Fundamentals of Faith

in the

Light of Modern Thought

By
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INTRODUCTION

HAVING had the privilege of an advance reading of the pages which follow, and having been requested to write some words of preface, I gladly enter these pages to serve as the forerunner for one of my friends and pastors.

I cannot think that it so much matters whether I agree with every sentence that the author of this book has written. Doubtless few of us have ever found several hundred pages of writing with every detail of which our own personal views would correspond. For there is, after all, a personal orthodoxy, and there is a church orthodoxy. If we try a man by the personal standard, he may be quite heretical; if we try him by the church standard, he may be very sound. This is because a church standard is and should be broader than a personal standard. If it were otherwise, thousands of labels of infallibility would plague the world. As an example, the Methodist Episcopal Church has no one doctrine of scriptural inspiration. Mr. Wesley wisely put it that "the canonical books of the Old and New Testament Scriptures *contain* all things essential to salvation." Years of

thinking could not possibly have yielded a better or safer statement. That broad creed of inspiration has saved our church from a crisis. I hold to the dynamic theory of inspiration; one of my ministerial friends holds to the verbal theory. From my personal standard I must regard him as heterodox, and from his personal standard he must regard me as heterodox. But from the church standpoint we are both orthodox, having room for each individual view within the ample statement of the church's creed.

Now, the author of this book has won for himself the repute for independent thinking. His mind is not unacquainted with ventures. But the adventuresomeness is wholly reverent. The pioneer always remains the mystic; and when he does not dogmatically pronounce a sure opinion of the nature of the burning bush, we still know that he has obeyed the divine command for reverence, and that he regards the place whereon he stands as "holy ground." His touch upon the mysteries is never profane, nor sacrilegious, nor blasphemous, nor even overbold. As I read the manuscript it seemed to me more than once that I could see the author listening intently and could hear him saying, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." It is very good and

important to maintain that mood in the Church of the Living God.

As for the main message of the pages, how much it is needed to-day! The world is noisy; we need to hear the still small voice. The world is nervous; we need to catch our Lord's command to rest. The world has a great visible; we need to get sure glimpses of the Invisible. The world is unduly lured by its own passing life; and it needs to lay hold on Him who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Consequently, the eternal in time is precisely the sense that the heart of the fussy world needs; and, like a refrain, that is at once major and minor, that note sounds in this volume. Above the towers of our clanging earthly cities, we see the turrets of the everlasting City of God. The mood of "everness" defeats the mood of "temporariness." The children of the Lord walk the ways of men; and those ways are all made to slope upward to those gates which we shall enter to go no more out forever. It is wonderful to dwell in eternity here—to feel that all fragments of the earthly calendar are made complete, by God's grace and our own purpose, so that even now the dates that are written under the term "Anno Domini" are given the meaning of the everlasting Lord.

That, dear readers all, is the impression that this book has made on my own mind and heart. I am proud to have within the Boston Area a man who, in the midst of busy pastorates and of overseas service, has been thinking these thoughts. And I am glad to place these words of mine in the front of his book, as I put up a prayer that the message herein given may have a genuine mission for many of the Lord's children.

EDWIN H. HUGHES.

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PREFACE

THE purpose of the chapters which follow is to attempt an interpretation of some of the more important facts of our Christian faith in terms of the ethical and scientific concepts of our own day.

One principle has furnished the key to this interpretation, namely, the assumption that the fundamental fact of human history is the growth of eternal life in time, and that the value of any doctrine will depend upon its relation to this fact. This principle has determined both the choice of topics and the order of their arrangement.

The doctrines of the Christian Church are made the subject of severe criticism to-day. Many men have withdrawn their consent from these doctrines, because they can no longer accept a certain form of statement with which they regard them as identified. I believe that there are eternal truths underlying these articles of faith, and existing independent of them, which every honest and reasonable man will support, if they are brought to his attention. These are the truths by

which we must live. I have endeavored to bring them to light here.

I do not mean to infer that what is presented in these pages is the sum-total of my own belief regarding any one of these truths. It is not my purpose, for instance, in the treatment of the claims of Jesus, to dismiss at a stroke a line of evidence which is dear to the hearts of many, and to them superlatively important. I insist, however, that if for any reason that evidence becomes valueless to anyone, Jesus still has certain fundamental claims upon a man's life, by reason of which that man owes to him his service and devotion. It is these claims that I have tried to make prominent in this argument.

The ability of Christianity to stand the final test of a religion will rest, in the last analysis, not upon its marvelous aspects, but upon its truth concerning the nature of the human soul in its relation to God, and to eternity.

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CHAPTER I

SOME PRESENT-DAY TENDENCIES IN RELIGION

THESE are days of religious unsettlement. While human life has made marvelous gains on its material side, and has won for itself incalculable wealth, on its spiritual side it is marked by destitution and the lack of deep conviction. Outwardly our civilization has a most imposing presence, but earnest souls are conscious that it lacks something which is necessary to give it abiding worth. Various attempts are made to discover the secret of this lack. In the main these attempts have failed because they have been unable to break away from the spell of the conditions which they seek to correct. It would seem, then, that a search after the great need of our age should begin with an examination of the outstanding religious tendencies of the age, to ask whether they are the leaders or the servants of that which they are called to direct.

I

The history of Christianity may be divided

into two great epochs, separated, roughly speaking, by the year 1600. These divisions are not mutually exclusive, they unfold into and overlap each other, but they represent periods when the life of Christian society has been dominated by tendencies distinct and opposite. The former may be characterized as the supernaturalistic, the latter as the naturalistic epoch in the church's life.

Christianity arose in an age when the foundations of society were crumbling. The pagan religions had failed and passed the scepter to philosophy. Philosophy had ended in skepticism and the negation of those values upon which humanity had set her heart. Judaism arose in an attempt to interpret life in larger terms, but the failure of her national existence had involved the collapse of her religious hopes. The Roman Empire had established political order, but she lacked the power to create and preserve the deeper values of life. As a result the ancient world came under the shadow that must fall on any age that is not girded by great ideals.

"On that hard pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell.
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell."[1]

[1] Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold. London, The Macmillan Company. 1910. Poem, "Obermann Once More."

Then it was that Christianity appeared, presenting a new view of life. If the old order had failed, she proposed the reality of a new order. She came to men with the proclamation of an invisible kingdom in which life's aims could be realized. If the visible world had proved insufficient, if it was unable to preserve the deeper values of life and give to life an abiding meaning, this was because it was only the husk of an inner world. This inner world is spiritual, and man must link his life with it and live for it if he is to find peace. The church is the visible expression of this inner world, and provides the way into its life.

This announcement broke on that age like a burst of sunlight.

> "So well she mused, a morning broke
> Across her spirit gray;
> A conquering, new-born joy awoke,
> And filled her life with day."[1]

Men took heart and turned their faces toward the front. An exhausted society received a new vitality. A new life began to rise in the generations, and for a thousand years the Christian world moved forward under the impulse of that life.

[1] Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold. London, The Macmillan Company. 1910. Poem, "Obermann Once More."

But it was inevitable that the interest of man should turn again to this world. The weakness of early Christianity lay in the fact that it accepted the verdict of the ancients that this world is wholly empty, and proposed an order of life that was separate from it. With the beginning of the seventeenth century the attitude of thought begins to change. Attention turns again to the world of nature. Its glory and its beauty begin to throb in the mind of man. Scientific method is born. Its application produces a new world-view. Nature is broadened immeasurably by discovery and investigation, while at the same time she wins a depth of meaning and a unity of life. A new age, the age of naturalism, begins.

Naturalism was inherently opposed to supernaturalism. The one looked for its guiding principle without; the other sought it within. Naturalism was based on two propositions destined to affect religious thought and life. It declared, first, that man is a part of nature, second, that nature is self-sufficient. And it was inevitable that under this influence the old view of a spiritual order apart from nature should gradually fade away.

II

At first the church opposed this attitude

of mind. But it was no mere passing mood, and it was unavoidable that she should come under its sway. Although never openly indorsing the naturalistic position, she found herself compelled to deal with it, and later to make friends with it. To-day the forms of her life are largely determined by it. The outstanding religious tendencies of our day are inherently naturalistic tendencies. As we look over our religious life, what are its distinctive features?

1. The tendency to rationalize the content of religion. Never before was the demand so insistent that the facts of religion shall submit to critical examination. The scientific method of investigation that has spread itself throughout every sphere of life has invaded the sacred precincts of faith. No object of faith can hope to escape it. God, revelation, miracle, providence—all the sacred mysteries of other days—must present themselves before the bar of criticism. The man of to-day refuses to be bound by beliefs and opinions that have no other claim to reverence than their age. He insists that the Bible shall bear the weight of critical investigation and approve its claim against this test. Essentially this spirit is the Protestant spirit. Protestantism arose as a cry of freedom. It was the answer to the

divine command, "Prove all things." Under its influence great good has been accomplished. The Bible has become a new book; religion has broadened its meaning; the light of intelligence has fallen upon the church's path.

2. The tendency to humanize religious values. One of the outstanding characteristics of the age is its return to the human standpoint. All the values of life are measured by their contribution to human welfare. Man finds the key to his problems within himself. Things are of worth as they minister to his life. In philosophy this new humanism has taken the form of a restatement of metaphysical problems originating with James, Dewey, and Schiller, and known as pragmatism, which measures all values in terms of practical consequence. This same spirit sets a definite task before religion. It must relate itself to everyday life. It must minister to human welfare. The church must justify her place in society by her contribution to man's material well-being. She cannot stand aside from the struggles of life—struggles political, economic, social. If so, she forfeits her right to the respect and support of men. In the battle of the workingman for larger liberty and larger gains she must show a sympathetic and active

interest. But this tendency is inherently a naturalistic tendency. It is based upon the supposition that human life is sufficient in itself.

3. Closely associated with this is another—the tendency to socialize religious effort. This is the result of a new consciousness that the gospel of Jesus has its application to the present world, and that the kingdom of God is to be realized on earth in the reconstruction of human society. During the last twenty-five years we have passed over rapidly from the individual to the social emphasis in religion. The church is beginning to realize that to fulfill Christianity's mission to the individual she must Christianize social conditions. These are the molds in which the individual life is made. This tendency is giving birth to new forms of service. It is ordaining a new ministry and creating a new architecture. Not only so. It asserts itself as the sum of Christian duty. For is not the message of Jesus a social message, and is not love the fulfillment of the whole law? But the more insistent it becomes, the more it falls into the naturalistic position of the preceding tendency, that if men are fed and clothed and recruited, the social problem will be solved and life will come to its own.

III

These, I maintain, are the outstanding tendencies of the religious life of our day. They have been productive of much good. They have wrought for the spread of religious activity. But examined closely they present a negative aspect. Life has gained in breadth while it has lost in depth. Practical effort has grown immensely, but in the meantime the contemplative life has withdrawn into the background. Methods for deepening spiritual experience are dying out. The practice of prayer and belief in its efficacy are becoming less and less. The need of the means of grace for the deepening of the devotional life is no longer felt. Looking closer still, we discover that these tendencies are based upon a fundamentally false conviction, namely, that life is determined by external relations; that if external relations are changed, life will become wholly satisfactory. They forget that life draws from an inner source and must find its control there.

Thus we are not surprised to find that with all its achievement this is an age of religious unrest. Despite our gains in knowledge and the control of the resources of nature, we are not happy. Life is beset with stern contradictions and difficult problems, and lacks both

the power and the insight to deal with these successfully. The ideals of our religion, with all their glamour and appeal, are unable to provide a principle broad enough to coordinate our multiplied activities or deep enough to command our unquestioning loyalty. Therefore the feeling is abroad that somehow religion is losing her soul.

Biblical criticism is good; but the Bible for many has lost that axiomatic certainty in the light of which the earlier ages lived, and we are apt to forget that intellect alone cannot settle the problems of faith, that reason alone cannot enter that life of the spirit that throbs through Scripture. Service of humanity is good; but we must remember that life is more than physical preservation, and that true welfare must be measured not by outward accretion, but by inward expansion. A testimony to the hollowness of the age comes to us from the recent European war. Conscientious men are asking, What is the matter? Is Christianity a failure? With all our civilization men are yet brutal and cruel. Something is the matter. The matter is that we have put success ahead of self-realization, that life is being lost in the effort to live.

This brings us to the one thing needful to our age: a reaffirmation of the reality and

necessity of the spiritual life. Life must win an inner depth, if it is to win stability and peace. For life is more than outward relations. It has temptations to face, burdens to bear, sorrows to suffer, inner perfection to gain. These are possible only as we are able inwardly to transcend the world, and thereby gain a victory over it. The soul must live a life independent of the world, of time; it must be liberated from human limitation. This can be only as it wins an inner meaning for itself. Of this deeper life Jesus Christ is the world's example. He lived in constant communion with the infinite, and thereby his life was raised above sin and chance to perfection and truth. His kingdom was the inauguration of a new world of spiritual meaning and victorious trust. His teaching was the endeavor to show men the way into that spiritual world. In this his divinity consists: the depth of his experience, his consciousness of union with God. If Jesus Christ is to be the Saviour of this age, he must be our spiritual Master, that is, he must bring us in touch with a deeper life that cleanses the heart, strengthens the will, and renews the mind.

There comes to me a story from the later days of Jesus' life. One evening as the shades began to fall he came to that home in Bethany

where he had rested so many times. There were two sisters there. One of them busied herself with the supper-getting; the other, realizing that Jesus' stay was short and that there were many things to ask about the meaning of life, sat at his feet and communed with him. Martha complained because her sister did not help, and Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Two views of life are here presented to Jesus—a receptive idealism and a practical realism—and he is asked to choose. The other day Kipling wrote his poem entitled "The Sons of Martha," in eulogy of the latter view of life. The whole poem is replete with that fallacy that is too much characteristic of our age. For the ultimate question of life is Mary's question: how we can make firm its spiritual values. This is the end for which humanity exists. This is the road to our highest realization. To be able to say with Madame Guyon:

> "I love thee, Lord, but all the love is thine,
> For by thy life I live.
> I am as nothing, and rejoice to be
> Emptied, and lost, and swallowed up in thee."

CHAPTER II

THE REALITY OF THE UNSEEN

Our view of being is fundamental. It determines the character of our thought, the general direction of activity, and therefore the ultimate issue of life.

