history of the race. The true life of a heroic soul only anti-

icipates the slower movement of the great body of which this single spirit is a part.

This I conceive to be the content of the masquerade, in which the emperor and his courtiers, including Faust and Mephistopheles, take part. We first have the elements, good and bad, that enter into civilization, all of which show plainly the marks of art or artifice, as distinguished from the simplicity of nature. At last all these are succeeded by a magnificent series of symbols, which, in my judgment, can represent only the tremendous glory and the no less tremendous fall of the Roman empire. This stands as the representative of the ideal political history of a people, where the political elements are affected slightly, if at all, by other than political forces. It also marks one great movement in the actual history of the world.

Representing what I conceive to be the heroic age of Rome, victory appears borne upon an elephant. On either side walk hope and fear, both bound, as being alike prejudicial to the common weal. After this moment of strength and triumph comes the period of wealth and of art. Plutus appears in a chariot drawn by fiery dragons, guided by a boy who symbolizes poetic and artistic imagination. This is the golden Augustan age, in which wealth was in some respects led by the genius that was dependent upon it. The height of power and glory had been reached ; now comes the fall. Avarice and lust, greed for gold, in a word, all the destructive forces of society hurry the social world to destruction. The sylvan deities appear, which represent the rude barbarian forces that broke in upon the world that had been so strong and so fair, and it sinks amid flame and terror.

From the realm of political growth and downfall we turn to that of æsthetic development — from Rome to Greece.

In the original legend Faust is represented as calling up from among the shades certain forms that were famous in the ancient world, and especially that of Helen. Later Faust marries Helen and has by her a son. Mother and child both disappear at the death of Faust. By a happy inspiration of genius Goethe uses this story to symbolize the springing of the modern romantic poetry from the union of the modern life with the spirit of Grecian art and beauty.

The emperor demanded the appearance of Helen. Mephistopheles explains to Faust that to accomplish this he must descend to the "mothers." Their abode is described in awe-inspiring terms. The meaning of all this would seem to be that to recreate the beauty of the past one cannot work mechanically from without, but must share the life from which it originally sprang; must descend thus to the very secret springs of being. Helen appears, and Faust becomes enamored of the vision which he had conjured up. When she disappears, he is left with an intense longing to look on her again. The classic Walpurgis night represents his search for this ideal of beauty. In this we see the development of classic beauty from the earlier and ruder types to its complete perfection. Through this wilderness of germinant life Faust wanders in his quest. The consummation of the process is represented by the beautiful scene in which Galatea enters with her train. After that, begins the phantasmagoria of Helen. Helen is represented as returning to the home of Menelaus. She is, however, made to believe that Menelaus means to sacri-

fice her as a victim to the gods. She would flee. The scene changes from ancient Greece to the Europe of the Middle Ages. Faust, who appears as a mighty ruler, receives her and places her upon his throne. From their union springs the boy Euphorion, who represents the romantic poetry which was the result of the blending of the classic beauty with the spirit of mediæval Europe. Especially Euphorion represents Lord Byron, in whom this romantic poetry assumed, in the judgment of Goethe, its most perfect form.

In the brief abstract which I have just given I have hardly referred to the wonderful poetic beauty by which every page is marked. My purpose has been merely to put into the hands of the reader a clue, by the help of which he may be able to trace out and to enjoy this beauty for himself.

The fact just referred to, that Euphorion confessedly represents specially the genius of Lord Byron, I regard as conclusive as to the true method of interpreting the second part of the "Faust." If Faust were considered merely as an individual, there would be something utterly absurd in making Lord Byron, in any sense however symbolical, his son. If, however, Faust here represents mediæval humanity, or in any way the genius of the Middle Ages, there is a profound meaning in making the genius of Lord Byron the offspring of his union with the classic beauty of Greece.

Before advancing to the consummation of the play we must go back and consider a character which has been left unnoticed in our brief review, because only at this point could his relation to the play be made clear. I refer to the most whimsical and the most

mysterious personage called Homunculus. I confess at the outset that this creation appears to me to mar somewhat the exquisite beauty of the poem. At best there is something artificial and awkward about him. Faust, just before entering upon the pursuit of Helen, which is represented in the classic Walpurgis night, finds himself with Mephistopheles in his old study. Mephistopheles, penetrating into the laboratory, finds Wagner, the former famulus of Faust, whose pedantic and mechanical views of life had been already referred to, busied with retorts and other chemical instrumentalities, in the attempt to construct, by such artificial means, a man. By the help of Mephistopheles, as it would appear, the experiment is so far successful that the Homunculus is produced. This is a being which the art of the chemist was not able to bring into full existence. He appears as a shining form enclosed in a flask, capable of moving through the air, and filled with the most intense longing for a fully developed life. He is extremely smart, according to the Yankee sense of this word. He becomes the guide to Faust and Mephistopheles as they enter upon the classic Walpurgis night, taking thus the place of the *ignis fatuus* who acted as guide in the Walpurgis night of the first part. He bursts his glass case and becomes presumably free at the moment when Galatea appears, who like Helen represents the consummation of Greek beauty. Putting all these things together, the significance of this unpleasant little imp becomes tolerably clear. In order fully to understand it, however, we must go back for a moment to the boy-driver who guided the dragons of Plutus in the masquerade. Of this personage Goethe himself tells us that he is Euphorion. This

statement by Goethe completely justifies, as I conceive, the explanation that I have given of the later part of the masquerade, as representing the glory and decline of Rome. Euphorion represents the poetry of one age; if the boy-driver is Euphorion, he must represent the poetry of another age, and to no age will the scenes apply but to the Augustan age of Rome. Between the two stands Homunculus, whom analogy might lead us to expect to represent the poetry of some intermediate age. This is especially the case when we consider that the artistic development of Greece intervenes between him and the earlier Euphorion. What is represented by Homunculus must be, in my judgment, the pseudo-classic poetry with its artificialities, as it existed, for example, in France. While Homunculus represents the spirit of the Renaissance in general, he represents in particular, as I have already stated, that literature which may be regarded as embodying most purely this spirit, namely, the classic poetry of France. The classic French drama is animated by admiration of the Greek beauty. It is a product, largely, of a mechanical imitation of the Greek drama. The glass bottle in which Homunculus was confined, and from which he longed to escape that he might really live, may represent wittily and truly the artificial rules within which the spirit of poetry in the French tragedies was confined.

When we consider Homunculus as representing in a special manner the French drama with its artificial limitations, it is obvious that the artificiality and awkwardness which mark him are integral parts of the satire. This is a point in regard to which all other explanations of his place in the drama fail. The sug-

gestion that Homunculus represents the artificialness of the earlier (French) classical literature is confirmed by these words spoken by Homunculus of himself, lines 2271-72 :

"Natürlichem genügt das Weltall kaum ;
Was künstlich ist verlangt geschlossnen Raum."

We understand thus why the glass bottle breaks when it strikes the chariot of Galatea. With the contact with the real art of Greece, and with sympathy with it, the artificiality of the "classic unities" is seen. These restraints are cast aside ; and the spirit of poetry attains to that naturalness to which the universe scarcely suffices. The boy-driver, Homunculus, and Euphorion represent thus respectively the poetry of Rome, the artificial classic poetry of the later Renaissance, and the romantic poetry of more modern times.

The fact referred to above, that the classic Walpurgis-nacht represents the struggle of the embryonic spirit of modern poetry to attain to complete and free existence, gives appropriateness to the introduction of the discussion between Thales and Anaxagoras, who represent respectively the Neptunian and the Vulcanian theories of the origin of the world. The evolution of a part must conform to the nature of the evolution of the whole ; and the principles which presided over the shaping of the earth are the same that preside over the development of its literary and artistic history.

Helen and Euphorion disappear, leaving their garments behind them, the works which remain after the creative genius has disappeared. The sprites that have taken part in this phantasmagoria are dispersed, each seeking that realm of nature to which

he belongs. We return to the plane of more ordinary experience.

Faust, by the help of Mephistopheles, aids the emperor to win the victory over his rebellious subjects. The war which is presented in relation to the person of Faust symbolizes the wars which devastated so much of Europe, by means of which, however, the people slowly came to their rights, and the field was cleared for the great altruistic consummation.

The destruction of the cottage and chapel of Philemon and Baucis exhibits the further clearing of the field by the abolition of superstition or, if one chooses so to interpret it, of positive religion. The troubles of the aged Faust may represent the anxieties and difficulties besetting an advancing civilization — labor troubles and the rest — such as we now know more of than Goethe did. By means of the war Faust obtains the right to reclaim a portion of the sea for the use of man. This symbolizes the general triumph of man over nature, and here, especially, the altruistic condition of society, which is the goal of history.

As Faust realizes what he has accomplished, there comes a moment in which the thought of the happy homes and of the peaceful and healthful activities of life which should result from his labors fills him with a lofty joy. He is ready to exclaim to the moment, "Stay, thou art so fair." This moment of exaltation forms the close of his earthly life. As he sinks in death the jaws of hell open, and Mephistopheles advances to claim the soul which he regards as his lawful prize. A troop of angels, however, dispute with him the victory. They pelt his attendant demons with roses, which, as they strike them, become burning coals. The whole scene is at once beautiful and

grotesque. At last the angels bear away in triumph the immortal part of Faust. The play closes with songs of wondrous beauty which represent the entrance of Faust into the heavenly life. Margaret seeks to be the helper of this new-born spirit, and she is told to rise, and if he divines her presence, he will follow. Goethe somewhere explains that he uses in these closing scenes symbols taken from the mediæval church, as in no other way could he fitly condense what is too large and vague for dramatic representation.

We have now to look more closely at the significance of this close of the play. We have to regard it in relation to Faust as an individual, and also in relation to that historic presentation which has formed the substance of so much of the second part of the play. In the one case we shall have a hint of a philosophy of life, and in the other of a philosophy of history.