At first suggestion this statement may appear unwarranted. Among the factors that determine life we are not accustomed to place a man's philosophy, much less do we make it essential. Men who have won certain definite conceptions of reality are no doubt greatly influenced by the beliefs which these conceptions support, but their number is small as compared with the multitude who have never even thought of being as such.

We forget, however, that a belief need not come up to the level of clear understanding to become effective. Few beliefs of the common man are formally understood. They grow up in his life like the faculty of perception: need calls them forth and experience gives them form, but the process of growth and the result thus attained are largely unnoticed. A man may possess beliefs that are undefined, even

unrecognized, but which nevertheless lend color to his every thought and deed. Whether we will it or not, we must build upon some philosophy of life. Thought must have a basis in conception; action must have some principle of coordination. There are also instincts and aspirations native to life, upon whose satisfaction happiness depends, which involve a man's view of being.

This demand for a philosophy of life is increased by reason of the transient nature of human affairs. If we dwell alone in the world of things—that is, in the world as it reports itself to us—we can find there nothing that abides. Life moves on amid shifting scenes, in which the very thread of its own experience is changing. Without some inner principle to bind together these changing experiences and make them one—one both in themselves and with the world—man's existence is weighed down by the sense of insecurity and all its more sacred values are robbed of meaning. Is there no permanence in things —no solid ground upon which man may plant his foot? In the changing life of phenomena is there nothing that abides? These questions press upon us and will not down. Upon the answer we give to them hangs the worth of life's meaning; without an answer, the impulse

is gone that might lead us to make out of this changing world something great and good.

I

In general, two views of reality have been held by the thinking world. One, the materialistic view. This regards the external world as primary. What can be perceived by the five senses and investigated it calls the real. These outward things are the facts, they are the realities. The inner life of consciousness is interpreted in terms of the outer world, and finds its sufficient explanation as a result of physical processes.

This view has always been popular, for to most of us the outer world seems the solid and real. It appears to be supported by the most tangible and obvious experiences of human life. Yet, closely examined, materialism is confronted by serious difficulty. This outer world can be known to us only by the senses, and we have no possible assurance that they report reality—things as they are. Indeed, we know that very often they deceive us, that they report things as we have reason to believe they are not. It may be that Lotze's claim that all perception of the external world is a deception, is extreme. Yet when we take into account the degree to which the perception

of spatial objects is a mental synthesis, and is determined not by the "thing" itself, but by the habit of the mind, the ground for this claim becomes evident. Errors of perception are innumerable. One or two simple instances will call this to attention. You sit in a stationary railway carriage, while another train alongside begins to move. Immediately you decide that your train is moving and that the other is still, and only discover the mistake by reference to your sense of vibration or to some familiar stationary object. Your eye tells you that the afternoon sun sinking toward the west is moving; but as a matter of fact we are taught to believe that the sun is the great fixed central hub and that it is ourselves that move. There are cases, then, when certain of our senses deceive us, but being able to check up the impression with the other senses we call this an illusion. May there not be cases where our senses unite in deceiving us, but since most people's senses are like ours and they confirm our impression, we agree to call what is merely a great sensible illusion reality? At least there is room for grave doubt as to the sufficiency of the materialistic position.

Over against materialism is the spiritualistic view. This regards the spirit in man as

the great reality. Spirit is the permanent, the enduring, it is the true life. Of this life man's body is merely an instrument which may at any time be thrown away. All that comes to us through the senses from the outside world is changing and temporal. Back of this too is a spiritual life and meaning which is forever unfolding itself. This is the reality —the abiding amid the changes of time.

It would be profitless here to enter into an exhaustive criticism of these two methods of interpretation. It is a sufficient statement that the great minds in every age, who have sought an answer to the deeper demands of life, have found themselves driven to the spiritualistic position. They have been forced to believe that the seen is the creation of the unseen, that the material world is the product of thought, that mind, not matter, is the great reality.

As a matter of fact, we all necessarily, though perhaps unconsciously, accept this view as a working basis of life. For instance, we call the structure in which we worship on the Sabbath a church, by which we mean, what? Materials? No! A church is the realized ideal of some architect, saturated with the most sacred sentiments of some worshiping congregation. Away yonder among the hills

is a place you call home It is only a modest cottage built of the humblest materials, but you never think of it without sentiment, and you travel back there every summer to linger near it. From the standpoint of materials it is worthless; but as you sit upon its step some vacation morn that step and door and mantel are vocal of souls and experiences past and gone. The fact is we live in a world of invisibles, a world of homes and churches and schools, of ideals embodied and ideas visualized.

In like manner as we look out thoughtfully upon nature there comes to us a sense that this too is full of meaning. Its objects are symbols. In it is a soul that speaks to our soul. The hill and vale, the stream and field, are the characters of an eternal language. The same is true of the universe as a whole. This too is the embodiment of thought. The very fact that we can interpret it argues a reason immanent in it that answers to our own, for only that which proceeds from thought can be interpreted by thought.

We must estimate the meaning of things not in terms of the seen but of the unseen. This does not mean that we are to despise these earthly forms. The Oriental has taught his fellows that this world revealed to the senses is simply a mirage, and therefore it is to be

ignored. A mirage is a mere semblance, but this is not our world. What we see and hear and feel is the temporal form of reality; it is the eternal subjected to creature use. The Christian ascetic withdrew from the world and hoped to enter into reality by thinking himself away from contact with the things of time. He failed of his aim because he forgot that there are no other characters than these earthly forms from which we can learn the meaning of reality, no other way-marks by means of which we can find the eternal.

II

This principle of interpretation applies not only to things but to events. The great world of events, like the great world of things, has an inner meaning which is the abiding reality amid the changes of circumstance.

There are two ways to read history, just as there are two ways to view reality. It may be considered as a mere succession of happenings, each event sufficient unto itself, each page we turn with a relation only of sequence to that which precedes. China creeping out of the distant past; Egypt sitting like a sphinx on the bank of her river; Greece, Rome, the Goths, the Saxons—they all follow each other in a wandering aimless manner. But there is

another way: that expressed by Hegel when he says that history is "the unfolding of spiritual being in time." There is a purpose in it all which if understood would account for each step in the process. History is not a mere succession of events, it is the progressive unfolding of the divine idea; its inner meaning is spiritual. These things we call events are symbols—symbols of a hidden life, just as the bud and leaf are symbols of growth. In their good time they appear, for their brief day they endure, as the forms in time of an ever-growing, ever-changing life. They have value, not because of their temporal form, nor, as we are wont to think, because they bring pain or pleasure to the race; their meaning lies in this, that they are the birth-throes by which the eternal spirit goes on to higher forms of manifestation.

Out of the mists of the distant past man emerges with the marks of the jungle upon him. For many centuries his path is dark and obscure, and when occasionally he appears before us he is clothed with deeds of barbarism. Then a light breaks upon the path, at first dim and scattered, but growing in depth and clearness. Certain religious beliefs appear, with corresponding moral conceptions that lend direction to the course and give

character to the story. Then Jesus Christ steps out upon the scene with the message of a new life. At first he touches a little group of followers, the circle of his influence widens, the handful grows into an army that sets out to win the world. Broken and persecuted, they persevere in their purpose, coining defeat into courage; the ranks increase, the borders widen, and they enter the twentieth century with the slogan, "The world for Christ in this generation." Sometimes the army has been driven back, sometimes it has wandered from the path, but the course has been steadily forward, and, looking back over it all, we see that behind the world of events is a soul of things that gives meaning to it all.

We have not discovered the key to human history until we have learned that all events are essentially spiritual. Many an incident which to its own day was a mere catastrophe has been found by the centuries following to be the revelation of some wondrous truth to the hearts of men. It is not what attracts the attention of the men of any age that endures—wealth, fame, material success; these soon pass away and are gone. But the thoughts that are begotten, and the ideals that are cherished in the hearts of the great men of the age, for which their lives are a sacrifice,

these abide. The Roman Empire failed to see anything sublime in the teaching of Paul. The political rulers could not believe that he had anything to do with the destinies of their world. They made the mistake common to men of the world of thinking that the things they saw were the real things. Gone are the armies, cities, and palaces of Paul's day; but his ideals still live, registered in the institutions of our Christian civilization. Dante's generation drove him out a fugitive on the hillsides. They left him there. The storm beat on him. In the darkness his soul sobbed out its sorrow. But one day Carlyle rises up to tell the world that "ten silent centuries found voice in Dante." The world is wiser than it seems. As time rolls round it remembers only the things of worth. If we blind ourselves to the spiritual meaning of our own day, remember, the generations that come will see that day only in terms of its spiritual meaning. The first century sent Jesus Christ to the cross, and bowed down before Pilate; the twentieth century has nothing but disdain for Pilate, while it places Christ upon a throne. To-day burns John Huss at the stake, to-morrow does honor to his memory. This generation erects a monument to Garibaldi, whom the last generation made a fugitive from

justice. The world is wiser than we think, and out of the field of the centuries it harvests only the things that abide.

III

A spiritualistic interpretation of history alone provides a satisfactory basis for an understanding of the many puzzles of life.

1. It furnishes a key to unlock the mystery of affliction. Life is a warfare, full of blinding sorrows and the wounding of our noblest sensibilities. There is no path that is not crossed by mishap, no burden that does not gall the shoulder, no friendship that is not made to be broken. The cause of pleasure is also the cause of pain; our source of hope is our reason for despair. One might expect that as we rise in the scale of life we should rid ourselves of its afflictions; but, alas! the higher we climb the more sensible we are to pain. With the deepening of civilization comes the deepening of our soul's sensibilities. This thought of itself tends to fill one with despair. But if we can believe that there is a hidden worth in these experiences, and a purpose that is beneficent, while they appear none the less harsh, they become at least more reasonable.

The problem of the world's suffering is al-

ways an enigma, but one thing is clear. Whatever be the justification, out of the strife and struggle come the treasures of the ages. Come back with me to the fourteenth century in England. A dark cloud gathers in the east and death springs up from the ground. Men die, women and children die; the baron in the castle, the monk in the abbey, the villein on the farm, all die. The terror is called the black death. In some towns not a single man is left. Then the springtime comes, and the summer sun with healing in his wings; and health returns; but the half of England is gone. Terrible! yes; but out of that stream of death came a new England. The feudal system with its mailed hand of bondage was doomed. The barons were dead; there was so much to do and there were so few to do it that the laborer began to go where he wished and to demand a fair wage for his work. Thirty years later came the uprising that made the English peasant the freest man of his class in the world.

And so it is in our lives. Many experiences bear the aspect of tragedy, and their curse is unmitigated unless they can be made to serve a spiritual end.

2. It gives a point of view from which to understand death. Life at best is a process

of decay. While the history of man has been marked by conquest over opposition and difficulty, and the banishment of ignorance and fear, one enemy has mocked his genius and defied his rule. That enemy is the power of dissolution. He builds, and it tears down. It sends its rust to eat up his handiwork; its mold to destroy his libraries; it taxes his health and faculties until at last "the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern; and the dust return to the earth as it was."

This fact has been sufficient to fill even the heart of the strong man with despair. Falling on death at seventy-two, Confucius, the great sage of the East, cried out, "The great mountain must crumble, the strong beam must break, and the wise man wither away like a plant." "Man giveth up the ghost and where is he?" was the sad refrain of the Hebrew prophet. And indeed, if there is no ground for believing that back of this decaying form there is an abiding spirit, this despair is reasonable. The only trustworthy optimism grows out of an ability to set time over against eternity, the seen over against the unseen, with the promise of an inheritance beyond. Then death is not going out, it is going home.

It is the spirit coming to its own. It is breaking through the veil into the realm of the unseen, into the world of eternal things.

Hall Caine is a great prophet of the soul. Have you read his story of Lord Nuneham in *The White Prophet*? Ruling with the hand of a tyrant, Nuneham had succeeded in bringing order out of chaos, and establishing a measure of prosperity in the land of the Nile. But as he had grown old the people had grown restless, and his empire was crumbling. Through all these years his wife, a choice spirit, had busied herself with those duties and devotions that lend culture to the deeper life. Then came the day when the Egyptian nurse knocked at the door to call Nuneham upstairs to close his wife's eyes in death. He looked upon her face radiant with celestial hope, he listened to her final reaffirmation of her faith, then returning to his study he seated himself in meditation. Memory called the roll of friends and foes come and gone. He saw the vision of his youth fading away just as its fulfillment was at hand, and searching questions came to him. "Can it be possible," he said, "that I have been occupying myself, after all, with the mere semblance of things, which we call by the great names, civilization and progress, while that simple

soul upstairs has been grasping the eternal realities?"[1]

The years roll by, the wheel turns round, and ever the sand runs out. In April the trees clothe themselves with leaves; only a few weeks, they fall and are gone. So is it with the generations of men. But the record of truth and goodness remains; God's eternal purpose abides. The task of our lives is to make the unseen real. Wherever a life of virtue is manifest in mortal flesh, wherever men and women adorn themselves with spiritual graces and spend themselves for the common good, there the unseen becomes real. And he who sets himself to this task will find his inner life ever renewed, so that, though he die daily, yet he shall be able to say, "I faint not."

[1] Hall Caine, *The White Prophet.* New York, D. Appleton & Company. 1909.

CHAPTER III

LIFE'S DEMAND FOR A RELIGION

THERE is nothing more characteristically human than the religious impulse, yet, as often occurs, that which is most common in experience is most difficult to explain. Until the middle of the nineteenth century religion was viewed as an incidental feature in human life, and students attributed its origin to sources wholly casual. Fear made the gods; religion is an invention of priests; religion is a projection of the tendency in early man to personify the objects of nature; the worship of ancestors is the mother of religion. These are some of the answers to the quest after the source of those forms of faith that constitute the record of the religious history of the race.

It is perhaps the chief service of the science of religion that it has exposed the fallacy of this view. Instead of the religious impulse being incidental to life, it is found to be fundamental. Man's mental structure is essentially religious. From the beginning of human history there is evidence of a principle which has given birth to all forms of religious ex-

pression, and which constitutes a bond of unity deeper than all racial distinctions.

In general, this impulse may be defined as a sense of need, a longing after something. "Just at the time when the human race was beginning to come upon the scene," says John Fiske, speaking as an evolutionist, "there came into the human mind the beginnings of a groping after something that lies outside and beyond the world of sense."[1] Man as man is conscious of the need of protection and direction, of cleansing from uncleanness, of power beyond his own strength. Through a multiplicity of forms, in different ages and races, this consciousness has sought expression, until at last it finds utterance in an insistent demand for God. Fear, ancestor worship, the personification of the objects of nature, represent the method by which man has blindly sought an answer to life's great demand; but always, back of all, is this innate longing for higher communion. This longing disturbs the soul from the first dawn of consciousness. It is deeper rooted than any other want. It is more insistent than any other desire. Years cannot silence it. Our desires change as the years pass by. Youth loves pleasure; manhood,

[1] John Fiske, *A Century of Science*, p. 114. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. 1899.

achievement; old age, rest. But ever present, behind all our desires is this hereditary want, an endless aspiration, a longing for something beyond, a discontent with life as it is and a reaching out toward a good that is undefined.

I

Whence comes this longing? The answer to this question will not only throw light upon man's nature; it will also enable us to understand some of the more permanent beliefs that have influenced his career.

1. It is a necessary result of our being. We are finite creatures, and consciously so, and therefore find life inadequate in itself. From whatever standpoint human existence is viewed, it is found to be subject to limitation; it stands in relations of dependence to a larger life. These relations would not trouble us, we should adjust ourselves instinctively to the condition in which we are, were it not that consciousness is ever bringing them to light. Consciousness, as we know it, not only performs its function, but acquires its nature through reference to a larger whole. Beneath and beyond all consciousness of finite things, all subjective feelings and interests, there is always this wider reference which constitutes the significance of

each. It is the genius of consciousness, not that the soul is moved by desires, nor appealed to by another, but that it transcends itself and the other, and gathers both up in an all-embracing whole.

The knowledge of any object lies in the fact of its limitation. Any object of knowledge derives its meaning not from itself but as a part of a larger whole. Meaning or purpose is always a term of relation. It presupposes not only knowing a subject, but also a wider range of meaning upon which its character depends. To define an object is simply to set certain definite limits upon the universe to which it belongs. Like the horizon, our definition is a boundary; it points within and it points beyond. Nay, more—the inner reference is dependent upon the outer and exists because of it. This object before me is a book. A book is a printed record of facts. What facts? Facts of history, of nature. Thus every fact of knowledge is a questioner leading us outward toward the boundless circle of the whole. Here we get the force of Tennyson's words when he wrote:

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I 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."[1]

The self, the I, the fundamental principle of human experience, is always incomplete. It is not only capable of development in and of itself; it draws from and reaches toward another life which forms its essential ground and constitutes its source of meaning. A full defense of this statement would be beyond the range of these pages. I appeal not only to religion but to philosophy as witness. I am not unaware that there is a group of philosophers who deny what I say. Their voice is but a whisper in the great chorus of those with whom I am in accord. For the oldest Hindu philosophy as well as the latest European idealism agree in the claim that the individual is the sharer in a self-consciousness which includes all individuals. This claim constitutes the eternal foundation of religion. The purpose of religion has always been to discover the nature of this universal consciousness and relate man's life to it in the most helpful way.

All the deeper problems of our lives as individuals are set for us by this relation to

[1] The relation of the finite to the infinite has been presented by Herbert Spencer in *First Principles*, and Max Müller in *Natural Religion*. A careful consideration of these views is given by Edward Caird in *The Evolution of Religion*, vol. i, lecture 4.

a larger life. Every such problem is a form of unrest, and life's unrest, so varied in expression, has its source in one central want. Doubt and perplexity, sorrow and care, all the disappointments that harass our days, are, as Hegel put it, "obstructions of finitude." Not only so, but the struggle and striving, that go under the names "ambition," "industry," "aspiration," and constitute so great a part of human enterprise, are prompted by this deathless yearning for fuller experience. The soul is never satisfied with its present attainment. Whatever be its estate, the broadening horizon of the unattained is a constant allurement in the presence of which every possession is robbed of its charm. This fact has been given powerful statement in the familiar passage of Thomas Carlyle.[1] "Will the whole finance-ministers and upholsterers and confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one shoeblack happy? They cannot accomplish it above an hour or two; for the shoeblack also has a soul, quite other than his stomach, and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: God's infinite universe altogether to himself, therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill

[1] *Sartor Resartus*, book ii, chap. ix.

every wish as fast as it rose. . . . Try him with half a universe, half of an omnipotence, he sets to quarreling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men. Always there is a black spot in our sunshine; it is even, as I said, the shadow of ourselves."

2. This longing comes not only because we are finite beings, but because we are moral beings. We are not only surrounded by a larger life and a larger good of which we form a part, but we are bound to that larger life by ties of obligation, and in the presence of that larger good a feeling of self-accusation haunts the soul. It is no mere trifle of experience that the path of man is clouded by a sense of unworthiness. This too belongs to the very nature of man's being.

If man could be satisfied with what he is, life would be a comparatively easy affair. But this is not the case. Over against what he is hovers a sense of what he ought to be, filling him with an inextinguishable longing for an unrealized good, and making his present lot unsatisfactory. This opposition in man's life may not be sharply defined in his earlier history; nevertheless it exists; a sense of oughtness is never absent from human nature. This constitutes man a moral being. For what is

morality? It is to be lifted out of oneself and made conscious of an ideal law one is bound to fulfill and at the same time is far from fulfilling. Man cannot escape the presence of this law. Like the girding of the infinite, this too is the ever-present shadow of himself. Somehow life is under constant judgment before the standard of the ideal. So far as one conscientiously seeks the demands of that ideal, his conduct is approved; wherein he fails, his soul is shadowed with a sense of unworthiness: where the standard is ignored there results a feeling of condemnation which renders happiness impossible. It is not necessary here to outline the evolution of this standard. Suffice it to say that in whatever form it appears it represents a will, man's own, yet not his own, to which he owes obedience, and in the presence of which he is judged. Therefore a fundamental instinct of the human soul is to find atonement for moral failure and win freedom from condemnation in the presence of this higher will.

There is a characteristic incident recorded in the fifth chapter of Luke. Peter, James, and John had been out on the Sea of Galilee fishing all night, and without success. In the morning they beached their boat and were washing their nets when Jesus appeared and

bade them push forth again and let down into the sea. Despite failure, they obeyed, and lo! the nets were filled. But, the record says, immediately Simon Peter, falling down at Jesus' knees, cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Here is the story of fruitless toil, and success at the Master's word, but in the midst of all this man bursts forth in confesssion. And so it ever is. Amid the din and roar of our daily tasks there is an undertone of self-judgment of which everyone is conscious. Peter is no exception. The first man utters this consciousness in the story of the beginning, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid"; and this utterance is characteristic of every member of the race. God has set up his throne in the human heart, and there every man is brought constantly to judgment before the awful self-revealing sublimity of the eternal.

3. With this sense of unworthiness there is also a sense of weakness. Great is the life of man. Wondrous in his powers and faculties, he is wondrous too in his achievement. The story of the triumphs of science during the past hundred years reads like the age of myth and fable. If we had not seen with our own eyes the marvelous gains that have been made, we should find it hard to believe such achieve-

ments were possible. But when one stands face to face with the soul's task it is a different story—a story of struggle and defeat, of failure and sin. The other day Alfred Russel Wallace wrote his *Social Environment and Moral Progress,* in which he maintains that while the higher nature of man has developed immeasurably in some directions, from the standpoint of morals man is to-day elevated little above the earliest condition that history records. We may not agree with Wallace's claim, but at least it causes us pause, that after twenty centuries of Christian progress such a statement should be made in all seriousness.

Human weakness is due both to the magnitude of the hindrance and the altitude of the goal. Whatever be our philosophy of life, one thing is evident: life must make its progress against opposition, and sometimes this opposition appears insurmountable. As the centuries have passed, man has triumphed over ignorance within and various difficulties without, but he is still, as Wallace said, a slave to self and passion. Evil habit binds its chain about him and robs him of his freedom. In despair he cries out, as one did long ago, "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then, too, the goal —this seems disproportionate to man's ability.

The caged eagle knows that if his prison door is opened, he can spread his wings and rise into the empyrean. His bondage is an imposed bondage. Man is not caged, he is free. He sees the height, but his wings are undeveloped, or his wings are broken. How shall he rise with an eaglet's wing? Who will help his feeble soarings to attain the height? Living in a world full of uncleanness, life demands of us purity—and who can be pure? Your outer acts are clean—has no base thought or passion been harbored in your soul? The deeper we go into life, the more keenly we realize the magnitude of the soul's task, and with that realization there is begotten an endless longing for help from the beyond.

4. Then there are those things we call evils, that afflict mankind with endless misery, and are so difficult to understand. These too constitute a perennial demand for God.

It would be far from me to seek to minimize the joyousness of human life. It is good to live and breathe, to work and get tired, to sleep and rest. Our faculties are attuned to a million sights and sounds that fill the soul with music. The necessary functions of life all have their pleasure-tone. Yet there is another side to the picture. One may underestimate the joyousness of life, but he is blind

indeed who fails to recognize that life is full of trouble and care, anguish and pain, heart ache and bitterness. The king of old wore sackcloth under his purple, and every man wears his sackcloth. Behind the smile and the cheery word there is often the noiseless pain of a hidden burden. What plans we have made, what hopes we have cherished, what friends we have had!—and now the plans have failed, the hopes are blighted, the friends are gone. And so, says Bossuet, the famous preacher at the court of Louis XIV, "We arrive at last at the tomb dragging after us the long chain of our broken hopes." Life is a battlefield with no truce possible in the fight. Whether the army retreat or go forward, the way is strewn with wounded heroes, deserted pennons, and men who have crawled away into the quiet to die. O the pathos of it!

The Great War has accentuated for many of us the shadow side of life.[1] Every morning there passes before the face of the sun a cloud of gloom, rising from the battlefields of Europe, where the bravest and best of our sons are pouring out their lives amid scenes of agony, hate, and slaughter. Men meet upon the streets with a question in the eye—the diurnal question. Now and then some anxious soul

[1] Written during the Great War.

trembles into words: "Why is this so? Why must this suffering be?" From millions of homes once light and happy there rises up the silent wail of a great sorrow. With this shadow, however, there has come also a new and deepening interest in spiritual things. The soldier in the trenches begins to talk of God. The essayist, who long ago dismissed the teaching of the Christian Church as exploded tradition, has suddenly become the prophet of religion. Why this change? Amid the horror, wretchedness, and shame that the war has entailed men turn instinctively, as they have always done, to the great Unknown for consolation and hope.

"The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow."[1]

II

What shall we do with this longing? Shall we stand here on the shores of time, like Enoch Arden crying across the empty waste, to hear in answer only the echo of our cry? Stifle it, says Matthew Arnold; there is no way out of our loneliness. The universe is silent, there is no help outside ourselves. We are

[1] *Shelley's Complete Poetical Works*, p. 408. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. 1901.

separated from the beyond by an unfathomable sea across which comes neither sign nor sound. But if this is true, then life is a mockery. The noblest experiences of the soul—its faith, its hope, its love—become empty impressions to which no reality corresponds, and all our dearest aims are vain. George John Romanes, having felt it his duty to school himself into an attitude of pure skepticism, had the candor to admit that with his "virtual negation of God" the universe for him "lost its soul of loveliness," and human existence became a "lonely mystery," prompting within him "the sharpest pang of which his nature was susceptible."[1]

Every religion must prove itself by its ability to answer the deepest cry of the human spirit. If it fails here, it fails everywhere; if it satisfies here, its existence is assured. Religion is not primarily for intellectual instruction nor for moral direction. Secondarily it is both of these. The source of its being and the test of its value are to be found in its relation to the few fundamental needs of human life. These needs, as we have already seen, are spiritual. They have reference to the relation of man to the universe, the mean-

[1] *Thoughts On Religion*, p. 29. Chicago, The Open Court Publishing Company. 1902.

ing of human conduct, and the goal of human destiny. No answer that is given to them can be put in definite terms, for life at best is a matter of faith, and all that can be asked of any religion is that it shall present certain beliefs which being acted upon will satisfy the human heart and help life upward toward its best.

Herein lies the genius of Christianity. Christianity is not presented as a system of philosophy aiming at the solution of theoretical problems. He who approaches it with this purpose in view may not be wholly disappointed; he has missed, however, the end for which it exists. Any religion, to be enduring, must rest upon a rational basis, but the test of a religion will be found in its ability to answer the deep-felt needs that spring out of our human constitution. Has Christianity met this test? Does it answer the deepest cravings of the human spirit? Does it satisfy the highest aspirations of the human soul? "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee." What has the Christian religion to say about the power outside ourselves? What help does it offer for moral failure? What light can it shed on suffering and death? We can live without an answer to the theoretical problems of life, but we cannot live without an answer to the vital problems. "Show

us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Is there a hand to help, a heart to forgive, a fountain to cleanse the stain? "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee." What answer does Christianity give to this cry of the soul? God lives! As the ocean is round about its islands his life flows round his creatures. This is God's world, and we are the children of his care. If you doubt his goodness, read the story of Jesus. What he was during his brief stay among men, God is. Every word of his was a word of God—every deed was a deed of God. His love for men was a faint reflection of the eternal love. Then fear not! What can separate us from the love of God? Naught but the blind folly of our own sin, which draws us away from the center of his care. Even then the solicitations of the eternal goodness are seeking to bring us back and heal the hurts that sin has made.

Christianity does not profess to answer the speculative problems of life. It offers an answer to the cry of the soul's need. And what is that answer? In the words of Tertullian, "Faith knows no necessity"—words the truth of which was certified by one long before Tertullian, when he declared, "Thou hast been my help, and under the shadow of thy wings will I rest."

CHAPTER IV

JESUS CHRIST, THE ANSWER TO LIFE'S SUPREME DEMAND

THE life of Jesus of Nazareth is being subjected to-day to the severest criticism. Since the day Strauss and Renan first threw down the gauntlet to those who claimed that the sacred character of Jesus' life and work placed them beyond the range of critical examination, there has arisen a long list of Christian scholars who have maintained that the obligations of scientific intelligence require that the primary records of Christian faith shall bear the test of the most thorough investigation. There was a time when the conclusions reached by these thinkers could be scoffed out of court as the deliverances of heretics and destroyers; but that time is past. The scientific investigation of the New Testament records, together with the new light which archæological findings have thrown upon New Testament times, have placed many of these conclusions beyond the range of question. Their forced acceptance has necessitated a reexamination of the founda-

tions upon which it was supposed for so long faith stood secure.