In the development of Faust, considered as an individual, we have three stages. In the first he sought knowledge as something apart from life. His aim was to know rather than to be. This, as we have seen, proved a failure. In the next stage he sought to be rather than to know. The whole titanic force of his nature was aroused. He would make of himself the representative of humanity. He would taste all joys and all sorrows. He would make of himself the centre, and to him all things should be tributary. This also proved a failure. He was but a poor fragment of humanity, and the attempt to make of himself a whole brought only wretchedness to him and to that other being whom he came at last to love better than himself. The unselfish love that was

awakened within him, in part by the very tragedy which blackened his life, indicates the path which in the third stage led him to the rest which he sought. His demand that all of life should become his was based upon the great fact that his nature was potentially infinite, and could be satisfied with no finite good. The way he took to satisfy this infinite longing was, however, a mistaken one. Not by making himself the representative of humanity could he reach his end, but by making himself the servant of humanity. He could not be the whole, but, by making himself a member of the common body, he could share the life of the whole. The completion which he sought he found by making the joys and sorrows of others his own through helpful sympathy. It was this joy of feeling the universal life throb in his veins that brought the solemn peace which formed the consummation of his life. Mephistopheles had been working for him all along, and when this peace came he thought that it was his doing, and that his wager was won. He had, indeed, been instrumental in accomplishing the result, but it was by setting in motion forces which were beyond his control, and of which, indeed, he knew nothing. The peace that had come to Faust was such as he could not give, and thus such as he could not take away.

I have said that the second part of the "Faust" gives us a hint of a philosophy of history. It does this by presenting in a symbolic way the more important of the stages that mark the development of man. First, as we have seen, we have a state founded upon might, which sinks through the undue development of the elements that had made its strength. Wealth and power become, when overdriven, the

sources of destruction. In this we could not fail to see the image of the glory of Rome and of its fall. Next is placed before us the development of art and poetry. Beginning with the art of Greece, and ending with the fullest development of the Romantic literature, the successive types pass before us; the succession at last taking the form of a romance of wonderful beauty. We do not see the history of literature and art in its essential limitation, it is true, but we see it in its transitoriness. Genius passes away, leaving only its results to be cherished by the world. The third great stage of development that is indicated is that with which the play closes, in which, as we have seen, the individual and the general meet in a common presentation. It is the stage of altruism. This forms the culmination of the history of the race, as it does of that of the individual.

From the hasty sketch which has been given it will appear that, as was indicated at the opening of this essay, in the play as a whole we have rather a philosophy of life than a study of the particular problem of evil. In the second part, Mephistopheles is very largely merely the servant of Faust, at most a principle of negation in the sense that it is he who brings about the changes which are necessary for the attainment of the desired result. Now and then, indeed, he is seen in his more natural character. This appears in the charming episode of Philemon and Baucis. This aged couple had the charge of a chapel which, with their little home, occupied land which Faust needed for his great undertaking. They formed a foreign element in the new world that he was making. They looked with horror on his bold plans, and refused to sell to him the homestead which they

loved. They represent conservatism in an age of progress. Faust intimates to Mephistopheles that he wishes to obtain possession of this bit of land, and the latter promises to secure it. Faust is shocked, however, when he learns that his too willing servant has set fire to the cottage, and that the venerable pair have perished in the flames. This whole transaction may illustrate the fact that even the excesses of revolution and the destructive passions of wicked men may help on the final triumph of humanity. It may also represent the disappearance of the world of superstition in the presence of the forces which mark the altruistic and positive era of human history. Just how much Goethe meant to include in this picture of superstition is a matter which I cannot here attempt to discuss.

From this whole examination it will appear that the unity of the "Faust," taken as a whole, is ideal rather than individual and human. The Faust of the tragedy of Margaret cannot be identified with the Faust of the opening scenes of the play; and the Faust of the second part cannot be identified with either of the Fausts of the first. We may criticise this as a fault, but it is none the less true. If we make the typical drama the standard to which the work should conform, we shall find it full of faults. The French critics were right when they pointed out the irregularities which mark the plays of Shakespeare. Doubtless these are often faults, and sometimes very grave faults. Not till we are content to take Shakespeare as he is and let him speak to us in his own way, do we really feel his strength, and really perceive the beauty of his work. It is so with the "Faust." We might say that it would have been

better otherwise ; perhaps it would, if we could have retained in this other form the beauties that it possesses as it is. We must take it, however, as Goethe meant it. We must find in it its own type and standard of measurement. If we can discover no individual unity, we must be content with an ideal unity. When the limits of possible personal experience are broken through, we must be content with symbolism. Not till we take the poem in this way are we in a position to understand it. Not till this is done are we in a condition fairly to judge it. Not till then have we the right to ask whether, taken as it is, the poem justifies itself, and whether it has a right to the admiration which it has received.

If we are content to accept the poem just as it is, if we see in it, as a whole, a presentation, on the one side, of the history of the individual spirit that possesses a germ of the higher life, and, on the other side, a presentation of the movement of history and the grand consummation to which history tends, we may see faults, indeed ; we may find enough to blame and to criticise, but we shall have a poem which, both from the beauty of its form and the depth of its significance, is worthy to stand as the fittest representative of what modern or romantic poetry is striving to accomplish.

XI

TENNYSON AND BROWNING AS SPIRITUAL FORCES

SINCE the death of Tennyson there has been a tendency in some quarters to insist that he should be honored simply as an artist. One writer has expressed himself with some warmth in regard to those whose estimate of the poet is in any degree higher than it would have been had the "In Memoriam" not been written. "Maud" has been exalted as if on that, more than on anything else, the fame of Tennyson ought to rest. The meaning of all this would seem to be that we should neglect the substance of the poet's work and look only at its form, because art exists only for art's sake.

In these claims there is a certain amount of justice. One does not truly enjoy the works of Tennyson who has no appreciation of their artistic beauty, and in a large part of "Maud" the art of the poet is as clearly manifested as in any of his other works. One who cannot take delight in the beauty of this poem can know nothing of the real charm of Tennyson. There are few English poets, perhaps few poets of any land, the music of whose songs is as perfect as that which is found in the verse of Tennyson, and in "Maud" this music is at its sweetest. If by the art of the poet we mean the melody of his speech, the lightness of his touch, the grace of his expression, the dainti-

ness of his conceits, the airiness of his picturing, then the art of Tennyson may indeed be enjoyed as a thing in itself with very little regard to the ideal content of his works. Some of his earlier poems were little else than music. As the singer plays a prelude upon his instrument before beginning his song, so Tennyson began his career with poems that said nothing. They were pure music and grace.

We may, however, enjoy the music that the singer offers as a prelude to his song, and yet enjoy still more the song itself. We may delight in the voice of the singer, his technique, his expression, and yet we may delight in some of his songs more than in others, simply for the reason that they have more to say to us. For aught I know, the Medicean Venus may be as perfect, considered as a work of art, as the Venus of Milo; yet we may take a higher pleasure in the nobility of the latter than in the mere sensuous grace of the former. In the works of Tennyson we may enjoy "Maud" in its way as truly as we enjoy "In Memoriam;" but the enjoyment will be different. The one calls forth pleasure and admiration by its sweetness and its strength. The other, in parts no less musical, appeals to different and higher elements of our nature. If "In Memoriam" is read merely as a discussion of certain questions in regard to life and death, one is not reading Tennyson; and one who reads "Maud" merely to discuss the place which war fills in our modern civilization is not reading Tennyson. The poet is first and always a poet. One who translates the poem into prose has touched the airy bubble and it has burst. He may be reading a valuable treatise, but it is not poetry. Yet none the less the poet's thought, embodied in his poetry and penetrated by it, may exalt our hearts.

It is one of the many contrasts between Tennyson and Browning that while the art and the music of Tennyson may, as we have seen, be considered by themselves, Browning interests us primarily in what he has to say. He is less thoroughly an artist than Tennyson, but not necessarily on that account less a poet. I recall only one poem of Browning which is absolutely without thought. I may raise a clamor of protest when I say that this one is "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came." In this we have simply a picture. We may put a meaning into it, but to ask what the poet meant by it is to appeal to the fancy. I do not say that the poet had not an allegory in his mind when he wrote; I simply say that the allegory is not in the poem. Mendelssohn often had some definite scene in mind which suggested his music. That is nothing to the listener. The music must interpret itself. It must suggest to the hearer what it will, or it may suggest nothing but its own sweetness. One might make an allegory, and a very pretty one, out of "Airy, Fairy Lilian," or, in fact, out of almost any poem. Leaving, however, all this out of the account, I would simply recognize the fact that in reading the poems of Browning the emphasis of interest is largely upon their substance, while in reading those of Tennyson the emphasis of interest is often upon their form. At the same time we must remember that the substance of Browning's poems would not so interest and charm us if it were not for the poetic beauty of their form; while the poems of Tennyson often gain a vast increase of power from our interest in the thought that utters itself in such melodious verse.

Whatever we may think of the part that poetry should play in life, there can be no doubt in regard

to the part that it has played. We may take one side or the other on the question whether the poet should be considered merely as an artist, and his works be enjoyed merely as things of beauty, or whether, on the other hand, he should be regarded in any sense as a teacher, as a moulder of our thought and an inspirer of our life; the fact remains that the poet has, to a very large extent, affected both the thoughts and the lives of men. This means that the poet has, in point of fact, been something more than an artist; that the substance of his songs has been as important as their form. This has not been because men separated the substance from the form. So to do would have been to put these fair creations to death. The substance separated from the form would have lost its power.

We can better understand the influence that poetry has possessed over the hearts and thoughts of men by considering some of the spheres in which this power has been chiefly felt.

Poetry has done much to give shape to the religion of the world. It has been said that Homer gave to Greece her gods. This is doubtless true in the sense that the Homeric poems did much to give permanent shape to the Greek mythology, and they did this not in spite of, but because of, the fact that they were, and were felt to be, merely poems. In later times Wordsworth did more than almost any one besides to give reality and influence to the religion of the divine immanence. At the same time, there could hardly be found examples of truer poetry than the lines in which Wordsworth sings of the beauty and sublimity of the divine presence in this outer world. It is because the poetry is so genuine, so perfect simply as poetry, that it has had such influence.

That poetry should have been able to influence religion in this way is what might have been naturally expected. Religion is of the nature of poetry. It implies a certain divine insight. In the religion of the earlier world men gave life to the things about them. The world in which they dwelt was a living world. The sun soared and guided itself through the heavens; men could speak to the trees and the mountains, and be heard. In later times, by a similar method, religion reached loftier heights. These heights were gained largely by faith, and faith rose upon the wings of the imagination. It was not by the arguments of philosophers and theologians that these planes were attained. These arguments followed after to give permanence to what faith had won. Faith, however, is always in advance. Thus poetry has lent itself from the earliest times to be the expression of religion. Indeed, it was probably at first simply the expression of religion.

What is true of religion is true also of morality. Morality rests not upon arguments but upon insights. Theories form about these insights. The moral sense upholds these theories, and is not upheld by them. Morality thus belongs not to the realm of logic but to that of the imagination. The same is true of the whole class of relations to which poetry has ministered. Love, patriotism, liberty, all these have been sung by poetry because they all bring us into relations with unseen ideals. They all belong to the realm of faith and imagination.

It is interesting to trace the history of poetry, and see how different have been the ideals which it has sung at different times. Take English poetry in its whole development, and I think we shall find that

at no period have these ideals been more pure and high than in these later years. This has not been at the expense of poetic genius. Few poets have been more truly masters of their art, or have been filled with a more truly poetic inspiration, than Tennyson and Browning, while few have done more to quicken the higher life. It is no matter of theory how we shall regard them. They were poets, and at the same time they have been spiritual forces. They have been forces which cannot be left out of the account in any estimate of the times in which they lived. Men have been inspired and ennobled by them. Faith has been quickened by them, and has been helped to reach heights which would have been inaccessible without them.

While these poets have stimulated religious faith they have also illustrated its methods. They have shown in what manner faith solves the problems of life and thought. They have done this simply for the reason that, as we have seen, religion and poetry are so akin. Both poets manifest in very many of their most perfect works the truths of morality and religion, but they present these unhampered by formal limitations. Their religion is undogmatic. What they utter is, for the most part, the absolute religion. If they use expressions borrowed from the creeds, these are changed and glorified, so that they easily become the utterances of the universal religious sentiment. It is this intensity of religious feeling, united with this freedom from the limitations of religious dogmatism, that makes it possible for the expression of religious faith to find a place among the very best works of these great poets.

When we look more closely at the poems of these

masters in order to understand the nature of their influence upon the world, we meet one of those striking antitheses which mark all the relations under which Tennyson and Browning may be regarded. The antithesis that is now before us has something of the surprise of a paradox. Browning speaks very rarely in his own person. His works are for the most part either dramas or dramatic poems. Tennyson, on the other hand, appears to be speaking more on his own account. He seems to be pouring into our ears his joys and his sorrows, his fears and his hopes. We might have expected that Browning would be lost among his creations as Shakespeare is lost in the world that he created. We might have expected that the personality of Tennyson would be as real and as near to us as that of our closest friend. Just the opposite of this is true. In reading Browning we cannot escape the sense of his vigorous, strong human personality; while Tennyson, despite all the intimate confidences to which he has admitted us, remains a stranger. We have little sense of personal companionship. The difference arises from the fact that Tennyson is the greater artist. The very perfection of his art conceals him from us even when he seems the nearest. He is like a bird singing in a thicket. It pours out all its little heart in song, but remains invisible. In spite, however, of the artistic impersonality of Tennyson we may find in his poems revelations of a spiritual life as truly as in those of the more personal Browning. It should be noted, however, that in the later poems of Tennyson this distinction is less marked. As his art became somewhat less perfect, his personality manifested itself with less reserve.

Although, as we have seen, the moral life belongs to the realm of the imagination, and thus of poetry, as truly as religion does, yet, for obvious reasons, morality lends itself to poetic uses somewhat less freely than religion. Although it belongs on the one side to the ideal world, on the other side it stands in direct practical relation with human life. Thus while in one of its aspects it is poetical, in the other it may easily become prosaic. Moral teaching most naturally puts on a poetic form when it is indirect; yet both Tennyson and Browning sometimes deal directly with ethical themes; and the poems in which these themes are treated are among their most beautiful creations.

It is noteworthy that we find Tennyson, in poems written not very far from the beginning of his poetical career, facing such moral questions as most concerned his own temperament and habits of life. As one must say continually in speaking of Tennyson, he was an artist; and the ethical problems with which he dealt so early are those which concern the life and the soul of the artist. I do not know whether we may consider "The Lady of Shalott" as anything more than a creation of the imagination. If it is, it presents a theory of the artistic life. This theory is very obviously that the artist must live among the forms of things, and not let himself become too much interested in their reality. The Lady of Shalott wove into her magic web the shadows of the world as they were reflected in the mirror that hung before her. So long as she did this, she rejoiced in her work. When she became "half sick of shadows," and was attracted by the warm, living, and loving life of humanity, the curse fell upon her. If this is meant to

express the nature of the artistic life, it contains much truth. The artist, as such, deals with the shows of things and not with their realities. From this truth springs the great peril to the life of the artist and the life of any one to whom beauty makes a strong appeal. It is the temptation to live in the world merely as a spectator, to live wholly in the shows of things, and thus in an unreal world of selfish enjoyment. Doubtless, Tennyson, in whom the artistic impulse and the sense of beauty were stronger than in most, felt the temptation and the fascination of this dream-like existence. If this were so, in his magnificent poem, "The Palace of Art," we have a representation of the actual struggle of his life. Thus understood, this poem has besides its exquisite beauty a heroic quality which is inspiring. Its beauty is indeed exquisite. Each one of the pictures with which the palace of him "who did love beauty only" was adorned has the perfection, the delicate finish, of a cameo. I think that nowhere else can one find a series of pictures so beautiful. In this Palace of Art sat the soul, as God,

"Holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

The same genius which described the magnificence of the Palace of Art pictured, if possible, with greater power the terrors of the retribution that overtook this soul that would live in the isolation of its beautiful world.

"A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seemed my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

"A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand,
Left on the shore ; that hears all night

The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white."

It is interesting to see this poet, one of the truest artists and one of the most earnest lovers of beauty of his time, thus warning the world of the peril of loving beauty only.

While "The Vision of Sin" is less striking as a work of art, and less special in its ethical teaching, it is very striking as a poet's rebuke of vice. The contrast between a night spent in sinful revelry and the morning in which

"God made himself an awful rose of dawn"

is wonderfully impressive. This contrast is by itself the condemnation. It suggests in a more poetical form the derivation that has been given to the Erinnyes of the Greeks. It has been urged that their name is derived from that of a Vedic dawn-goddess. This goddess is considered to have given her name to the haunting furies because the daylight discovers guilt. In this poem the dawn brings condemnation because its sublime beauty is a revelation of God himself.

To the indirect moral teachings of Tennyson there is here space for no more than a hasty reference. We have the self-abnegation of Enoch Arden, and, noblest of all, the heroism of the "Idylls of the King." In these poems sin is shown in its beauty, while, at the same time, as it is beheld in its relation to the lofty ideal of the king, it is seen in its blackest ugliness. The portrayal of the contrast reaches its culmination in the last meeting between Arthur and Guinevere, ending with her cry,

"We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another."

It is said that Tennyson designed these idylls for an allegory representing the soul's search after God. As I have said in regard to a poem of Browning, such an idea on the part of the author does not change the nature of his work. Happily, any indication of an allegory was left out of these poems. An allegory they are not, unless we choose to make them so. The stories stand in their solid reality, and their moral teaching is all the more impressive on this account.

While the moral teaching of Tennyson may be called special and realistic, that of Browning is more ideal and philosophic. In the case of Browning, also, I must pass over the indirect moral bearing of his dramas and much of his other work, and glance merely at passages which are a direct statement of ethical truth. The impression that one gathers from Browning is that the true life consists rather in aspiration than in attainment. With him the outer life goes for comparatively little. One of the most exalted of the poems of Browning, which is also one of the most exalted in the whole range of literature, "Rabbi Ben Ezra," presents this view of life in the most striking form :

"What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me."

"The Statue and the Bust" presents the same view of life in a very impressive way. The thought of the poet is that it is better to sin than to pass one's life longing to sin and kept back merely by external considerations. This poem has been much criticised as immoral. In one aspect of it, it teaches the highest morality — a morality which comes very near to that of the Sermon on the Mount. It is

based upon an ideal view of life. Sin is in the soul, not in any outward act. It goes further, and implies that life, even if it be a bad life, is better than absolute stagnation; that decision, even if it is wrong, is better than aimless and endless indecision. It utters in modern form the cry of the Hebrew prophet, "If the Lord be God, serve him; but if Baal, serve him." By all means, it would say, serve something. If one would really heed this teaching of Browning, and be driven to make a conscious choice between good and evil; above all, if one could really feel that it is the sin in the heart which actually defiles, perhaps the poem would be found one of the most moral in the language.

If we now turn to the consideration of the religious utterances of these two great poets, we shall find between them a difference greater than that which marks their ethical teaching, though of the same nature. As religious poets they possessed much in common. They were in no special sense poets of religion, as Cowper was. This fact gives greater interest and force to what they say of the spiritual life. They approached religious themes in the same simple and natural way in which they approached other themes. Religious poetry, in any strict sense of these words, constitutes a very small part of their works. Religion forming, as it did, a real part of their lives, and the truths of religion forming a part of the environment in the midst of which they lived, they could not help giving them a place in their songs. The place which such themes held in their works was thus a wholly natural one. It was not as in the works of Burns, for instance, where the religious poems seem so little at home among many of

the others. In Tennyson and Browning there is, at the same time, no cant or professionalism. There is no limitation of dogma. Their religion is as untrammelled as any of the other themes of their song. They thus stand in a very special sense as the poets of their generation — a generation in which the line of separation between the sacred and profane is no longer drawn so sharply as of old, in which life is seen to have something of the sacredness of religion, and religion to have all the naturalness of life.

Despite these resemblances, there are, as I have already said, great differences. Their religious world being such as I have indicated, they divided it between them, united only in what is most central and essential.

Tennyson looked at religion, as at ethics, very largely from the human side. What interested him chiefly was the destiny of man. Now and then his spirit rises in adoration; but for the most part God is regarded as the supreme power in the universe, to whom we may trust to fulfill the promise which is implanted in our souls. He had faith that this promise would be fulfilled. This faith was not always clear and strong. It did not soar with untroubled flight up into the serene heavens. It was a faith that struggled with doubts and difficulties. Few have felt these difficulties more keenly than Tennyson. There was no disturbing influence of the time, no questioning of doubt, no protest of unbelief that was unfamiliar to him. These doubts and questionings approached him not merely from without. They had a home in his own heart, and raised their clamor of opposition against the utterances of faith. This is one of the great sources of the power of Tennyson

in stimulating the spiritual life. There is no difficulty with which he has not himself fought and which he has not overcome.