For twenty centuries Christian thought has based the authority of Jesus upon certain external facts whose marvel was considered sufficient to justify his reputed claim to a unique place among the sons of men. Chief among these facts were the miracles he is said to have performed, and more especially the miracles of his entrance into and his departure from human life. With the progress of science the miracles of Jesus have become a difficulty to an increasing number of Christian thinkers. They have made necessary for many what G. Stanley Hall has called "a double housekeeping and more or less dualization of mind." That is, they have required the separate maintenance of a world of science and a world of faith, which these Christians have found difficult to harmonize. It is not my object here to undertake an investigation of the gospel record concerning miracles. I only wish to suggest that the place of Jesus in history, and his claim upon the life of any age does not depend primarily upon belief or disbelief in wonders he may have performed.

In early days signs and wonders were regarded as the necessary evidence of divine power. All the great men of old attested their

claim to be the representative of Deity by the performance of miracles. Without these mighty works their testimony would not be heard. This reliance upon wonders as the certain evidence of God's witness was peculiarly strong among the Jews. Their prophets had accredited themselves in this way. Not only so, but they had specified in their teaching that when the Messiah should appear this would be the sign by which he was to be known. It is significant that Jesus when he appeared sought to discourage marvels as the basis of his claim. Nevertheless, not only the multitude but also the disciples asked for a sign, and he found it necessary to accommodate himself to this demand. Otherwise his influence upon his own age would fail, and that influence was the fulcrum from which alone he could hope to move the world.

Essential as the miracles of Jesus were to the first Christian centuries, the progress of time has lessened their evidential value. This change has been due not to the failure of faith but to the growth of faith. It indicates an awakening of the believers in Jesus to his own view of the nature of his life and work. Jesus' claim to our allegiance does not rest upon his ability to multiply loaves, to walk on the water, to raise the dead or be raised

from the dead. It rests upon his ability to unite man with God, and thereby bring satisfaction to the deepest needs of human life. Signs were necessary one day just as the object lesson is necessary to the juvenile mind; but faith must pass from objects and diagrams to principles before it can become an instrument of life. It may be that the uniqueness of Jesus' life once recognized will make it easier than not to accept his miracles as evidence; but unless a man has known the larger freedom, power, and fellowship which Jesus brought to life, that evidence will be valueless, and when he has known this it will become altogether secondary.

I

That which distinguished Jesus among men was his sense of oneness with God. No one else had made this pretension and sustained it as he did before the world. "I came forth from the Father," he said. "I and the Father are one." This characteristic distinguished both his life and teaching. In the times of severest trial he was self-composed through the consciousness that he was not alone, but his life was linked with another in which were limitless resources of strength and wisdom. This consciousness found voice continually in

his words—indeed, it was the very message of his gospel. The training of the twelve as the first missionaries of a new religion had as its object the creation of a belief that they too were not alone, but were sharers in the purpose and interest of God.

It has been the aim of all religious thought and effort to find a pathway to the presence of the Infinite. Before Jesus came men had looked for that presence chiefly in the world without. They sought the revelation of God in nature; they listened for his voice in the wind and by the sea. It is true the Hindoo had turned the search within. In his proverb, "Myself am God," we have a suggestion of the word of Jesus. But the self with the Hindoo was a sort of thing outside, and to find it and thus find God he must deny all that makes the self what it is. It was the merit of Jesus that he took the human soul, with all its desires and purposes, its passions and aims, and linked it with the eternal. He said: "Man is supremely God's child. In him, above all things else, the image of the eternal is revealed. In him God dwells, and through him he comes to self-consciousness." The destiny of man, therefore, is to live out the life of God in the soul. This is man's true, his higher nature.

There can be no oneness in the sphere of

personality that is not expressed in a union of will and spirit. The life of a person is the manifestation of a self, and the character of self-expression depends wholly upon the nature of the purpose by which the life is sustained. It is to be regretted that so often personality with us is at a minimum by reason of the lack of a principle of coordination; but so far as we are persons, life is the embodiment of purpose, and so far as we share the life of others we are sharers with them in a common aim. Henry Drummond's well-known case of the two students who had lived together in the closest friendship is significant here. The mental and moral reaction of each to any situation was found invariably to be the same. We share the life of God as we are sharers of the purpose of God. That purpose has been revealed through the ages. The nature of the eternal has not remained completely hidden from the mind of man. The history of the race is the story of the gradual revealing of the divine nature. The possibility of that revelation argues an essential kinship between the human and the divine, and a perfect life, if it were realized, becomes at once a declaration of what God is and what man ought to be.

In Jesus that perfect life is manifest. In him all that mystics and seers through the

ages have dimly and partially intuited is gathered up and embodied. In him the divine nature has not only been fully grasped, but he has dared to live it out before the world. Not only does Jesus claim oneness with God, but the character of his life is in complete harmony with all that the finer spiritual discernment of man recognizes a divine life ought to be. Jesus does not base his claim to be the Son of God, therefore, upon the mere authority of his statement, "I and the Father are one," nor upon the reenforcement of that statement by marvelous works. The statement is, rather, the explanation of a manner of life men recognize to be divine. In him God is man and man is God.

To be linked with another life is to have one's strength multiplied; and if that other life be the eternal, there are no limits to the range of possibility open to man. Many a weak and wavering soul has been sustained, and made capable of righteousness, simply by the love or friendship of another. Ambition has been stimulated, ideals created, and strength given to follow the lead of those ideals. The secret of life, says Robert Louis Stevenson, is juxtaposition. At the crossroads of acquaintanceship we touch the determining point of our career. When we have stated union with

God, therefore, we have opened up an infinite reach to human life. Not only is confidence established, through the conviction that one is in harmony with righteousness, with the power that grows out of that confidence, a power that enables one to face suffering with gladness and death without fear, but life derives a potency capable of deeds marvelous to the limited sphere of the child of earth. The power of the Father speaks through the child. Grant, therefore, Jesus' claim to oneness with God, and you have provided the condition for the exercise of extraordinary power.

II

The question of the divinity of Jesus has been associated in many minds with the method of his entrance into the world. Grant the miraculous conception and divinity follows; deny it, and belief in divinity fails. It is unfortunate if the uniqueness of Jesus' nature is made dependent upon an event that is incidental, and which acquires its chief evidence from the fact it is made to sustain. Such a confusion can only be a cause of increasing difficulty to thoughtful Christians.

It is far from my purpose to introduce here a discussion of the miraculous conception of

Jesus. That doctrine is the endeavor of an age long gone to state a great and mysterious truth. The statement may be outworn, therefore some are tempted to throw it away. Let us beware, however, lest we throw away also the truth which it represents. What is that truth? That Jesus is unique among men—unique in the consciousness of his relation to God, and therefore unique in his life and work. The mind of another age stated that truth by saying that he was born of the Spirit of God. That statement may have become awkward, but we should not allow its awkwardness to silence our confession, "Truly this is the Son of God."

The uniqueness of Jesus' life necessarily involved an apparent contradiction. His mission required that the divine life should be lived out within the limits and amid the conditions of imperfect men. This fact gives rise to strange contrasts in his character. In him weakness and strength, simplicity and wisdom, infirmity and majesty are strangely commingled. He shared our temptations as a friend and brother, yet he was sinless, and we go to him for help. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, yet his life was a triumph over pain and sorrow. The fathers of the church tried to state this dual

character by declaring that he was Son of man and Son of God. He was one with men, yet he was more than a man. On the one hand, his humanity required that he should come into the world by human birth; on the other hand, such a life as his could be explained only as a creation of the Divine Spirit. Their statement, however, was secondary. It was an attempt to define a life recognized to be at once distinctively human, and yet essentially divine. The definition may fail, but the fact of the life remains, challenging our endeavor, and rebuking our refusal to give heed to its appeal.

III

We have only stated half the truth of Jesus' mission in the words, "I and the Father are one." Jesus did not stand in lofty isolation above the lives of men. What he was he asked his followers to be; what God was to him he declared he would be to every man. "That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us." The same intimate filial relation that characterized his life was the privilege of every member of the human race. In the consciousness of that relation every man might find the answer to the deep needs of his life.

As with Jesus, man's union with God may be defined in a twofold way: as a union of spirit and a union of will. The former he characterized by the term "faith," the latter by the term "service." These are the two great words in the religion of Jesus.

Faith is the constant experience of the life of God in the soul, a sense of relationship with the eternal. It is the conviction that God is, that he is with us, that he is with us to lead and help and heal. The God in whom we believe is the God we see in Jesus; therefore faith is belief in Jesus. Faith, then, is an experience. It is the misfortune of Christian history that this has not always been emphasized. A few choice spirits in the early Christian days lived life in union with God and attempted to report their experience. The generations that followed took that report, formulated it into a system of belief, and substituted the statement for the experience itself. Then Christianity gradually became a body out of which the life had gone. Yet down across the centuries comes the first apostles' testimony, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

1. This faith saves from the limitations of finitude. Thereby the range of life is increased both extensively and intensively. Man

is no longer shut in by the boundaries of time. He is a sharer of the life of the eternal. Death cannot harm him. He has that within him that transcends the power of change and death. Not only so, but through faith he finds a vocation that gives to his life a meaning and worth that are inestimable. Henceforth the goal of endeavor is that he shall measure toward the standard of Him in whom God dwelt complete. Character, as Jesus realized it, becomes a value to be sought after supremely. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the world, and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And here we come upon the second term of Jesus' gospel. Life is so constituted that no one can win his soul alone. Man, as a child of God, is the member of a family, and wins the opportunity to a larger life in the service of his fellows. "He that loseth his life shall save it." Union with God is fellowship in work. Each shares with all in the divine purpose of creating a kingdom of individuals who will be partners in a life permeated and controlled by the divine will. The ministry of Jesus was the inauguration of that kingdom; it was also the evidence that ages of labor and sacrifice would be necessary for its consummation. To win the kingdom Jesus must

die; to become one with him in the life of God his followers become sharers with him in a process of redemption realized through the ministry of the cross.

2. This faith saves from the hurts and ills of time. It has been said that the unchristian conduct of society to-day does not instance the failure of Christianity, for no serious attempt has yet been made to apply the principles of Jesus to social relations. This same claim might be made regarding one aspect at least of the life of the individual. The mass of men and women are weighed down and their happiness marred by fear and anxiety, prompted largely by ills of their own making. This should not be. Life in God is greater than all these things and need not fear because of them. Fear is the great enemy of man, and fear is only another name for lack of faith. Jesus often wept in the presence of anxiety and heartache, but his tears were tears of sympathy for the failure of faith. It was so difficult for his followers to learn the lesson he came to teach, that they could rise above life's ills. To his disciples he said: "Have faith in God. . . . If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

We have poorly learned this lesson too. The haggard aspects of life—its pain, sorrow, misfortune, and disease—fill our souls with fear, when all that is needed is the venture of faith to prove that life is friendly and essentially trustworthy. Trust in God, with a clear sense of his aim for life, banishes fear as the morning sun scatters the dark. Who can separate us from the love of God? Can tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or trial, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, for through them the real treasures of life are won. He that has found God has found a source of contentment; there is no fear for him who realizes that the eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

3. This faith saves from the guilt and power of sin. Sin is primarily separation from God. It is indifference to and rebellion against the will of God. It is following the momentary particular interest, as opposed to the appeal of a larger good. To be saved from sin a man must be drawn away from obedience to narrow self-interest into devotion to the law of the larger life. He becomes ready to sacrifice present impulse to reason, the gratification of the moment to future realization, individual

gain to the welfare of the common life. Faith accomplishes this change. As the act of coming into conscious union with God, faith begins a process of transformation in character that is destined to terminate in righteousness. The will is the spring of action. When the will becomes right it tends to righten the whole life. Sin may have wrought permanent physical injury, but a change of will has in it the promise of rebirth in character. Not only so, but the life of God in the soul makes available to man the resources of the Infinite. The will of man is energized and made capable of an attainment otherwise impossible. Jesus stated this fact under the allegory of the vine and the branches. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." Jesus is the world's Redeemer, for it is through him that man is drawn away from his sin into union with the eternal. He has taught man to hate his sin. He banished the cloud of guilt from the human soul when he said, "It is not the will of your Father . . . that one of these little ones should perish." He struck new courage into man's heart when he declared that God is ever laboring and suffering for his wayward children's sake. Through faith in him souls have

gone from darkness to light, from the power of sin and death to the power of the Spirit and life. Dead unto sin, they have become alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

I may not be able to satisfy my understanding concerning the marvels recorded in the Gospels about Jesus, but this I know: when I come into his presence I see one who has made God known to me; I see one who reveals to me what a man ought to be; I learn that my life may be lived in union with the Eternal, and that when thus lived it wins a power that enables it to rise above trouble, sorrow, death, and sin. This is enough. I bow before him and lift up my prayer that he will give me faith to follow him and grace to become day by day more like him.

CHAPTER V

HISTORY'S TESTIMONY TO JESUS' CLAIM

THERE is nothing more unique in the ministry of Jesus than the claims he made concerning his own life and person. Other teachers have given a system of truth; Jesus offered himself as the perfect embodiment of the truth, and, setting out from his own experience and person, all that he said was a characterization of himself. "I am the bread of life —I am the water of life—I am the resurrection and the life—I am the way and the truth and the life—I am the light of the world." These are some of the claims about which he built the framework of his gospel, and among them there is none more significant than the latter, "I am the light of the world."

The significance of this claim lay in its prophetic character. The truth of some statements is self-evident; it matters not by whom they are spoken; the words carry with them the inevitable testimony of truth. Other statements are made on the ground of possible evidence. Having heard, we proceed to

gather from history and experience the proof we need. The whole is greater than its part —this is a self-evident truth. In the same conditions the same cause will produce the same effect—this is a statement based on the testimony of experience. But here is a statement with no other certificate than the authority of the speaker, for this Man is making a claim concerning himself, and as yet he has had little influence in the world. He is practically unknown, his teaching is unheard, his mission is misunderstood. His statement is therefore prophetic; only the future could vindicate this Man's claim to be the light of the world.