The poem of "The Two Voices" is a type of Tennyson's utterances upon this theme. This is one of his most melodious poems. Its sweetness is wonderful. The voice which urges despair is not that of the earthquake or the wind. It is a still, small voice that sings its way into the innermost recesses of the heart. Its reasoning is subtle. If one of its arguments seems met, it urges another that, if not stronger, has an appearance of greater strength. The soul that it is assailing finds itself entangled in sophistries from which it cannot free itself, and is ready to yield. Suddenly rescue appears from a source whence it could have been least expected :

"I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
'Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

"And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.

"Like softened airs that blowing steal
When meres begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

"On to God's house the people pressed :
Passing the place where each must rest,
Each entered like a welcome guest."

Among the rest walked a little family—the father, the mother, and their child.

"These three made unity so sweet
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

“ I blessed them, and they wandered on.
I spoke, but answer came there none :
The dull and bitter voice was gone.”

In its place came a second voice that breathed of hope and cheer :

“ ‘ What is it thou knowest, sweet voice,’ I cried.
‘ A hidden hope,’ the voice replied.”

This, then, was the struggle and the victory. The victory was not won by force of logic. It was a poet's victory. The nature was simply recalled to health and to a healthful relation with the world about it. It felt itself in the presence of love and faith. The answer of cheer was very vague. It was “ a hidden hope.” It was a victory of love and faith, of faith in love.

This is the answer that the poet made to the questions of the time that pressed with as much force upon him as upon any other child of the century. As I have said before, religion is of the nature of poetry. The poet thus exemplifies the triumph of faith. It does not conquer by solving all difficulties, by making a demonstration of the truth of that which it believes. Its victory is positive, not negative. It is trust in the highest and the best. It is not without its weapons of argument, but its strength is in its harmony with the positive life of the world. Because the victory which is celebrated in “ The Two Voices ” was one of faith and not of demonstration, the battle had to be fought over and over again, but always with the same result. In the poem called “ Vastness,” which is in the last volume of his works that was published while Tennyson was still alive, are painted with more repulsive details the evils of the world which would seem to crush out the possibility of

faith. No other outcome seems possible to our existence than that we should be

“Swallowed in vastness, lost in silence, drowned in the deeps of a meaningless past.”

Suddenly the poet breaks off, and exclaims :

“Peace, let it be ! for I loved him, and love him forever : the dead are not dead, but alive.”

The poetry of this composition is greatly inferior to that of “The Two Voices ;” but the triumph of faith is accomplished in the same way. It is faith in love that is stronger than all doubt.

“In Memoriam ” is, on the whole, a song of confidence ; but in this also the old enemy has sometimes to be met, and it is always conquered by the same weapon. The victory is still one of faith. In the magnificent Proem we read :

“ We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from thee
A beam in darkness.”

Later in the poem, after facing some of the darker problems of existence, the poet cries :

“ I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world’s altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,

“ I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.”

The confidence of the poet in the future of man upon the earth is similar to his faith in the future life of the spirit. It is held with a distinct perception of all the difficulties in its way. No one saw

more clearly than Tennyson the crimes and the miseries of the world. So clearly does he see them that when his later poem on "Locksley Hall" was published, it was received, one might almost say, with a howl of indignation — an indignation which, now that we look calmly upon it, we cannot fully understand. In one respect there is a deeper insight than is found in the earlier poem. That was written with the sense of the aristocracy of the ideal which is not infrequently felt by the young who are eager for nobility of life. Their ideal is something abstract. Its inspiration is somewhat vague, though real. They are sometimes tempted to have a certain scorn of the humbler virtues that are practiced by those who seem to lead merely plodding lives. The insight into the beauty of lowly heroism had been brought by the sixty years that had passed, and, if they had brought nothing else, they had not been lived in vain. The poet had not lost his faith in the future, even if the grand consummation seemed farther off than he had once dreamed. "Forward, then," he cried, as of old, though he was forced to add :

"But still remember how the course of time will swerve,
Crook and turn upon itself in many a backward-streaming curve."

The fact that his religious faith reached its triumph only after fierce struggle may account, in part at least, for the passionate manner in which it was held. He is quoted as once exclaiming, with reference to faith in immortality, that if God made the earth and put this hope and passion into us, it must foreshow the truth. If it were not true, he added, "I'd shake my fist in his almighty face, and tell Him that I cursed Him."¹ This has been called blasphemy,

¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, January, 1893, p. 169.

but his reply would be in the lines which occur in the poem called "Despair:"

"Blasphemy! true! I have scared you pale with my scandalous talk,
But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in the way that you walk."

He was indignant with those who drive men into unbelief by false pictures of God; and although he had sung

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds,"

he was indignant with aggressive unbelief that is no longer doubt. Positivism and atheism he felt must necessarily be sources of immorality. Thus in his "Promise of May" we find the hero embodying a materialism that led him into cruel crime and sickening meanness.

In all this I know that I have made too prominent the aspect of Tennyson's poetry which has been under consideration. There is no space to contemplate the serene heights of faith where he sometimes loved to rest. I have described merely the toilsome path by which these heights were reached.

When we turn to the poems of Browning we find little that is akin to the aspects of Tennyson's poetry that we have been considering. While religion was to Tennyson so largely a matter of faith in immortality, with Browning it was chiefly joy in the divine presence. Immortality he took for granted, with a serene confidence that left no place for the struggles and the passionate eagerness that are so marked in the poems of Tennyson. Browning simply rejoices in the light that the thought of immortality sheds upon the strifes and imperfections of our human life. He felt that it was

“God’s task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen,”

and he could leave the matter in His hands. Hardly anywhere else does the word God occur with such vast suggestion as it carries often in Browning’s poems. I recall but one passage in Tennyson that may be compared in this respect with the many such utterances in Browning. It is the one that I have already quoted from “The Vision of Sin,”

“God made himself an awful rose of dawn.”

This is wholly in the spirit of Browning. In Browning’s poetry the divine presence appears to enwrap our human life as the sky and the sea enwrap the earth. In the dramatic poems, of course, all kinds of people have their say ; but so far as the spiritual life of the poet seems to reveal itself, we find no hint of doubt and struggle. The song of Pippa,

“God’s in his Heaven,
All’s right with the world,”

suggests the music to which the spirit of the great singer moved.

Though Browning seems not to have needed to convince himself of the truth which his faith so gladly held, yet he did sometimes strive to remove the doubts of others. Of this spiritual teaching his “Saul” is the most magnificent example. In this poem David appeals to Saul with the same kind of argument which Tennyson addresses to himself :

“Do I find love so full in my nature, God’s ultimate gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it?”

Over and over again do we find expressed by Browning, as we have found expressed by Tennyson, this faith in love as the supreme revelation. It is the

faith of the poet, and it is the faith of religion as well. It is faith in the highest as of necessity the truest.

Both poets believed in the possibility and promise of human life. Here, also, while the confidence of Tennyson was burdened by the sense of human suffering and sin, that of Browning resembled the clear insight of his religious faith. Nowhere else, save in the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven, can we find such jubilant outburst of praise of the joy of living as in his "Saul." Here, as elsewhere, the doubt that with Tennyson speaks from within speaks from without, and is overpowered by the outpouring praise of the gladness of life in which the earthly and the heavenly form parts of one complete whole.

As we have seen, Tennyson and Browning had a special interest in different aspects of religion. Tennyson clung to the hope of personal immortality, while Browning, assuming this, rejoiced chiefly in the divine presence in the world. There is a passage in the works of each in which this relation appears to be reversed. They are the passages in which the two poets look forward to the experience of death. With Browning the thought of death, when he wrote his poem, was of something comparatively remote; Tennyson's poem refers to something that might soon become a reality. I refer to the "Prospice" of Browning, and the "Crossing the Bar" of Tennyson. In his splendid poem the one thing to which Browning looks forward with passionate eagerness is the meeting again with her who had so recently left him. Such human interest finds a minor place in the poem of Tennyson. The poem reaches its culmination in the cry,

"I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

Of course the circumstances under which each wrote affected more or less his work ; yet the difference in regard to the point of interest that is named may naturally have grown out of the mental habits of each to which I have referred. To Browning the divine presence was a reality. In regard to this, death could make little difference, "for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?" Death could affect only that which is changeable. It could reunite the broken links of human fellowship. In the case of Tennyson this was different. He is reported as once saying : "My greatest wish is to have a clearer vision of God."¹ This is the wish that this poem expresses. The very fact that the strongest impulse in his religious life had been the hope of a future for himself and for all would lead him to emphasize in the thought of this future that grand element of the religious consciousness which had been in his case less marked.

In regard to their final and highest thought of religion these two great poets were at one. In their highest expressions they recognized God, not as a being far off and foreign, but as immanent in the world.

Near the close of "In Memoriam" the poet exclaims to his vanished friend :

"Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee.

"Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
I hear thee where the waters run ;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

"My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;

¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, January, 1893, p. 169.

Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more."

This might imply a loss of personality in his departed friend and an absorption into the absolute life of nature. All the poet's later utterances, no less than his earlier, forbid this interpretation. The divine life is now the sphere in which his friend lived. This life penetrated the world. Nature itself was its manifestation. The life of his friend, ensphered in this divine life, he felt to share something of this universality :

"Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
I shall not lose thee though I die."

Thus we have the expression of a profound sense of the immanence of God in the world, though this is for the moment at least regarded merely as furnishing the possibility of a new and larger relationship to the departed friend. In "The Higher Pantheism" the thought of the divine immanence is dwelt upon with direct reference to the relation of man to this indwelling and encompassing spirit :

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet,
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

But at the close the poet falls back into the contradiction between life as it is and its imagined possibilities :

"And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see,
But if we could see and hear, this Vision, were it not He?"

The poem in which Browning expresses in the most striking manner the thought of the divine immanence is the Epilogue to the "Dramatis Personæ." In this are portrayed three stages in the development

of religion. The poet presents first a picture of the worship of a transcendent deity in the splendid Hebrew ritual :

“ When the singers lift up their voice,
 And the trumpets made endeavor,
 Sounding, ‘ In God rejoice !’
 Saying ‘ In Him rejoice
 Whose mercy endureth forever !’

“ Then the temple filled with a cloud,
 Even the House of the Lord ;
 Porch bent and pillar bowed ;
 For the presence of the Lord,
 In the glory of His cloud,
 Had filled the House of the Lord.”

In the second scene, as it may be called, is pictured the sad effect of modern criticism upon religious faith. The presence of Christ in the world is pictured as a star that had come to the earth and opened, revealing the actual presence of God :

“ We gazed our fill
 With upturned faces on as real a Face
 That, stooping from grave music and mild fire,
 Took in our homage.”

Driven away by critical unbelief, the star had closed and retreated, leaving the earth desolate, and man sadly recognizing himself as the highest in the universe.

In the third scene is recognized the divinity that is immanent in the world :

“ Why, where ’s the need of Temple, when the walls
 O’ the earth are that ? What use for swells and falls
 From Levites’ choir, Priests’ cries, and trumpet-calls ?

“ That one Face, far from vanish rather grows,
 Or decomposes but to recompose,
 Become my universe that feels and knows !”

In comparing Tennyson and Browning we have found that Tennyson represents the realistic and human aspect of ethics and religion, while Browning represents rather their ideal aspect. In considering this contrast, different persons may be tempted to exalt one of these poets above the other. To some the faith which battles with doubt and triumphs may seem the noblest. To others the faith that dwells in serene peace may seem the most exalted. Why need we seek to give to one or the other such preëminence? Each had his special work, and each performed it nobly. Let us rather rejoice that these great poets have together presented the higher life in its fullness; that together they have done that which no one singer could have accomplished.

XII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BROWNING

WHEN the philosophy of Browning is spoken of, the words may seem to some to imply either that Browning was a philosopher and not a poet, or else that he being a poet is to be treated as if he were a philosopher; that is, he is to be forced into the likeness of something that he is not. The manner in which the works of Browning have sometimes been studied might make this suggestion probable. It cannot be denied that students of Browning have sometimes drawn from his works meanings that they have first introduced into them. Sometimes the poems have been so analyzed, the thought so straightened out, its stages so numbered and expounded that it would hardly enter the head of the reader to imagine that it was a poem and not rather an abstruse treatise that he was working over. At least, this treatment suggests the study of some foreign author that must be translated by the aid of grammar and dictionary. Some readers can go through all this without harm; just as some school-boys may toil through grammars and dictionaries, syntax and etymology, may take their author all to pieces, and then can put him together again, or rather can see him stand forth in his original freshness and beauty, as Pelias was expected to arise in renewed youth after having been cut to pieces and boiled.

The daughters of Pelias were disappointed, however; and many schoolboys have, I fear, as the result of their work, only a lot of verbs and nouns and rules of syntax. So I fear that for some Browning must remain nothing other than a preacher or a philosopher; whereas he should be seen first and last, if not always, between the two, a poet. I confess that it is sometimes a little difficult so to see him. In some of his later poems the metaphysician seems sometimes to get the better of the poet for a while, though the poet comes out triumphant at last.

If we have, for the moment, to consider Browning as a philosopher, let us then not forget that he is first of all a poet. Indeed, there is no necessary conflict between philosophy and poetry. Every man has his philosophy—his philosophy of life. Every poet is a man, and thus has his philosophy of life, and we should naturally expect that this would show itself to some extent in his works. Sometimes, indeed, the philosophy manifested in the works of an author is too superficial and obvious to be made a matter of thought. Sometimes his compositions are the mere play of the author, and he puts little of himself into them. He can, however, rarely conceal himself for long. Few can so truly as Shakespeare create a world in which the presence of the creator is hardly felt. Browning was also a dramatic poet, but the world of his creation was a smaller one, and rightly or wrongly we feel that we gain from it a real impression of the personality of its author.

To see more clearly the possibility of a blending of poetry with philosophy, we need to consider briefly what poetry is and what philosophy is. It is sufficient for our present purpose to say that for poetry is

needed the enlivening touch of the imagination. This does not mean that where this touch is present the product is always what we call poetry; but simply that there is no poetry without it. It can be said, however, that where there is this touch of the imagination, the result is akin to poetry and differs from it, if at all, only in form. It may be said further that there is nothing which the force of the imagination may not transform to poetry. By the use of the word transformation I do not mean to imply that truth is necessarily sacrificed to poetry. It is sometimes so sacrificed. In this case, however, we are apt to speak of fancy rather than of imagination, though the two are really different forms of the same power. Even fancy plays to a certain extent about nature, adapts itself to a certain extent to the natural object, and follows lines indicated by it. Imagination has a power of vision as well as of creation. It sees the universal in and through the individual. In this it is akin to science and philosophy. It differs from them in the fact that while they recognize intellectually the universal in connection with the individual, the imagination sees and feels it. Peter Bell stands as the ideal of the prosaic, literal man. Of him we read:

" A primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

Why was not Peter Bell right? Why must we not admit that he saw things as they were, and that if the poet saw what he did not see, what was thus seen was fictitious and unreal. What more, then, did the poet see? If I were a poet I should be better able to say. For one thing, the poet must have felt

that the flower did not stand by itself, but that it was an expression of the heart of nature, that the universal life blossomed in it. He might also have seen in it a symbol of I know not what gracious and graceful things. Sweet and gentle associations may have gathered about it for him. The flower may have seemed to him something akin to himself, only much more pure and simple. All this, or nearly all, is as real as that which was seen by Peter Bell. The imagination created something, but it saw more than it created.

In the Prologue to *Asolando*, Browning compares his present with his past :

“The poet’s age is sad : for why?
 In youth, the natural world could show
 No common object but his eye
 At once involved with alien glow —
 His own soul’s iris bow.

“And now a flower is just a flower ;
 Man, bird, beast are but beast, bird, man —
 Simply themselves, uninct by dower
 Of dyes which, when life’s day began,
 Round each in glory ran.”

I suppose that the poem of Peter Bell was not in Browning’s mind when he wrote these lines, but it is the Peter Bell attitude that the lines picture ; yet I do not believe that Browning assumed it to anything like the degree which they imply. However this may be, Browning proceeds to justify it :

“Friend, did you need an optic glass,
 Which were your choice? A lens to drape
 In ruby, emerald, chrysopras,
 Each object — or reveal its shape
 Clear outlined, past escape?”

How gladly would Peter Bell have so responded to

Wordsworth if he had had the wit. But let us follow Browning further :

“How many a year, my Asolo,
 Since — one step just from sea to land —
 I found you, loved yet feared you so —
 For natural objects seemed to stand
 Palpably fire-clothed ! No —

“No mastery of mine o'er these !
 Terror with beauty, like the Bush
 Burning but unconsumed. Bend knees,
 Drop eyes to earthward ! Language ? Tush !
 Silence, 't is awe decrees.

“And now ? The lambent flame is — where ?
 Lost from the naked world : earth, sky,
 Hill, vale, tree, flower — Italia's rare
 O'er-running beauty crowds the eye —
 But flame ? The Bush is bare.

“Hill, vale, tree, flower — they stand distinct,
 Nature to know and name. What then ?
 A Voice spoke thence which straight unlinked
 Fancy from fact : see, all 's in ken :
 Has once my eyelid winked ?

“No, for the purged ear apprehends
 Earth's import, not the eye late dazed.
 The Voice said, 'Call my works thy friends !
 At Nature dost thou shrink amazed ?
 God is it who transcends.' ”

It is as I said. Poor Peter Bell is deserted by the poet in whom he seemed to find a defender. In this last verse the poetic spirit rises and leaves him with his primrose that was nothing else. It suggests that though one may see the natural object just as it is, the flower just as a flower, yet through it one may discern the presence of nature and of God. At the same time, the poem I have just read marks a descent from poetry towards prose, for to prose Browning

could never, or at most very rarely, quite descend. It does illustrate, as we shall see more clearly later, the difference between Browning's later and his earlier works ; and I contend that what Browning saw in his youth, when the objects of nature shone with an iridescent glow ; what he saw in his first visit to Italy, when all the associations of history and romance, of poetry and art were concentrated into a single moment, and, kindled by his youthful enthusiasm, played about each thing of beauty like a lambent flame — this, I contend, was more true than the clear outlines which his more mature and custom-dimmed gaze beheld.

Since poetry depends upon the method of treatment rather than upon the nature of the material treated, there would seem to be no reason why the material which enters into philosophy should not assume the poetic form. Some of the early philosophical systems were in fact expressed in poetry. Heraclitus and others among the early Greek philosophers were poets. Nothing might seem more foreign to poetry than the view of the world and its creation that was held by Lucretius ; and yet his great poem still occupies a foremost place in the literature of the world. Indeed, philosophy and poetry are very much akin. The aim of philosophy is to express an idea of the world in which its discords are changed to harmonies. A system of philosophy is thus an ideal creation as truly as a great poem. The constructive imagination plays as prominent a part in the one case as in the other. The system of Hegel may be compared to a grand symphony, the theme of which is continually recurring, sometimes in simple forms, and sometimes involving the vastest and most complicated

elements. In general the ideas of philosophy are presented under such large and universal forms as to exclude the more delicate and concrete treatment upon which poetry so largely depends, just as the artist does not for the most part find in Switzerland the scenes that are best fitted for his skill. Yet philosophic ideas may be presented in narrower and more picturesque forms. Special aspects of the great whole may be selected and the power of the ideas which philosophy suggests may be exhibited through the strifes and collisions of the world. The questions which it is the business of philosophy to solve may be forced upon us by the experiences of life, and may suggest their own solutions. Students of philosophy too often express themselves in harsh and abstract formulas. He only has got at the heart of philosophic thought, or rather we may say that philosophic thought has got into the heart of him alone who can utter it in simple speech and can apply it, hardly conscious that he is so doing, to the ordinary circumstances of life. We must recognize also the fact that there may be a philosophy that is in a special manner poetic; that the poet as poet may have a philosophy that is as likely to be true as any that is elaborated by the abstract intellect.