The claim is significant also because of the character of the analogy employed. No element in nature possesses a greater significance than light. Like a mantle of blessing, light falls upon our world, bringing life and growth and beauty. With the ancients light was a sacred thing; it was associated with all that is highest and best. It was the synonym of life, the symbol of moral excellence, the garment of the eternal. Modern science has served to deepen the mystery of light, and to give to the term a larger meaning. It shows that this element fulfills a threefold function, each division of which is vital to the well-being of the race.

1. Light is the source of power in the natural world. The coal in the mine, the electric current in the wire, the energy that drives the factory, the force in animal and vegetable life—all these are variations of solar energy. Like a mighty dynamo hitched to our planet by wires called sunbeams, the sun is feeding the multiform machinery of earth with power.

2. Light is the condition of life and growth. Sunshine is a metallic shower, that bathes us with vaporized metals and gases. Nothing grows without it. The nude races, who receive the sun's rays unobstructed, are endowed with extraordinary strength and endurance. When Kitchener was with his army in the Soudan his men were taken with cholera, and did not respond to the use of medicine; he ordered them to strip and lie in the sun, "for," said he, "I believe that the sun can reach these germs of disease which we cannot reach," and the results practically justified his claim. It is the sun that stores the grain and fruit with those elements that sustain animal life. This is the perpetual miracle of the ages, the mystery of growth. The seed unfolds in stalk and flower and fruit; the acorn rises in the forest; forever the multitudinous forms of earth are reaching upward and outward toward their perfecting; where is the secret of it all?

In the sun. Where the sun shines there is life; where darkness comes there is death.

3. Light is the source of the world's illumination; it is the counterpart of vision; by means of it we find our way. It touches the face of nature with grace and beauty.

The present glory of this claim of Jesus lies in the fact that these three points of analogy are applicable to him in his relation to men; that he who said two thousand years ago, "I am the light of the world," has shone like a sun on the centuries, lending to them life and power and illumination.

I

Jesus is the inspiration of modern civilization; he has given the impulse to all those achievements that are the glory of modern society.

The history of civilization is the record of man's struggle for freedom. Life in early times was servitude; man was a slave—a slave to his fellows, a slave to ignorance, a slave to circumstance. This condition was manifest in the entire organization of society. Politically, the mass of the people were serfs whose task was to do the arbitrary will of some overlord; morally, ignorance had cast its shadow over the soul, trailing after it that great brood of vices that blackened the face

of life in early times; religion was a discipline of fear, by which man sought to win the good will of powers he conceived as hostile to himself; suffering, disease, and death walked up and down the earth, with none to check their ravages or strip them of their power. Human life in itself is inherently bondage. Wherever we look we are face to face with objects and forces which set themselves in opposition to us and declare we must submit. Look within, the life of passion and impulse tyrannizes over us; look without, we are subject to the world of nature and circumstance. Drought blights our crops, circumstance wrecks our plans, misfortune ruins our happiness. The goal of human effort is to rise superior to these oppositions, not so much to conquer them as to make them our friends. Man's task in life is to gain control of himself and of his world.

Although the early centuries in history accomplished much that was great and good, in this, the central task of life, they signally failed. Three great civilizations arose before the time of Jesus, were put to the test, and proved themselves a failure. Despite their achievements, it must be confessed that they missed the key to the problem of life. The Hebrew nation is one of the miracles of history. Born in the desert and cradled in servi-

tude, this people, under the leadership of their prophets, separated themselves from the idolatrous peoples of the earth and laid the foundations of a social and ethical order that will abide forever. Although only a handful, they stood for centuries unmoved amid the empires of the earth. But Hebrew civilization fell short of its goal. It was narrow and exclusive, it lacked that spirit that makes for permanence in the life of a nation. Truth hardened into tradition, religion lost its meaning, righteousness became a name, and as a people the Hebrews passed from the face of the earth.

Greece is one of the world's greatest benefactors. She gave to the world art, philosophy, and literature. No nation has produced so many great minds who enriched human life with their thought. But the speculations of the Greek sages passed above the heads of the people, powerless to prevent their corruption and the darkness of moral failure. Rome, too, was great. She led her armies to the conquest of the world and established a mighty empire. But she lacked the direction of a great moral impulse, and as a result life lost its purpose and was weakened by vice. The poor were enslaved, labor was despised, the rights of the weak were ignored, suicide was praised. Rome did some great things, but

she lacked the inspiration necessary to an abiding civilization.

Then one day a Child was born in Palestine. He grew up in obscurity in his little Galilæan town. When he came to manhood, he went down to the Jordan and was baptized by one John the Baptist, and certain evidences were given that marked him as a divine leader among men. Then he gathered about him a group of disciples and began to teach them. He taught them a great prayer; it read like this: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Here was the key the world needed. Here were certain truths destined to give a new meaning to human life, namely, the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, that faith is the principle by which the world may be overcome, that love is the principle that sweetens life. Then he set himself to exemplify these teachings. For three years he lived a life of faith toward God and love toward men, realizing in himself the reality of his teaching. Then he entered Gethsemane, to show how man may conquer circumstance;

he climbed Calvary, and came out by way of the tomb to show that life is lord of death. A new age began. Certain great conceptions began to find their way into men's minds and to affect the whole of life. They said, "If man is God's child, then life is a sacred thing; these gladiatorial games must go; child-life must be protected and nurtured; the aged must be cared for." This gave birth to the church, the hospital, and the school. They said, "If God is the Father of all, then all men are brethren." What a mighty stream of results flowed from this conception! The missionary set out to carry the evangel of God's love to the ends of the earth; the slave was emancipated; political democracy rose like a star of hope in men's hearts, bringing the promise of liberty, equality, and fraternity. They said, if man is God's child, misfortune, disease, and death have a place in the divine discipline of life, and nothing can separate us from the love of God. A new spirit took possession of men. Life took on a fresh meaning. The soul now had a high task before it, and with courage and hope men set themselves to realize the program of their Master's life.

This is what Jesus is doing. He is helping men and women bear their disappointments and overcome their temptations. He is removing

the burden from the oppressed and lifting up the downtrodden. He is making men brothers. He is making the ends of the earth neighbors. He is making life everywhere sweeter and people happier. He is leading forward currents of reform and renewal. He is their inspiration, he gives them direction. "I am the light of the world."

II

Jesus Christ has furnished the conditions of moral and spiritual growth; he is the "sun of righteousness." Growth is God's perpetual miracle, by which he unfolds before us unceasingly the majesty and mystery of life. This question of miracle is one that has been greatly confused. We have insisted on restricting the term to the extraordinary and unaccountable, and have trained ourselves to look for God in the capricious, thereby robbing our common life of the beauty of its divine meaning. If we were to stand out on the hillside to-day, and suddenly a plant should rise out of the earth and unfold in stalk and flower and fruit, we would say: "A miracle! God is in this place." But if we plant a seed in the garden, and to-morrow two green leaves appear, and in their time the flower and fruit, we forget that God is there, and that the rare happening

when it occurs is necessary only because we do forget. When we study the science of growth we notice that two factors are involved: the life-impulse and suitable conditions. Plant a seed: for growth there must be first, a principle of life, then, moisture, sunlight, and warmth. Plant a stone, you may have the most suitable conditions, yet it will be nothing else; plant a seed, but with conditions of drought and chill there can be no growth. The same is true in these human lives of ours. For growth toward manhood and womanhood two factors are involved: there must be the life-impulse and there must be a suitable atmosphere. God has planted in us the life-impulse; it belongs to our nature as human beings. Every soul born into the world is a seed of divine life planted in the fields of time. In the morning of creation God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

We all have in us the possibility of the divine likeness. All that is needed is a proper atmosphere for its development. Plant a soul in the heart of Africa, where the light has not shined, and it will grow up pagan. Plant a soul in the slums of the modern city, where the light has been smothered beneath the shadow of sin and vice, and it will be none the less pagan. Plant a soul amid conditions of

abject toil, in childhood, robbed of the tender care of a fostering love; in boyhood, of opportunities for mental and moral improvement; in manhood, doomed to tramp the treadmill of an unending, distasteful, uninteresting task, and it grows up reprobate in mind and heart. The more I study some phases of our industrial life, the less I wonder that so many of our working people present such an unlovely spectacle. Fortunate you are if you love your work; if it is yours, if it inspires your interest, it will be easy to be good and happy. But if your task is forced on you by the pressure of necessity, if it is not yours, and you have no other ambition than to get it done, a burden from which death alone can free you, it will crush the joy out of your heart and the light from your life.

Now, Jesus came to create conditions favorable to the development of the true type of manhood. He is the "Sun of Righteousness," that is, he provides the conditions necessary for the production of righteous character. He came to bring light to the heart of Africa, to bring cleansing to moral slums, to create in the world a new social order in which moral and physical servitude will not exist, and which shall lift from men the burden of degrading toil. Thank God, he is accomplish-

ing his end, the light has not shined in vain. Africa and the islands of the sea are being reclaimed. There is growing among Christian peoples an awakened social consciousness that the slum and the gutter are a moral injustice. Under the constraint of the Master's spirit men will one day learn to love each other and to work for the common good. It is true the light is not yet fully risen. When the seventh annual report of the chief of the Children's Bureau tells us that in 47 factories visited in one State in 1918, 430 children under twelve years old were employed; that in 205 canneries in another State 721 children under fourteen were found, fifty of them being under ten; when the secretary of the Child Labor Commission declares that one million children under sixteen are laboring in our industries, that is, one million children deprived of the chance of physical, mental, and moral development, doomed to a life of ignorance, wretchedness, and sin, the force of this comes to us. But the existence of such conditions is not an arraignment of Jesus Christ: it is an arraignment of our human weakness. No one of us doubts that if the principles Jesus taught were put into effect, and the spirit Jesus showed was exemplified among men, a new age of good will and gladness would dawn, and so

far as society is filled with light and peace it is drawn from him.

III

Again, it must not be forgotten that growth toward moral excellence is determined by an ideal. This is so true as to be almost a platitude. For the moral education of a boy there must be some hero who exemplifies the grace or characteristic desired; this stimulates and directs his moral development. For unlimited growth in life there must be a perfect example in which are combined all the graces and virtues of character.

This is one of the chief merits of the appearance of Jesus Christ among men. There is a story from the life of the great Italian painter, Michael Angelo. When he was a youth he was bidden to paint a picture described by his teacher, but the more faithfully he tried the more signal was his failure. Finally the teacher took a crayon and sketched the rough outline of his thought and asked the youth to return to his task. Angelo seized the brush and soon filled in the outline in perfect accord with the teacher's idea. This story is true of the higher art of life. With master hand Jesus has sketched the outline of the perfect life, and then has bidden us out of the materials

of the days to complete his idea. Our success depends upon our following with care the completed form of his outline.

What virtue was not supremely perfect in him? What heroism! What moral courage! What victory over difficulty! What calmness and confidence! In the darkest hour he saw the stars shining on the path, he felt that God was near and the gate of hope open. Other names are great, but to whom can we liken the Man of Galilee? In his matchless poem, "The Crystal," Sydney Lanier makes a survey of the prominent names of history—Homer, Socrates, Dante, Milton, Keats, and Emerson. He finds in each certain qualities of excellence, but in every case mingled with some fleck or flaw. He concludes his estimate with these words in reference to Jesus:

"But thee, but thee, O sovereign seer of time,
But thee, O poet's poet, wisdom's tongue,
But thee, O man's best man, O love's best love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's comrade, servant, king, or priest—
What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in thee,
Jesus, good paragon, thou crystal Christ?"[1]

[1] *The Poems of Sydney Lanier.* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. 1906.

Who can measure the influence of this example among men? The saints and mystics that have been his imitators, the nameless millions who have striven to follow him and have found the way home. The task of Christian experience to-day is to give allegiance to this ideal, to treasure in the soul this supreme model, to be able to say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ."

Not only did Jesus present an ideal for the individual life; he presented one also for social effort. He painted on the canvas of the sky the picture of a kingdom, toward which he bade men turn their hearts and direct their endeavor. Through the centuries the efforts of philanthropist and teacher, economist and reformer have found their inspiration here. We to-day, like the prophet of long ago, are looking forward to the time when peace and good will will reign, and the well-being of all will be fostered, and we think of that day in terms of Jesus' conception of the kingdom. Like the Star of the East, this has been leading the generations across the desert toward the City of God.

"He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." "The light of life"—there is something impressive in the words. This journey of life

is a treacherous way, through forest and desert, over mountain and stormy sea, a way over which we have not gone before, and which is therefore unknown. Unless we can get light upon a few outstanding questions we are indeed wanderers. There are three words on which we must have light: "duty," "destiny," and "God." What are we to believe? What are we to be? What are we to do? Nature, philosophy, and history are all silent regarding these questions. Jesus alone answers them. What are we to believe? Believe that God is your Father, that he is ever near, that he is working with you and for you. What are we to be? Be what I am. What are we to do? Follow me. And so amid the round of daily cares we follow on, knowing that he who spake two thousand years ago has proven his words true when he said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

In June, 1904, a somewhat remarkable book was published by the Rev. Byron Palmer, of Ashtabula, Ohio, entitled *God's White Throne, or A Defense of Divine Wisdom and Goodness in the Dark Things of the World and Life.* This book was unique, not so much by reason of its contents as because of its relation to the author. Soon after leaving school, and just as he was beginning the Christian ministry, this man was stricken with an incurable disease, a slow process of ossification. First his limbs became useless, then one arm, one eye, and finally the spine was attacked. For years he spent twelve hours in bed and twelve hours in a wheel chair, while his wife taught school to support the home. Now he has himself wheeled up to the desk, that with the remaining arm and the dim light of the remaining eye, he may write this book justifying the ways of God with men.

In the introduction Mr. Palmer says: "When at last came the ordeal of being shut away from the world, and of leaving my life's work,

and of being compelled to accept the life and the lot of a daily sufferer, my mind naturally turned to the problems which experience had made uppermost in my daily meditation. It became necessary for me to seek and find a satisfactory solution of, not only the problem of personal suffering, but of the larger problems of human life and destiny, of the apparent misadjustments in the world, of the seeming contradictions in the course of Providence, of the absence of order in divine government, and the apparent defeat of righteousness and truth in the world."[1]

The question voiced in these words is ages old: How shall we retain belief in the being and rule of God in face of suffering and other forms of evil? This difficult problem constitutes a shadow that has rested upon the intellectual history of the human race. It is the everlasting "Why?" Under its pressure human hearts in every generation have been driven to pessimism and despair. In the attempt to solve it man's genius has risen to its greatest height.