I have assumed that it is at least a part of the business of philosophy to solve the discords of the world. Such discords exist under many forms, and one or another of these may excite specially the interest of the philosophic thinker. In regard to almost any system, one might ask what is the special aspect of the apparent discords of the world which this system was primarily designed to meet. Elsewhere I have referred to the aspect of the world's discords or col-

lisions which seems chiefly to have interested Browning, so far as his earlier poems are concerned. This is the relation between the head and the heart. This furnishes the *motif* of most of his dramas, and is not wholly wanting in any of them. The same element enters also into some of his more important poems other than the dramas. Shortly after the appearance of the "Dramatis Personæ," in an article in the "Christian Examiner" I presented this aspect of Browning's poems so far as they had then appeared; and this article without any agency of mine was placed in the hands of Browning, who, I was informed, expressed himself as much pleased with it. I mention this to show that the view of his poems which I had taken was at least near enough to the truth to interest him. I do not understand that he necessarily was consciously working out this theme in the earlier poems. Whether or not this was the case, it is impossible to decide. This constantly recurrent theme at least shows that the relation between the head and the heart so interested him that it naturally offered itself to his mind in the moments of its creative activity.

After I had thus traced the various developments of this theme in the earlier poems, I was greatly interested, in reading the work of Professor Jones entitled "Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher," to find that he recognized in the later poems also, as their most important element, the same antithesis; Jones, however, pointed out that in these later poems the head and the heart found themselves in opposition to one another; the relation seemed to have developed into one of open hostility. The exhibition of this relationship demonstrated a certain

unity in the poems of Browning; at least it showed that the same theme, under one form or another, had interested him from the beginning. I speak of learning this fact from Professor Jones's book, because when I first read this I was not familiar with Browning's later poems. To speak frankly, I had been somewhat repelled by them. I have since read them with a good deal of care and with much enjoyment. I recognize the harshness of many of them; but a part are so beautiful that in reading them I do not realize that they are not equal in poetic power to the earlier. Some of them may be; but so far as most are concerned, if after reading them I chance to turn back to the earlier, it is to feel afresh the unequaled power in these great works in which the fullness of the poet's strength was manifested.

The relation between the head and the heart furnishes thus the material with which Browning's philosophy has to deal. The discord that may arise between them presents the difficulty of which Browning's philosophy seeks the solution. In the earlier poems this discord is less marked. In the later it is seen in its full force.

We will first glance at the attitude in which these elements are seen to stand to one another in the earlier poems. Afterwards we will examine the relation in which they are presented in the later works. I shall pass over the treatment of this theme in the early poems very hastily, because I have given it a fuller discussion elsewhere.

The theme of the "Paracelsus" is that the true man should develop equally the intellect and the heart. Paracelsus and Aprile are each an abstraction. One seeks only to know. The other lives only to love.

The one who loves only is weak. He who would know and would live for that alone is strong ; but he too is a failure. He has emptied his world of all true interest. He awakens to learn his mistake. Paracelsus cries :

“ Love me henceforth, Aprile, while I learn
To love ; and, merciful God, forgive us both !
We wake at length from weary dreams ;

“ I too have sought to KNOW as thou to LOVE —
Excluding love as thou refusedst knowledge.
Still thou hast beauty and I, power. We wake.”

and again,

“ Die not, Aprile ! We must never part.
Are we not halves of one dissevered world,
Whom this strange chance unites once more ? Part ? Never !
Till thou, the lover, know, and I, the knower,
Love — until both are saved.”

So in the “ Christmas-Eve ” the love that was manifested in the gorgeous ceremonial of St. Peters is contrasted with the pure intellect of the Göttingen Professor. In these poems we find that the mistakes and failures of life are, at least in part, due to the fact that the head and the heart are so often unequally developed. Where the heart and the head are so contrasted that we have to give the preference to one or the other, it is, according to the poet, the heart to which the preference should be given. Thus in “ Pippa Passes ” the song of Pippa breathing its simple childlike faith has a power to control the lives of those who hear it. The plots and mystifications by which men’s lives were enveloped are pierced by the magic of this song. So the simplicity and straightforwardness of Luria stand in splendid contrast with the cold intellect of the Italian emissary

who watched and measured and judged. We regret the precipitancy with which he yielded himself to the fate that seemed to him so certain ; but though here a calmer judgment would have been the better, we feel that on the whole, he, as he was, stands far above the schemers by whom he was surrounded. So the simplicity of Colombe's love broke through the arguments of policy which would ensnare her. Similar was the relation of Anael to Djabal, and of King Charles to King Victor. In the "Blot on the 'Scutcheon," indeed, we see the ill results that appear when the heart is left too much to itself, and recognize the fact that a little more common sense divided among the characters would have been a good thing.

I have felt it important to dwell upon the contrast between the head and the heart as this exists in the ordinary relations of life, even at the cost of some repetition of what I have said in substance elsewhere, because in no other way would it be possible to make clear how profound and far-reaching is this conception in the work of Browning.

I wish to show that in the relations of life, apart from all speculation, the interest of Browning was, to a large extent, attracted by the part which the elements to which I have referred play in the great drama of the world, and that it was his conviction that while the head and the heart should be united, while each had its proper place and its proper work, yet the heart should be the true leader ; that in matters of practice the heart can cut the knot which the intellect cannot untie ; that it can discern the path, while the intellect may be in wandering mazes lost.

From this examination we are prepared to find a

like relation between the head and the heart when we rise from these practical relations to matters of philosophic or religious interest. We should expect to find that here also the heart is recognized as the leader. We meet, however, one important difference in the attitude of these elements towards one another in this realm of thought from that which we found in the world of life. It is that while in this latter the intellect is presented as in some sense over against the feelings, in the world of religious faith there is in the earlier poems very little distinct reference to the intellect. The head and the heart are in such perfect harmony that they appear to be blended in one common apprehension of the truth. The intellect is so willing to be led by the heart that it does not even raise its voice in conscious recognition of this leadership. It takes it as a matter of course that the heart discerns the truth.

I have spoken of the search for truth. The phrase was not quite just. In these earlier poems there is neither searching nor finding. If these were present the intellect would have a more distinct part to play. There is simply a recognition of the truth. Love is seen to be the most divine thing in the world; therefore it must be the chief thing. The possibility of a division between a power *de jure* supreme and a power *de facto* supreme was simply inconceivable, or at any rate unconceived. Man loves. If the power that rules the world is not love as well as power, then man is superior to it. This is something not to be thought of and not to be reasoned about. In the often quoted lines from the "Christmas-Eve,"

"For a loving worm within its clod
Were diviner than a loveless God,"

it is taken for granted that the central power in the universe is a power of love, for it is assumed that man cannot be the loftiest being in the universe, and that a loving worm could not be more divine than God.

If we were to analyze the logical method of Browning and bring it into consciousness, as he apparently did not, we should find that his test of truth was what it is now common in Germany to call the *werturteil*—that is, a judgment based upon value. This judgment may separate itself into its elements. We may say such a thing is so essential to man's highest life that it must exist; or we may simply take for granted that the thing so essential exists, or, in other words, that what ought to be is. This latter seems to have been the method of Browning.

From what has been said it will appear that the philosophy of Browning was one with his religion. It was a philosophy that was one with faith. The thought of Browning thus takes its place in that line of philosophic development which began with Kant, and which finds its latest illustration in the Ritschlian School of Germany. We speak of it as a philosophical movement, but in strictness we might as well say that it is a movement away from philosophy. Its philosophy is to deny the possibility of a philosophy. From Kant to Ritschl those who are influenced by this movement rest, like Browning, their belief, under one form or another, upon worth. That is and must be which is worthy to be. From Kant to Ritschl the philosophy of those who enter into this movement is, like that of Browning, one with religion. It is the recognition of the authority of the heart in matters of belief.

Up to the point to which we have now followed him Browning has had little in common with the negative work of this school. I mean that thus far he has made little war upon the philosophy of the intellect. He has simply affirmed with glad enthusiasm and with absolute confidence the faith of the heart.

What has been said must not be understood as implying that Browning was directly influenced by the philosophical school with which I have compared him. I recall no indication that he had been brought into contact with these thinkers. Their influence was, however, far broader than personal contact extended. The spirit which spoke through them was in the air. It was a part of the new life of the age. It was an age that rebelled against dogma, and placed its trust in the instincts of the soul. This tendency was, in a sense, impersonal, though it manifested itself in and through persons. We find it not only in metaphysicians and theologians, but in poets and the creators of the larger literature. It spoke through Carlyle and Emerson. It was like the genius of the spring quickening life in the lowliest flower as well as in the sturdy tree. Tennyson shared it as truly as Browning.

I intimated in the introduction to this paper that there might be a philosophy that was in a special manner that of the poet. What we have been considering is such a philosophy. It is simply the giving free play to the idealizing elements of the spiritual life, and accepting as true the highest results of this idealizing process. This may be called philosophy in the large sense of the word, because it furnishes a basis upon which belief may rest. It is at the same

time poetry, because it is the expression of an ideal, and thus in a sense the work of the imagination. If, however, it is poetry, it is poetry believed in; and thus we come back to the philosophic aspect of the process.

This is not the place to discuss the claims of this philosophy upon our acceptance, or to question whether or not it needs any qualification. All that is here in place is to point out its nature, and to show, as I have tried to do, that the method of Browning is in close accord with that of the most important philosophic development of our time.

The two articles of Browning's philosophic creed, which was at the same time his religious creed, were the belief that love is the centre and controlling power of the universe, and, growing out of this, the belief in the immortality of the soul.

This confidence in the dominant power of love appears so frequently in these earlier poems that in spite of its importance it is not necessary for our present purpose to dwell much upon it. We have a splendid example of this confidence, and of the judgment of worth upon which it rests, in "Saul," in which we find also a recognition of Christ as the manifester of this love such as we meet in several of these poems. This poem is so much to our present purpose, that, though it is so familiar, I will quote a few lines :

"Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou — so wilt thou!

So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown —
 And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
 One spot for the creature to stand in! It is by no breath,
 Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death!
 As thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved

Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being Beloved !
 He who did most shall bear most; the strongest shall stand the
 most weak.

'T is the weakness in strength that I cry for ! my flesh that I seek
 In the Godhead ! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
 A Face like my face that receives thee ; a Man like to me
 Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever : a Hand like this hand
 Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee ! See the Christ
 stand ! ”

It was this recognition of the manifestation of God in Christ, this messianic prophecy, that doubtless led Browning to put this whole exalted utterance into the mouth of David.

In one very striking passage in “ Sordello ” Browning apparently expresses the belief that except as manifested in Christ God would be the Unknowable. This passage is more important because Browning arrests the progress of the story and in his own person utters the thought,

“ Ah, my Sordello, I this once befriend
 And speak for you. Of a Power above you still
 Which, utterly incomprehensible,
 Is out of rivalry, which thus you can
 Love, though unloving all conceived by man —
 What need ! . . .

 But of a Power its representative
 Who, being for authority the same,
 Communication different, should claim
 A course, the first chose, but this last revealed —
 This Human clear, as that Divine concealed —
 What utter need ! ”

Besides “ Sordello ” and “ Saul ” there are three or four other poems in which the central position is given to Christ. This is quite marked in “ Pauline.” In “ Christmas-Eve ” the poet’s own voice seems to break through the limits of the allegory to utter this conviction. In “ Easter-Day ” there is the sugges-

tion of a similar view ; but the allegory has no rift like that which we seem, at least, to find in the "Christmas-Eve." An "Epistle Containing the Strange Medical Experiences of Karshish the Arab Physician" and "Cleon" seem to have a similar import. There may be others which I do not now recall. We cannot reason positively from these poems to the poet's own thought except, perhaps, in the case of "Sordello" and "Christmas-Eve," but we can hardly escape the impression that this was the view that the poet habitually held of the position of Christ in the world. Such a recognition of the manifestation of God in Christ is not inconsistent with the statement of Mrs. Orr that he "had rejected or questioned the dogmatic teaching of Christianity."¹ "The evangelical Christian and the subjective idealist philosopher were curiously blended in his composition,"² as Mrs. Orr tells us in another place.

The "Dramatis Personæ" has always appeared to me to be one of the most interesting of the volumes published by Browning. It was written before he had passed out from the inspiration of the companionship of Mrs. Browning or from the softening influences of her death. It contains some of his ripest compositions, as the "Rabbi Ben Ezra" and, in a wholly different vein, the "Caliban upon Setebos." It is in a special manner interesting as forming the conclusion of what is generally recognized as Browning's first period. We find in it an indication that he had passed or was passing out from the form of thought to which I have just referred, and had begun to take a larger view, whether truer or more helpful it is not for us here to consider.

¹ *Life and Letters of Robert Browning*, vol. ii., p. 540.

² Same, p. 542.

The last poem in the "Dramatis Personæ," the "Epilogue," presents in a very striking way the chief stages through which the thought of the world in regard to religion has passed. These are, first, that of the worship of a divinity over against the world; secondly, the stage of skepticism; and thirdly, the recognition of a divine power, immanent in the universe. The first speaker, who, we are told, represented David, describes in magnificent language the worship of the Temple, which, by the way, David had never witnessed. We have placed before us the scene

"When the singers lift up their voice,
And the trumpets made endeavor,
Sounding, 'In God rejoice!'
Saying, 'In Him rejoice
Whose mercy endureth forever!' —

"Then the Temple filled with a cloud,
Even the House of the Lord;
Porch bent, and pillar bowed:
For the presence of the Lord
In the glory of his cloud,
Had filled the House of the Lord."

The second speaker represents Renan. He refers to the passing away of the divine vision.

"Gone now! All gone across the dark so far,
Sharpening fast, shuddering ever, shutting still,
Dwindling into the distance, dies that star
Which came, stood, opened once! We gazed our fill
With upturned faces on as real a Face
That, stooping from grave music and mild fire,
Took in our homage, made a visible place
Through many a depth of glory, gyre on gyre,
For the dim human tribute."

The Face had by degrees disappeared. Man remained the highest being in the universe.

“ Oh, dread succession to a dizzy post,
 Sad sway of sceptre whose mere touch appals,
 Ghastly dethronement, cursed by those the most
 On whose repugnant brow the crown next falls.”

The third speaker is not named, and may perhaps be considered as the poet himself. He represents the reconstruction of faith, only under a somewhat different form. The passage ends :

“ Why, where 's the need of Temple, when the walls
 O' the world are that ? What use of swells and falls
 From Levites' choir, Priests' cries, and trumpet-calls ?

“ That one Face, far from vanish, rather grows,
 Or decomposes but to recompose,
 Become my universe that feels and knows.”

We have here a view of the relation of God to the world different from any that we have before found in Browning. It represents the attitude of one who had passed through the doubts and questionings of this doubting and questioning age, and had come out with a faith changed in its form, indeed, but as strong and as real as that which it replaced. So far as this poem is concerned, the real incarnation of the divine is found in the universe itself. I think that never again, except in “The Ring and the Book,” where dramatically it was in place, does the Christ appear as the express manifestation of God ; although in the struggle with doubt that the later poems represent, such a manifestation, had it been recognized, would have brought great help. In one thing the poem of which I last spoke may disappoint us. Perhaps the poet himself may have awakened to a disappointment. The poem is, as we have seen, the utterance of one who had passed through the conflict with doubt and had come forth unscathed. Perhaps the poet thought

he had reached the point of calm and perpetual repose. His later poems show that the real battle was yet to be waged. He was to come forth triumphant indeed, though not wholly free from the marks of the struggle. It may be that he missed more and more the serene faith of the sweet singer who had walked by his side and cheered and encouraged him by her presence. At the same time, he had in his later years burdens to bear such as he had not before experienced. There was the perpetual sorrow of his great bereavement. The sudden death of a friend in "La Saisiaz" came as a fresh sorrow before the last had healed. This left him, for the moment, with so dark a view of life that when we read the poem that bears the name so sad to him we long for a minstrel to sing to him a song, not of hope merely, but of the fullness of his own life, such as his David sang to Saul. Whatever may be the reason, we find in the later poems much more distinct recognition than in the earlier poems of the intellectual difficulties that stand in the way of faith.

In the introduction to this paper I quoted a poem from the latest collection published by Browning, in which he speaks of the disappearance of the glory which in the poet's earlier days invested every natural object for him. This glow was found also in the world of faith. From his whole nature seemed to rise a flame of love and trust that illuminated the present and the future. As the brightness which had radiated from the outer world tended to fade somewhat with the waning of the poetic imagination of Browning, so was it with the spiritual illumination. As this flame sank, the nature of its source became more distinctly visible. Though, before, the intellect

and the feeling seemed to unite to produce it, we now see it rising from the feeling alone, the intellect reflecting it, perhaps, but not joining in the creation of it. To speak more simply, we have seen the part which the relation between the head and the heart played in so many of Browning's earlier poems, and how, throughout, the poet's tendency has been to give the primacy to the heart. In these later poems the heart has still the primacy, and its visions are accepted for the truth. The intellect, however, professes ignorance, and stands by — we might almost say sullenly — giving to its eager companion no open help. So strongly marked is this, that Professor Jones, in the important work that has been already referred to, accuses Browning of agnosticism, and takes much pains to show that his agnosticism has no real foundation in the nature of things.

There are many passages that seem to justify this charge. Take, for instance, the following from "La Saisiaz."

" Conjecture manifold,

But, as knowledge, this comes only — things may be as I behold,
Or may not be, but, without me and above me, things there are;
I myself am what I know not — ignorance which proves no bar
To the knowledge that I am, and, since I am, can recognize
What to me is pain and pleasure: this is sure, the rest — surmise.
If my fellows are or are not, what may please them and what pain, —
Mere surmise:

.
Pleasures, pains, affect mankind
Just as they affect myself? Why, here 's my neighbor color-blind,
Eyes like mine to all appearance: 'green as grass' do I affirm?
'Red as grass' he contradicts me; — which employs the proper
term?

Were we two the earth's sole tenants, with no third for referee,
How should I distinguish? Just so, God must judge 'twixt man and
me.

To each mortal peradventure earth becomes a new machine,
Pain and pleasure no more tally in our sense than red and green."

In several poems Browning thus insists upon the impossibility of taking the point of view of another person. We cannot get outside ourselves. Nescience in general is often insisted upon by Browning in these poems. Thus in "Parleyings with Francis Furini" he says :

"Of power does Man possess no particle ;
Of knowledge — just so much as shows that still
It ends in ignorance on every side."

In "A Pillar at Sebzevar" he contrasts knowledge and love. He says :

"Knowledge means
Ever-renewed assurance by defeat
That victory is somehow still to reach,
But love is victory, the prize itself."

Of course this ignorance extends to spiritual things. In the "Reverie," in "Asolando," we have presented in great contrast power and love. There is evidence enough in the universe of power, but it is impossible to prove that love is manifested in it :

"Head praises, but heart refrains
From loving's acknowledgment.
Whole losses outweigh half-gains :
Earth's good is with evil blent :
Good struggles, but evil reigns."

How easy would it be for power to sweep away

"What thwarts, what irks, what grieves !
.
How easy it seems — to sense
Like man's — if somehow met
Power with its match — immense
Love, limitless, unbeset

"By hindrance on every side !"

There are aspects, he tells us, in which this ignorance is a blessing. If we knew with absolute certainty that what seems to us wrong is really wrong ;

if we knew with equal certainty that there is a divine power that will as assuredly punish wrong as fire burns the hand that is thrust into it ; that thus " life has worth incalculable," earth would be no longer man's probation place. Man would avoid wrongdoing with the same necessity that he refrains from putting his hand into the fire.

"Once lay down the law, with Nature's simple 'such effects succeed

Causes such, and heaven or hell depends upon man's earthly deed
Just as surely as depends the straight or else the crooked line
On his making point meet point or with or else without incline' —
Thenceforth neither good nor evil does man, doing what he must."

The view here presented, that a lack of absolute knowledge is a help to man, because it allows a certain amount of freedom of choice which would be impossible if all the issues of life were thrown open to him, is no new thought with Browning. He has given utterance to it more than once in the earlier poems, notably in the "Easter-Day."