It is the fatal charge against materialism and the doctrine of the negation of evil that they fail to provide a ground for a practical

[1] Byron Palmer, *God's White Throne*, Cincinnati, The Methodist Book Concern, 1904.

optimism. No theory of evil is either possible or satisfactory except on a pragmatic basis. Centuries of reflection have proven that the theoretical aspect of the problem cannot be solved; yet man must live amid conditions of evil and find life not only tolerable but desirable. Nothing is more evident than the tendency of men to lapse into pessimism and despair when they lose their faith in the wisdom and the righteousness of things. We cannot hope to explain why the world is as it is, why man is constituted as he is; but we must preserve our belief that the world is wisely ordered and that human life is of worth. To save faith in the goodness of God and the desirability of life, some explanation is demanded.

It is the merit of the answer of the illustrious sufferer in *God's White Throne*, that, like Job of old, he has retained his faith in the worth of human life. He does not rebel against the lot that has fallen to him. He does not complain against divine justice. He does not cry out, like Petronius in Sienkiewicz' *Quo Vadis*, "Weakness cometh; it is better that I depart." He does not steel himself into an attitude of stoical indifference, declaring that he will despise these things even while they overcome him. He asserts that this is God's

world, and that he governs it in the interest of a moral and spiritual order. Virtue, holiness, patience, love, are the fruit he seeks. Life's evils are the method of discipline necessary to the production of this result. They who follow the devious path up through darkness to light alone are life's victors.

I

Life's discipline is necessary because man is what he is. He is not a mere mechanism; he is a conscious being. He grows by exercise; he learns by doing. Exercise we know is the great thing in muscle-making. It is the man under strenuous physical discipline that develops physique. The pioneers of our land of two centuries ago were a sturdier stock than the men of to-day, because life for them meant warfare. They must kill the wild beasts that preyed upon them; they must clear away the forest and plow the fallow ground if they would eat bread. Physical hardships made them strong. The mothers of that day knew nothing of the weakness and suffering of the women of to-day.

And exercise is the great thing in character-making. Character is strengthened by exerting the will along the line of a resolution. Character, said Novalis, is a completely fash-

ioned will; that is, a will that always takes the path of the ought. It makes us stronger to do something each day merely because we ought to do it; and to feel what we ought to do and yet pass it by, deals a blow to will-power. So common a thing as lying in bed in the morning when we know we ought to get up weakens character. On the other hand, to face difficulty with the determination to overcome it develops strength. It is well for us that we do not have the control of our lives wholly in our own hands. We would choose the path of ease, and ease is not good. To safeguard against this mistake we are placed amid conditions that require of us constant struggle and sacrifice. No good of life is bought without its price. The treasures of earth must be wrought for, its jewels digged, its fields cleared, its forests reclaimed. Only amid scenes of sorrow and failure are mental and moral stability attained. We do not know what is best; it is well that necessity drives us forward, while the heart teaches us to trust that the way is good.

II

The thought of life's discipline offers a key to the nature of evil. A popular way of disposing of this problem has been to refer it to

the devil. He is the author of darkness; an infinite demon is at work among men whose mischief makes misery; a rival power is in the world which in conflict with God at times seems to outdo him. It is only fair to notice that this teaching is not essentially Christian, but it has come down to us from a pre-Christian age. Zoroaster, twelve centuries before Christ, to escape making God responsible for evil, conceived of a dual principle giving birth to two brothers, the power of good and the power of evil. This dualism was taken over by the Jews of the Babylonish captivity. "There is no evidence," says John Fiske, "that the Jews previous to the Babylonish captivity possessed the conception of a devil as the author of evil."[1] The later Jews ascribed to Satan all the ills of life. From Judaism this conception passed into Christianity, and gradually took form as an established doctrine. Such a doctrine, however, strikes at divine sovereignty; it gives us a universe divided against itself, and therefore the thinking world to-day is rapidly abandoning it.

1. From the standpoint of the physical order, what we call evil is natural consequence. It is a necessary result in a universe, that is

[1] John Fiske, *Myths and Myth-Makers*, p. 122. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. 1900.

in a world a perfect ordered system, that infringement on the rights of that order should bring disharmony. To be out of order is not pleasant; it means conflict; it means suffering. It is a part of the nature of things that disease should follow impure living, and that calamity should result from breaking across the path of law. These things are not the works of an evil one, they are the natural consequences of an ordered world, and it is the task of modern civilization to eliminate them by establishing life in harmony with God's law.

Pain is hard to bear, but it is not the worst thing in the world. It is a beneficent agent of God's goodness. It is nature's warning that the course we are taking is destructive, and without it the race would extinguish itself. Pain is the life-principle asserting itself against that which would overcome it. When a man suffers, his suffering is the result of the struggle of life to maintain itself. Bodily life implies sensation, and sensation means enjoyment when all the functions of life work normally, and suffering when they are obstructed.

2. From the standpoint of the moral order, evil is sin, and sin has its origin in the human will. It is rebellion against the will of God. By the will of God we mean those moral requirements which in their relation to the

individual and to society make the fullest life possible. That we should be free spiritual agents is the purpose of creation. But the gift of freedom implies the possibility of sin. In balancing between powers and passions, principles and appetites, it is possible for us to choose the lower rather than the higher, self-interest instead of sympathy, love, and honor. It is because we choose the lower, contrary to God's will, that moral blight and calamity fall upon human life, for the wages of sin is death.

3. But you say: "What of those calamities that fall upon life unexpected and undeserved? What of the righteous who suffer while the wicked prosper?" This was the problem that faced the writer of the book of Job: why should a good man suffer? While not attempting to defend the justice of calamity or of undeserved pain, it may be noted that both have served a moral purpose. First, it is quite evident that if reward was always apportioned according to desert, there would be scant opportunity for the production of unselfishness, which is the very life of character. And, secondly, the social constitution of human life is such that many are involved in the mistakes of one. No man liveth or dieth unto himself. Those ties called heredity, proximity, respon-

sibility, are often instrumental in throwing upon the innocent suffering for others' sin. But in such vicarious pain life finds its healing. To love is to suffer, but in the suffering of love life is reborn to better things. The world lives by the vicarious sacrifice of love and innocence.

The pain side of life then serves not only a physical but a moral purpose. Sickness has taught men divine lessons; death is one of the mightiest educators of the race. Sadness is the mother of tenderness; patience and hope are born of difficulty and disappointment. Without pain we could never learn the meaning of sympathy, nor attain the will to sacrifice. Our own burdens and woundings give us a sensibility to others' needs. The experience of pain—in sickness and sorrow, disappointment and difficulty, danger and defeat—is the matrix out of which are begotten all those other-regarding graces that give to life its charm.

Even the sin of man has become a condition for accomplishing good, for here the sacrifice of self-giving has reached its height. The possibility of healing from sin is measured by man's ability to suffer for others' sake. In the cross of Christ this truth has been manifest, and as men have accepted it

and devoted themselves to it they have been trained to goodness and brought into fellowship with the eternal. They have found a motive for bearing pain with gladness as heroes and martyrs, believing they were "filling up their part of the sufferings of Christ."

III

It would seem, then, that those things called evils are in great part the result of the check and correction of God's teachers, and are intended for our good. Every trial has its compensation. This is true even of that form of testing that results in sin. "Count it all joy," says the apostle, "when you fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proof of your faith worketh patience." It is not enough that man should have the power to choose the wrong; life is presenting constant invitations to make the wrong choice. Thus his power is tested. The possibility of character implies freedom, and freedom is real only when it grapples with opposition. Furthermore, the possibility of character implies that our world is in the making. A finished world would not be a favorable environment for the development of moral beings. The unbeliever has made the apparent imperfections in our world a ground for his opposition to the claim

that wisdom and goodness are at the heart of things. Given a chance, he would create a better world than this. But, alas! he has failed to interpret life in moral terms, or he would have seen that ours is the best possible world for the production of that which reveals itself as the purpose of creation.

The justification of this view of the evils of life is found in the almost inexhaustible supply of illustration presented in every sphere of observation. In nature the elements, if left to themselves, tend to stagnate into pestilence, but the storm comes to stir them again to health and sweetness. History teaches that those races out of whose life have come the divinest revelations of thought, energy, and faith have been located amid rocky mountains and barren deserts or beside roaring seas, where acquaintance with hardship has created courage, and the presence of immensity has awakened a sense of the eternal. The prophet of the Old Testament sums up the record of a people's misfortune in the words: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God has led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no." From Jacob and David to John and Paul, the spiritual

genius of Scripture finds its source in darkness and desolation. Many of the greatest masterpieces in modern literature and art were born out of bereavement and cradled by the hand of infirmity. The noblest visions of the soul are evoked by hardship, like incense touched with fire. They say that there is a flower in South America that blooms only when the wind blows hard. It is a species of cactus. On the stem are little lumps which being smitten by the strong wind burst into bloom. So is it in our lives.

"We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those
That tell of saddest thought."[1]

What, then, is the lesson of it all? This is God's world. It is not a realm divided against itself. God has created the world and is determining it every day. The conditions governing that creation are ordained by him, and they are the best possible conditions for accomplishing their appointed end. That end is the production of character—his own self-revelation in his children. The fact of creation cannot be divorced from the idea of worth.

[1] *Shelley's Complete Poetical Works*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. 1901. Poem, "To a Skylark."

1. The production of character requires circumstances of struggle, disappointment, and care, for only amid these conditions are those qualities developed which life teaches us to regard as of permanent worth. 2. Each individual is a creator, and living in a world the plan of which is not fully revealed, he will mistake for good that which is worthless, or even injurious, and in the exercise of freedom ofttimes be tempted into paths of rebellion.

This answer is not intended to silence all puzzles involved in the problem of evil. Our knowledge at best is exceedingly fragmentary and imperfect. But if we could stand at the center of things, and see life in its completeness, we would doubtless find that the shadow of evil is cast by the presence of good.

Then let us take heart since Divine Love reigns. Man may have sinned, but with his sin his redemption has come. Sin is not a trifling thing, and persisted in it can result only in disaster for the transgressor; but it is not the Father's will that one of the least of these little ones shall perish. The goal toward which God works is the establishment of harmony throughout all his kingdom. Fear not but that this end will ultimately be accomplished. The mountains may depart and the

hills be removed, but the kingdom of love shall not fail of its purpose until the

> " . . . one far-off divine event
> Toward which the whole creation moves"

is realized.

> "Take heart! the Waster builds again—
> A charmed life old Goodness hath;
> The tares may perish, but the grain
> Is not for death.
> God works in all things; all ooey
> His first propulsion from the night:
> Wake thou and watch! the world is gray
> With morning light!"[1]

[1] *Whittier's Complete Works.* Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. 1894. Poem, "The Reformer."

CHAPTER VII

THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM

THERE is no greater word in our language than the term "freedom." For the idea which it represents men have been ready to sacrifice themselves in every age. It is the desire of every heart and the ideal of every people. And yet, strangely enough, no word in our language has been so persistently misunderstood. Jesus aroused the indignation of the Jew of the first century by offering to point him the way to freedom. "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be free?" The spirit of the twentieth century evidences no better understanding of the nature and means of attainment of that which Jesus offered to the Jew.

I

It has been the common judgment of man that the bondage of life is due to external conditions, and therefore freedom is to be found in independence. This judgment has prompted his endeavor to escape the domina-

tion of nature and the empire of his fellows. Under its inspiration the foundations of civilization have been laid, with the advancement of knowledge and the growth of democracy. But while this judgment has vastly increased the range of life, it is only partially true. Freedom is impossible so long as ignorance leaves man a prey to the forces of nature, or tyranny holds him in servitude. But emancipation from these powers still leaves unanswered the question, Who shall a man's master be? One may have accomplished a high degree of independence of external authority, and still be under the necessity of determining by what law he shall live. For the battleground of freedom lies within a man's own life, and the ultimate goal, as Jesus indicated, is not to win independence of the forces without, but to subdue the foes within.

That which distinguishes man from the brute and lifts him out of the realm of necessity is his ability to reflect upon the life of impulse and view it in relation to a larger good. The animal acts always from impulse. If hungry, he snatches; if angry, he destroys. It is given to man to check impulse and bring it under the law of the higher self. This ability to stand above the impulse of the moment, above the entire impulsive life, is man's prerogative.

It constitutes him a moral being. To say that man is a moral being is to say that he is a creature of impulse, but also that he is a personality which stands above the life of impulse, criticizes it, and legislates concerning it. The extent to which the personality has gained control constitutes character. Character is nature disciplined. Character is coordination, complete and continuous self-mastery. The man without character is the man whose sensibilities are unorganized, in whom one impulse controls conduct. When the cold wind blows he becomes irritated; when appealed to by appetite or passion he yields to the sway of sense. Such a man is a slave, a slave to his lower self. Long ago Plato spoke of the beast in human nature under whose sway every folly and crime is committed. So long as this monster remains undisciplined life has failed of freedom, even though the balmiest external conditions have been secured.

The task of life, then, is to establish the control of personality over the lower self. That this is not easy may be seen from the number of failures that occur along life's way. Man is always in trouble by reason of his ignorance and weakness. He wrecks his health through excess, his happiness through folly, his soul through sin. One of the tragedies of

life is instanced by the number of men of knowledge and high endowment whose hopes have been wrecked by the tyranny of passion. Here is Robert Burns, great-souled Burns, who writes one day to a friend: "By Babel's streams I have sat and wept, almost ever since I wrote you last. . . . I close my eyes in misery, and open them without hope. . . . God have mercy upon me! A poor, damned, incautious, duped, unfortunate fool! The sport, the miserable victim, of rebellious pride, hypochondriac imagination, agonizing sensibility, and bedlam passions."[1] And somehow, although perhaps in an exaggerated form, he strikes off the experience of us all. "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

II

Man's failure in the fight for freedom has been largely due to ignorance. There are some, it is true, who have never set themselves to the task of subduing the baser passions, but their number is few. Most cases of failure in this regard are instances of a losing fight. Aware of the danger of an evil habit, the first impulse is to attempt to inhibit it—an attempt that always ends in failure. For in fixing the

[1] *The General Correspondence of Robert Burns.*

thought upon a sin to suppress it you merely hypnotize yourself with it, and as a result the sin is greatly strengthened. To win freedom from a tendency toward evil, you must forget it by losing yourself in some larger interest.

This is a general principle of life. You cannot win health by thinking continually of yourself and your ills. You must forget yourself in some work that is pleasure and some recreation that is joyous. The same is true of happiness. J. S. Mill pointed out long ago that one can win happiness only by aiming at something else. This is known in ethics as the Paradox of Hedonism. A boy goes out on the ball field seeking a good time. If he thinks only of the fun he desires, he will miss a good time. If he loses himself in the game, he will come away to find that he has accomplished his desire. It is not otherwise with character. You cannot achieve character by saying: "Go to! I will now throttle this passion, root out this habit, and build character." Character is not won that way. You must lose yourself in some cause that is big enough to elicit your best effort, some interest sufficient to command your attention. He therefore who promises to save men from sin, must offer such a cause and such an interest.

III

Jesus presents this larger cause and broader interest. He represents the beauty of personality and the worthiness of it, so that in his presence man is forever shamed. In the love of him all baser interests are blotted out and the values of character become the chief object of desire, for the life of Jesus as the revelation of what man ought to be constitutes a court from which there is no appeal. Once he is known, all other interests are brought for judgment before the bar of his example. There is henceforth one law, at once the voice of Jesus and the voice of one's inner self, demanding unqualified obedience.

But this law, as the essential principle of one's nature, is also the will of the Eternal, and therefore in yielding to it the individual comes into union with the Eternal. Herein lies the source and spring of freedom. Little has been accomplished if the effort after liberty stops with a crushing recognition of what one ought to be. The law is to be an emancipator, not an enslaver. The fact of human weakness bears witness how necessary is this union with the Eternal if man is to fulfill the purpose of his being. Through obedience to the law of the larger life he opens his soul to the streams of the divine, which

become within him a new power, a new capability, and a new hope. Thereby the forces of destruction are counteracted, weakness is empowered, and largeness of life becomes possible.

Ours is a world in which marvels have resulted from the contact of personalities. A word from Napoleon could restore courage in the heart of an army. Who can measure the possibilities of a life when it comes under the touch of Jesus Christ? It is not easy to be good. The climb of life is steep; there are obstacles in the way, and the will is all too feeble. There is an effort, however, that succeeds, not because of itself alone but because of the new life-force to which it may lay claim. Before the will enfeebled and enslaved by sin Jesus stands with the promise, "The Son will make you free." What though the past has left a legacy of failure? What though the present reveals incapacity by reason of the death of faculties of the soul? "I am come that ye may have life, and that ye may have it more abundantly." This is the promise. "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

IV

Here, then, is the principle of Christian liberty.

1. Man is free only to choose the form of his obedience. If human life has a meaning, this involves a law by which that meaning may be realized, and that law is revealed, in the effort to live, as the way to a full life. We may choose that law or follow our own impulses, but in either case we are under authority. The instrument of self-direction in personality is the will. A lawless will is a misnomer. As a function of personality the will must be true to the law of its own nature. It cannot transcend itself nor deny its own claims. We escape the principle of self-direction only when we cease to be ourselves. From the grain of sand to the farthest star freedom lies in obedience to law; all else is disorder and self-destruction. Man is no exception to this universal rule. The only liberty that man can know is the ability to live out unhindered the essential purpose of his own being.

2. True freedom is an achievement. It begins with the first recognition of the claims of personality. It grows with the increase of the control of personality. It is never complete, for the process of the unfolding of personality is limitless. This is the task that is ever before us. Every attainment is but the scaffolding to a higher reach of attainment.

We are ever to seek to surpass the best in us, and press on in hope and assurance toward the greater possibilities before us, confident that that power which has sustained us will see us through to the end. "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."

3. In the effort after freedom, the material of the lower self is not to be destroyed; it is to be transformed. The good man is not the passionless man. The baser stuff of sense is the weight by which we rise. As the kite ascends by reason of the resistance of the air, so the human spirit attains its climb through those very limitations that hamper it. We may not be ready to admit Francis Thompson's claim that imperfections are the coloring in the perfect picture, but undoubtedly they are the colors out of which the picture is made. It need not be the cause of discouragement that the pulse of passion is strong. This is a reservoir of force waiting to be harnessed to a worthy end. Nay, more, because of the unity of personality it is the very force that being redirected becomes the power of will and the strength of personality. Passion uncontrolled and irregulated constitutes a danger,

but passion controlled furnishes the opportunity, test, and measure of virtue.

4. Since the law of the higher self and the will of God are one, the ultimate goal of life is the same for all. The aim of each is to secure his own growth and development, but that aim is common to all. And here we touch the basis for a free society—a community of individuals each seeking a common aim and laboring to make conditions favorable to the attainment of that aim by all. "Act," says Kant, "so as to use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always as an end, never as merely a means." This is the first principle of democracy. It is the fatal mistake of both the individual and of society that humanity is treated as a means. When all men everywhere come to regard human life as of supreme worth, and seek for themselves and for all others the values of personality, then shall begin that age of freedom so long prophesied.

V

The lessons involved here are of perennial importance. What is the malady at the heart of our civilization to-day? Let me quote the answer of one serious observer.[1] "The steady

[1] Herbert Croly, *Disordered Christianity*, The New Republic, December 31, 1919.

expansion of secular knowledge is the dominating fact in the lives of the Christian peoples. It is exercising an ever more complete and irresistible authority over both the conduct and the conscience of mankind. But its authority is devoid of moral sanction. The new knowledge has done little or nothing to enhance or to liberate human life as a whole. On the contrary, it is vesting the moral ownership of incalculably formidable engines of power in particular classes and nations whose special interests are opposed to general human fulfillment. If the secularization of knowledge continues, it will ultimately wreck civilization."

There is rebellion to-day against recognized authority in society. We see it in politics, in industry, in religion. "During the war," said one labor leader, "they taught us to be lions' whelps, and now they want us to subside quietly into beasts of burden. We shall never do it." There is a real danger here. So far as conditions make difficult the living of life, they ought to be changed. But we must not forget that external conditions are not the sole determining factor in a man's life. Indeed, the very crux of the problem of freedom is absence of determination by anything outside oneself. The life of the animal is determined by conditions; man, on the other hand,

lives within the world of his own character. You may preach economic theory until your hair is white and men still remain slaves in their lives. What the world to-day needs, primarily, is not a new social order so much as a wider knowledge of the ideal of life, and a more general recognition of those moral sanctions through which alone humanity as a whole can find true freedom.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT IS TRUTH?

WHAT is truth? There is no question more ancient or more essential than this. It was asked in the Egyptian temple; it is still the query in the modern university. The reason for this unfinished inquiry lies in the fact that it touches the whole range of human life. In the common mind truth is a matter of mere verbal accuracy, but in reality the term has a much deeper significance. It represents the substance and content of the rational and moral life. There is no good that exceeds it. "The inquiry of truth," says Bacon, "which is the love-making or wooing of it—the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it—the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it—is the sovereign good of human nature."[1]

Yet strangely enough, no question has been more generally ignored, and to this ignorance may be traced much of the tragedy of human life.

[1] *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, p. 736. New York, E. P. Dutton & Company. 1905.

"O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a lifelong trouble for ourselves,
By taking true for false and false for true!"

What is the source of the disappointment, defeat, and shame, that weigh down the lives of individuals? In brief it is Tennyson's answer, they take the true for false, the false for true. This is the story of Esau and Absalom, of Pilate and Judas. Wisdom says, "Choose this; it is not so pleasant now, but it is the greater good." No, this seems better. And so for the price of a moment's pleasure, the real values of life are spurned. Here is a man in the prime of his years, but the hand of death is upon him. He is walking under the shadow of his own folly. Nature and society both combined to give him a good start, his life might have been useful and happy; but he "forged a lifelong trouble for himself." He believed the true worth of life was to be found in self-gratification, so he courted self and played with passion, and thought it good; and now too late he wakens to his mistake, for there is a sovereignty in the truth that cannot be evaded. You may ignore it, or reject its claim, nevertheless you must answer to it. As George Eliot puts it: "It is the truth that commands you. And you cannot escape

it. Either you must obey it, and it will lead you, or you must disobey it, and it will hang on you with the weight of a chain which you will drag forever."

I

But what is truth? Have we a right to censure a man for his folly until we can offer an answer to the question? There is no truth, says one; all knowledge is relative. Just as light and heavy, cold and heat, plenty and want, are relative terms, so are truth and error. Water boils at 212° Fahrenheit; liquid air boils at 312° below zero. You place water on a fire to boil; you place liquid air on a cake of ice and it boils. The power derived from liquid air is simply steam generated by the temperature at which we live. A coin on the hand is warm or cold according to the temperature of the skin. So it is with all experience. Knowledge comes through opposites, and is relative to the range and degree of opposition. There is no such thing as absolute heat, absolute weight, absolute truth. All truth, says Nietzsche, is relative to man's power. That which suits his purpose is true; that which is opposed to it is false.

But grant that all knowledge is relative, yet one may be honest in reporting his experiences. Truth, then, is the correct statement of fact.

In some regards this claim has a vital importance. There is nothing more needed than sincerity among men, that one's outward deportment shall be in accord with his thought and intent. But in the scientific sense, the sense in which it is ordinarily taken, this claim is confronted with difficulty. Our experiences are seldom alike; no two men look upon exactly the same world. And if it be said that the consensus of judgment makes fact, this too must be recognized as uncertain. One generation declares that the sun moves round the earth, another that the earth moves round the sun. Humanity is constantly revising its judgments to meet the exigencies of life.

Truth, then, is conviction. At least we may rely upon those beliefs that come to us with immediate certainty. But conviction has shown itself to be subject to enlightenment. Nothing has so marred the story of human progress as false conviction. From the Carthaginian placing his child upon the red-hot lap of Moloch, to the Indian fakir; from the thumbscrew and the rack, to the present-day injustices born of social hysteria, conviction has proven itself a dangerous guide.

But has there not been conserved out of the centuries of human history a residue of knowledge upon which we may all agree?

Truth is tradition. Alas! it is just here that we do not agree. Not only do many deny the authority of the past over the present, but there is no unanimous understanding of that which the voice of the past conveys. Who is to choose between the hundred warring creeds through which tradition is mediated to us to-day? Or why should we choose? The world is older with each generation, and ought to present new and larger views of the nature and meaning of life.

II

There is an old story from the closing days of Jesus' life that is suggestive here. Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate by the Jews charged with claiming to be a king. This charge, because of its political character, impresses the governor, who enters into a discussion with the prisoner. As a Roman, Pilate's conception of kingship is that of physical dominion. The mission of Rome was to rule and command by force. This conception is back of the question he addresses to Jesus, and gives to it a touch of sarcasm, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" But Jesus disclaims the purpose to establish a kingdom of physical force. "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world,

then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

"Art thou a king then?" What other basis can kingship have? What other foundation is possible for sovereignty? "Thou sayest that I am king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Ah! truth—the question is shifted. This man is not a rival of Cæsar; he is a new teacher. He means to conquer by the power of ideas. At once the intellectual history of that age passes before Pilate's mind. He sees the whole philosophical development of the period, aiming to discover and present the truth, terminating in skepticism and despair of knowledge. Here is another wild enthusiast offering to reveal the undiscoverable. With a half-sarcasm, the half-sad exclamation of skepticism, he answers, "What is truth?"

Here Jesus interposes words that are of deep significance. "Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice." In this more or less enigmatic statement is the key to Pilate's question. Notice he does not say, everyone that heareth my voice is of the truth. Pilate was wholly mistaken. Truth is not a matter of ideas; it is an affair of life. Ideas are

ever open to debate; there is nothing final in them. Life is final. Life presents an ultimate standard for the judgment of values. Therefore Jesus came not to present a new system of ideas, but to live a life. Not all who heard his words understood that life, but all who grasped his ideal of life saw the truth of his words. "Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."

III

If, then, the consideration of truth as knowledge terminates in skepticism, Jesus offers a new line of approach to the question. With him truth is not impersonal, scientific. "I am the truth." In the implications of this statement we find the answer to our question.

1. Truth can be manifest only in a life. It is a person, living in the relations of life, true to all that those relations require. This is the foundation of all shades of interpretation of the term. Verbal accuracy, conviction, the true representation of fact, are manifestations of an underlying personality, and acquire their value from the person which they express. Jesus could not have answered Pilate's question in words. Words are of worth only as the expression of character. Therefore Jesus lived a life, and his words were but to make plain the meaning of that life. He said:

"Service is the law of life. Suffering is the law of service. Love is the first principle of being. Greatness and goodness are one." Are these statements true? Whether they are or not depends on whether the application of the principles stated to human relationships contributes worth to man's being.

It is significant that the Greek word *ἀλήθεια*, ordinarily translated "truth," usually stands in the New Testament for "righteousness." That is, the meaning of the term, as conceived by the New Testament writer, is broader than intellectual rectitude; it includes rightness of conduct as well. In fact, intellectual rightness, or truth, is considered as only one aspect of that moral disposition which the term denotes, and upon which truth depends. Now, in the terminology of the New Testament, "righteousness" has a very definite meaning. It is that disposition of life that takes as its norm the will of the Eternal. Truth, therefore, as here employed, means nothing else than the advance of life toward its own perfection. This reflects the significance of Jesus' statement when he said, "I am the truth." In him the life of righteousness is seen complete.

The border-line between truth and right is indefinite at best. What is truth, and what is right? Right applies to conduct measured

by a norm. Truth refers to the life, which is at once the source and standard of conduct. It is the ideal of being that man shall constitute himself a full personality. That ideal is implicit in us all. It forms the norm for all judgment. An act is right which expresses the fuller personality, or contributes to its fulfillment. The difference between truth and right, then, is the distinction between a life and its expression. This identity of meaning in the New Testament usage explains the presence of "truth" rather than "right" in such passages as John 3. 21, "He that doeth truth cometh to the light"; also 1 Cor. 13. 6, "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

2. Only as we live the life of righteousness, can we hope to understand the meaning of truth. "He that is of the truth, heareth my voice." "Only he," says Lotze, "for whom truth is true can recognize it as truth. . . . The understanding can find truth only where it sees the content of its thought agreeing with a standard which it carries within itself."[1] Of old it was said of Jesus that when he should appear, to many he would be without form or comeliness and there would be no beauty about him that they should desire him. Right-

[1] Lotze, *Microcosmus*, ii, 698.

eousness is never desirable to the unrighteous, nor purity to the impure. Rectitude of life is necessary to rectitude of thought. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." You cannot prove that proposition to a selfish man. If he declares it more blessed to get than to give, you are silenced; he is not of the truth. Purity is a beatitude only to the heart that has abandoned its evil passions. This fact reveals the central problem in the effort after the world's evangelization. How shall we get men to forsake that which they love and accept that for which they have no desire? At best the acceptance of the life of righteousness is a venture of faith. We put the life of virtue to the test and find it supremely good. In the very nature of things this could not be otherwise. Since truth is life, and knowledge comes through experience, there is no means by which one may learn that righteousness is desirable except by putting it to the test. And since the life of righteousness as the will of the Eternal is also our truer self, there can be no doubt as to the verdict when once it has been tried.