I have here cited only one or two examples of the manner in which in these later poems the intellect is affirmed to be unable to solve the mystery of existence, and in which, on this account, knowledge is pronounced impossible. In every case, however, such statements of the failure of the intellect are followed by the most triumphant expressions of the faith that springs from the heart. Thus in "La Saisiaz" he longs to gather up into himself the fame of Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Byron, who had all frequented the region where he stood, in order that men might gain new confidence for their own faith, while they said of him :

" . . . Why, he at least believed in Soul, was very sure of God ! "

There is an interesting parallel to this passage in a letter quoted in Cooke's "Browning Guide-book" [p. 307]. The letter is addressed to a lady in affliction. After having expressed his faith in the power and love of God, he said, "For your sake, I would wish it to be true that I had so much of genius as to permit the testimony of an especially privileged insight to come in aid of the ordinary argument."

I have just quoted a passage from "Asolando" to the effect that in this world knowledge can discern power, but cannot with equal clearness recognize love. Later in the same poem we read :

" From the first, Power was — I knew.
Life has made clear to me
That, strive but for closer view,
Love were as plain to see.

" When see ? When there dawns a day,
If not on the homely earth,
Then yonder, worlds away,
Where the strange and new have birth,
And Power comes full in play."

In these poems we thus have presented over and over again the contrast between knowledge and faith, between the utterances of the head and the heart. It is these passages upon which is based, as I have already intimated, the charge of agnosticism which Professor Jones makes against Browning.

In examining Professor Jones's treatment of this matter, we notice a lack of careful definition of agnosticism. In fact, there are three forms of agnosticism which are widely different from one another, or rather there are three attitudes of the mind to which the term "agnosticism" may with greater or less propriety be applied. One of these emphasizes the fact of the fleeting character of what we call

knowledge. We no sooner reach a limit than we transcend it. What is called the knowledge of one age is often by the next pronounced foolishness. The more we know, the more sensible do we become of our ignorance. Newton expressed something of this aspect of the case when he said in effect, in reference to his discoveries, that he had only picked up two or three pebbles from the shore of the ocean. He differed from his contemporaries perhaps more in his sense of the unknown than in his knowledge. He at least felt the nearness of the ocean. Paul expresses one phase of this truth when he says, "Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away." I have already quoted from Browning a passage to the same effect, and others might be added. Browning's statement is precisely that of Paul. He compares love that is enduring, and which, so far as it exists, is real and complete, the end and meaning of life, with knowledge, which is fleeting and changeful. Such statements in regard to knowledge emphasize one aspect of it. Professor Jones urges that knowledge is always gaining something real, that it is thus constantly advancing. Browning said the same in his "Death in the Desert." We see precisely what Browning saw when he used the negative expressions that I have referred to, and we know precisely what he meant. Such expressions may easily be taken too literally and too abstractly. We can see this in Paul's case. "We know in part," he says, "but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." It shall be done away in the sense that it is taken up into the perfect. If Paul had been a German scholar and had read Hegel, he would have used the word *aufgehoben*, which with

this philosopher means at once destroyed and preserved. There is thus an antinomy in the case. According to one aspect, our little knowledge is lost and proved to be ignorance. In another aspect it is preserved. Not having at his command that convenient German word which I have cited, Paul could only point first to one aspect and then to another: "We know in part." There is so far real knowledge. It "shall be done away." There we see the aspect of falsity. So, too, there is a contrast between love and knowledge, such as both Paul and Browning pointed out. The vastest knowledge reached by man is imperfect in quality as well as in quantity. Incompleteness of knowledge affects what is known. Nothing is truly known till all is known, for each thing is related to all things, and the truth of each is not in the sum of these relations, so that a part is true as far as it goes, but in the complete organic relation of all. Love, on the other hand, like beauty, however limited, is the real thing so far as it goes. All this, I repeat, is one side of an antinomy, but it has its truth, and it is to this that both Paul and Browning referred. In both cases the expressions are obviously in part rhetorical, although what they refer to is fact. When in the same connection Browning says: "Of power does man possess no particle," he evidently does not mean to be taken quite literally.

The second form of agnosticism to be named, the first, indeed, to which the term is properly applied, depends upon inability to form any conception of the matter referred to. This is the agnosticism of Herbert Spencer. With him the absolute is unknowable because it is inconceivable. We have no conception

by which it can be represented. Of this form of agnosticism there is no trace in Browning. By failing to make such distinctions, by assuming that agnosticism is agnosticism, Professor Jones is led to urge criticism that has no application to Browning. Thus he says: "But although in this sense love is greater than knowledge, it is a grave error to separate it from knowledge. In the life of man, at least, the separation of the emotional and intellectual elements extinguishes both." Again he says: "We cannot love that which we do not, in some degree, know" [p. 321]. All this is perfectly true, but it has not the slightest relation to Browning. Browning, if I may use the expression, knew precisely what he did not know. The most important matters in regard to which the intellect could not satisfy him were the divine government of the world and the future life. He knew exactly what he meant when he spoke of God, of the soul, and of immortality. I do not mean, of course, that he thoroughly comprehended these, or indeed anything else, but he had a thought clear enough for all practical purposes. The trouble was not inability to form a conception, but that the intellect could not prove to him that there were objective realities corresponding to his thought. This is that third form of agnosticism to which I referred, the recognized inability to prove. When Browning said in effect: "I do not know, but I believe," he meant, as I understand him, that he could not demonstrate the truth of that of which he spoke, but that he believed it none the less. Let us take a simple example. I have quoted Browning as saying that it is possible that pain and pleasure in the men and women about us no more resemble ours than the colors resemble one

another that are seen by one gifted with normal sight and by one who is color-blind. Applying this to the great world, he says that so far as his own inner experience of pain and pleasure goes,

"All, for myself, seems ordered wise and well
Inside it, — what reigns outside, who can tell?"

Quoting this, Professor Jones says, "As to the actual world, he can have no opinion, nor from the good and evil that apparently play around him can he deduce either."

"Praise or blame of its contriver, shown a niggard or profuse
In each good or evil issue."

When Professor Jones says that in regard to these matters Browning affirms that he can have no opinion, he goes beyond what is written. Opinion is a very different thing from knowledge. We all have opinions in regard to a great many things of which we have no knowledge. We know, in fact, that Browning had opinions strong and intense in regard to the matters of which he spoke. These opinions he claimed to hold by faith and not as knowledge. He could not demonstrate their truth. He could not even by any process of reasoning remove the difficulties that stood in their way. Browning is striving to move as carefully as though he were trying some scientific experiment. He wishes that nothing that is not absolutely certain shall be allowed to cast any doubt upon the result. He says, I cannot speak for other people. What the world is to them I do not know; but so far as I am concerned all things seem to be ordered wisely and well.

Professor Jones gives no clearer a definition of knowledge than of ignorance. He intimates several

times, indeed, what it is not. A little singularly, what he calls knowledge is very similar to Browning's intellectual ignorance plus faith. He says: "The appeal to the heart is the appeal to the unproved, but not, therefore, unauthorized testimony of the best men at their best moments, when their vision of truth is clearest" [p. 326]. Again he says: "The quarrel of the heart is not with reason, but with reasons. Evidences of Christianity? said Coleridge, I am weary of the word. It is this weariness of evidence, of the endless arguments *pro* and *con*, which has caused so many to distrust reason and knowledge" [p. 328]. Not only does he thus speak of knowledge in what, practically speaking, are the terms of faith, but he recognizes the "faith" of Browning as knowledge. He says: "The 'faith' to which religious spirits appeal against all the attacks of doubt, the 'love' of Browning, is really implicit reason; it is 'abbreviated' or concentrated knowledge; it is the manifold experiences of life focused into an intense unity. And, on the other hand, the 'reason' which they condemn is what Carlyle calls the logic-chopping faculty. In taking the side of faith, when troubled with difficulties which they cannot lay, they are really defending the cause of reason against that of the understanding." Professor Jones in the same connection says very much more to the same effect, and says it extremely well. I for one am for the most part in hearty agreement with him in this matter. In the light of these quotations, and indeed of the whole discussion of which they are a part, the difference between the positions of Professor Jones and Browning seems to reduce itself to a question of terms. In the first place, Professor Jones describes his know-

ledge as being in its essence faith ; that is, as something that does not rest upon proof, as it certainly does not rest upon the senses. He then shows that Browning's faith is really knowledge. This being so, I do not see what contention he can have with him. I do not see where all the talk about agnosticism properly comes in. The use of language on either side appears to me to be justifiable. If one chooses to say, of anything that he is morally sure of, that he knows it, I for one do not criticise him. If he says of anything that has not the authority of the senses, and that does not admit of actual proof, that he does not know it, but that he believes it and is in fact sure of it, I think this language is not to be criticised. The difference is between intellectual certainty and moral certainty. One of these forms of certainty may leave as little place for doubt as the other, but the two represent different forms of authority, and there can be no objection to calling them by different names. If I had to decide between the two, giving my preference to one or the other, I think that I should accept the faith of Browning rather than the knowledge of Professor Jones. At the same time I should hesitate to use the term "ignorance" as freely as Browning does ; not that this term is not justifiable in the connection, but simply because it may be misleading, and because it fails to do full justice to what the intellect has actually accomplished.

I do not think that Browning would have accepted the compromise proposed by Professor Jones. I think he might have replied : "What you say about the best moments of the best men may give fresh inspiration to my faith, but it contributes nothing to the solution of my intellectual questionings."

For the sake of seeing the thought of Browning expressed in another form, we may quote from Tennyson :

“ We have but faith, we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see.”

This we should hardly call agnosticism, but it might as truly be called such as the thought of Browning.

I have thus tried to indicate the kind of unity that runs through the poems of Browning. This is nothing mechanical. It does not make itself felt everywhere. Browning was not the victim of one idea. The world of thought and life was open to him. Still the relationship between the head and the heart often forced itself upon his mind from the beginning to the end of his literary career. It is clear that throughout, both to his poetic insight and to his more conscious thought, the primacy belonged to the heart. Even at the last, when the intellect seems to rebel somewhat against this leadership, the heart remains untroubled and supreme, and sings with the old confidence, though in different words, its early song of faith :

“ God 's in his Heaven,
All 's right with the world.”

The Riverside Press

*Electrotyped and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.
Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.*





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