3. There is a commentary on this statement in a recent article on the Foundation of the State.[1] What is the ground of the authority

[1] David Jayne Hill, *The Foundation of the State.* Reprinted from The Fra, November, 1916, by permission.

of the state? One answers, "The power to compel obedience." No, that is the philosophy that might makes right, a philosophy we in America, at least, disclaim. Obedience is not duty. Furthermore, if any group of persons in the state are strong enough to resist, they are under no obligation to obey. Well, then, the authority of the state rests in the will of the people. But what authority have ten people that one does not have? Or what right have ten to impose their will upon one, if that one does not wish it? What, then, is the foundation of the state? There is in every one of us a sense of justice, and with it a corresponding sense of obligation. This lifts a man above personal preference and makes him capable of society. This is the soul of which the state is the body. Not he that heareth the voice of the state is of the state. He may harken through fear, and be an outlaw in his heart. But he that is of the state heareth the voice of the state.

IV

Certain far-reaching implications follow from this view of truth. First, it suggests that ultimate reality is personal. Just as thought, word, and deed are instruments for expressing the inner life of man, so the world of things

is the means of expression of an underlying personal life, which is its ground and support. Our thought and purpose manifest themselves in and through spatial objects which we create, such as houses, gardens, and harvests. In like manner the spatial world as a whole is the revelation of a hidden thought and will.

Philosophy has always drawn an inadequate distinction between truth and reality, as if truth were something external to or above existing things, when it is present only in the thought of some thinker while he thinks or in the action of some being while he acts. Truth cannot exist independently of being; it is real only as the nature and habitude of being. This distinction has led to much loose thinking in the endeavor to interpret the nature of reality as a whole. Reality, we are told, is universal life, power not ourselves, impersonal will, unconscious reason. But these are all empty phrases, names for nothingness. As Borden P. Bowne has said, "Intelligence and reason are such only as they are guided by ends; and a guidance by ends means nothing except as those ends are present in consciousness as ideal aims."[1] Unless we are ready to adopt a crass materialism in our conception

[1] Borden P. Bowne, *Philosophy of Theism*, p. 127. New York, Harper & Brothers. 1887.

of ultimate reality, a consistent logic forces us to think of it as personal.

Any interpretation of nature is of necessity a product of our own thought. That is, it is a construct, formed through the application to the world of appearance of the laws of the mind. But if that construct is to have validity, the laws of thought must also be the laws of nature. The possibility of truth lies in our ability to reduce the phenomena of nature to an intelligible order, and that order can be real only as the expression of intelligence.

The theory of evolution was supposed for a time to have dispensed with personal agency as a basis of reality, by substituting for it the reign of law. It was discovered that the whole creation is not only ruled by law but that it is determined by law. As a result, law was given a substantive character, and set behind the world of things as its cause and sufficient explanation. But a more candid inquiry as to the meaning of law has shown the fallacy of this position. A law is only a description of the process by which an agent works; it explains nothing, but is itself in need of explanation. It is truth only as a statement of a method of action.

All reality is an eternal spirit. All things

that appear are but manifestations of the Eternal. The heavens and earth are a mirror in which we behold the Eternal Goodness, and discover the plan he is working to fulfill. From him all being flows; in him all life subsists. Nature is the declaration of his thought. Human perception, so far as it is true, is the interpretation of the thought of God, for God is truth. Effort after truth is effort after God; truth acquired is God possessed.

V

The discussion leads finally to a practical question: How may we be of the truth? This is the ultimate question of the Christian life. We gain excellence here as in the pursuit of any art. How does the artist win perfection? He chooses a perfect model, and copies it until he grasps, first the general rules involved in its production, then the basic principles. So it is with the art of life. Imitation is the first law of progress in character. It is the supreme merit of Jesus that he has made known to us the truth as life. The perfecting of humanity consists in a faithful embodiment of the mind and life of Jesus. It is a law that we tend to become like that with which we are constantly associated. The ancient Greeks who lived daily in the presence of the

statue of Apollo unconsciously became erect. As we contemplate the perfect life of Jesus we tend to become like him, until imitation grows into consecration. "We all, with unveiled face," says the apostle, "reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." Jesus is the perfect man—the final form of truth. As we follow him we are of the truth; as we live in him the meanings of life become plain.

CHAPTER IX

IS PERFECTION POSSIBLE?

HUMAN perfectibility has been the ideal of every religion. The Chinese sage, the Greek philosopher, the Indian yogi, and the European Christian all agree in this, that man ought to attain to a perfect state. These teachers have not agreed on the content of perfection, nor the path by which it is to be won. One would reach it by meditation, another by education, still a third by inspiration; but all are unanimous in the claim that human excellence is to be desired. "Religion," says Borden P. Bowne, "aims at the perfect and will have the perfect or nothing."[1] Even the atheist has not dissented from this statement. Nietzsche embodied it in his doctrine of the Superman. From the beginning the vision of the perfect man has floated before the human mind.

I

Nothing is more marvelous than that this dogma should have been so unanimously ac-

[1] Borden P. Bowne, *Personalism*, p. 293. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. 1908.

cepted, for the one thing quite evident is the fact of man's incompleteness. Men may have lived who have attained complete bodily development, but who has reached the fullness of his mental and moral powers? The perfect man, in whom all mental and moral capabilities are fully realized, is far before us, if, indeed, he has broken upon the vision of some of us. The great souls of history represent but a single phase of the ideal life. The saints of the Bible were not faultless men.

Is perfection possible? What perfection can this be? Humanity free from all defect? Lack of infirmity of will or soul? Is not all human perfection relative to our limited and varying conditions? We do not expect perfection in a fresco as in a painting, in a piece of plaster work as in a frieze. We think of the lily as beautiful, and yet in the tropics it grows to be many feet across, and with the most delicate hue. There are conditions of life that make it inevitable that some souls should be dwarfed and, struggling up, attain little. The conditions are adverse, the growth is slow, the time is short, the goal is high. Yet ever in the mind of man rings this challenge, "Be ye perfect, for your Father in heaven is perfect."

The conclusions of modern science have re-

acted against belief in the possibility of attaining a perfect state. Man is no longer considered as a degeneration from a primeval condition of excellence, which he may recover suddenly by the triumph of divine grace in his life. He is a personality in the making. For ages he has been fighting his way up from the lower levels of animality to a diviner type of life. Essentially this struggle is to constitute himself a self-determining being—to bring his entire nature under the control of the ideal of reason. Personality emerges with the beginning of this control and advances toward perfection as control increases. It follows that perfection can be conceived no longer as faultlessness, for the ideal emerges with the development of personality, and always runs ahead of it. No human being ever realizes his ideal. Where there is ignorance mistakes will occur; where the will is undisciplined life will fall away from its goal. What we are is at best only a fragmentary representation of what we know we ought to be.

The Christian life is sometimes defined as an identification with the life of Jesus. He has set before the believer an example of excellence which all are expected to follow. The goal of Christian endeavor is to embody in character and service the example and

spirit of the Master. But there is a sense in which the life of Jesus immeasurably transcends even our best attainment. The holiest men have made confession of this fact. After two thousand years of Christian history, Jesus still stands above us as an example of moral excellence and spiritual being, after which we may ever reach, but to which no one ever fully attains.

II

If, then, we cannot attain our ideal, in what sense is perfection possible? Evidently, the term can be applied to man only in a relative sense, except as it refers to the will or intent that governs the life. The will may be wholly turned from evil toward righteousness. Such a will may err for lack of knowledge, or because of inability to command conditions; nevertheless it never deviates from its direction, being wholly fixed upon God.

There is no Christian teacher who has spoken with clearer insight upon Christian perfection than John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Wesley made this doctrine central to his thought. The significant thing in his teaching in this regard is the emphasis he laid upon the will in the Christian life. While he was insistent upon the need of the Christian attaining to the experience of holiness, it

was not his thought that this experience is to be understood as faultlessness in conduct or blamelessness in character. "By perfection," he says, "I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions." It would seem that he purposely avoided giving the impression that perfection is sinlessness. His definition of sin as "voluntary transgression of a known law of God" would prohibit this. Perfection is a matter of the purpose or disposition of one's life. It is being able to say, "I am come to do not my own will but the will of him that sent me." It is a life inspired and controlled by one aim, and that to know and to do the will of God.

It is not Wesley's thought, however, that the perfect man is simply one whose motive is ever right. Life lived from the level of duty is not the Christian's highest privilege. Duty implies anxiety and fear, but Scripture represents to us the possibility of a life of peace. Peace is attainable only through the control of the whole nature by some positive principle that fills consciousness and makes righteousness easy. That principle is spiritual love. This transforms duty into pleasure, and makes the most irksome task radiant with joy. Think you that Father Damien found

a life of service for the Molokaian lepers a task? Did he offer himself upon the altar of sacrifice only because duty demanded it? Not so. He moved under the impulse of a divine constraint that made each day's service a delight, because it was what his soul would choose.

III

There is a wholeness about this view of perfection which is its chief merit. Science has made this an age of specialization. Time was when every physician was supposed to be competent to treat any part of the human organism. It is not so to-day. One gives his thought to the stomach, another to the heart; one to the eye, another to the ear. This is an age of specialists in the science of medicine. The naturalist, by reason of the extent of his field, is unable to master all the forms of nature. The study of one branch of the animal kingdom alone is the task of a life-time. This specialization is necessary in art, literature, and industry. Our industrial life is so highly organized that to each workman falls a single task, and in this he must be expert. The field of literature and art has become so extensive that any reasonable production requires a division of labor. But

in the very nature of the case there can be no specialization in morals. Morality is a disposition of the soul toward the duties of life; it is the reaction of the human spirit in the field of conduct, and it is not possible to be expert in one sphere of conduct and ignore the rest. Whatever else may be said of our morals, they must be well rounded; that is, they must apply to all days and all acts. We are too inclined to be Christian specialists. There are few of us but excel in some one grace, while we are greatly lacking in others. One is large in sympathy, but weak in faith. Another is strictly honest in business, but fretful and irritable in little things. Church members are often firm in their belief in the doctrines which the church inculcates, and this is commendable; but too often they are devoid of that Christian love without which such belief is as nothing. This is not the Christianity of Jesus Christ. He has no place for Christian specialists. He calls for that attitude of soul which always and at all times disposes one to follow the divine will.

"Holiness" is a word not held in the highest respect in the popular mind of our day. With many the term is associated with fanaticism and sensationalism. This is unfortunate, for, rightly understood, there is no more

noble word in our language. Several reasons have no doubt contributed to this misunderstanding, but there is one for which we ourselves are largely to blame. In our popular usage the term has been employed to indicate a negative condition; it has been interpreted as referring not to the possession of something excellent so much as to the absence of something branded as bad. But holiness in the New Testament is a distinctively positive term. It is more than innocence. Innocence is a clean sheet with no writing on it; holiness is a clean sheet, but with a lot of writing on it —writing of a definite kind, the record of self-conquest and self-development. Holiness is heroism, and heroism of the boldest type, heroism in the moral life. There are men to-day who, if called to take up arms and go to the front in defense of their country, would do so gladly. We call them heroes, yet these same men have had habits and impulses ambushed in their lives for years, enslaving and hampering them. They know these enemies are there, they know they are undermining their life, and they have never had the courage to rise up and drive them out. It is easy to be a hero on the battlefield of the nations; it is hard to be a hero on the battlefield of the soul; and that man who sneers at holiness

as something cheap and sentimental simply does not know what holiness is. He has not entered into a warfare with the enemies in his own life. He has never undertaken a fight to the finish with selfishness and lust. He has never tried to walk the path marked out by the Son of God. For the distinctive achievement of the life of Jesus was this, that he was a man and lived among men, and was perfectly holy. He did not seek seclusion as a better condition for living a holy life. Conditions never once were accounted by him. He took the world as it was, and lived his life and retired from the scene without a blot on his banner or a single record of defeat. And what was this perfection of Jesus? First of all, and chiefly, it was a perfection of will. His first recorded utterance is, "Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?" Every thought and deed after the moment of that utterance was governed by the purpose these words express. Throughout the varied experiences of his ministry he was completely devoted to the doing of the will of God. And, this is the perfection you and I may hope to attain. We cannot expect to be blameless, but we ought to have that attitude of will which always seeks to do the right. Not that we shall ever reach a finished perfection.

Any state of perfection involves the possibility of advance. Christianity, it is true, presents the ideal of an absolute good, and bids men seek after it; but at the same time it makes clear that the good for us lies in our growth toward that ideal, a growth measured by the degree of our devotion to it.

IV

The assertion of Scripture, then, is that a life of outward obedience to the will of God is a means of inner transformation. Thereby the springs of a man's life are changed. So that doing the perfect will of God ultimately results in inner completion of one's being.

There is a modern theory of ethics which teaches that in the struggle with environment man is making himself; that day by day as he labors to subdue his passions and follow the law of reason he is constituting himself a moral being. The little child is not a moral being, but only the prophecy of one. His nature is a sort of ground-plan upon which the years to come are to build the structure of the life to be. Struggle and effort, success and failure, the joys of triumph and the regrets of defeat all have their place in this process of construction. At no time is the task complete; there is always something more to be gained.

Goodness is perpetual self-development; and human life is defined in the paradox, I build and yet in building I am.

This theory is in harmony with the teaching of the New Testament. The Christian's task is to obey the divine will, but in so doing the inner life is ever renewed. Take one outstanding illustration. Here is the fisherman Peter, to whom Jesus one day said "Follow me." Peter was weak-willed and impulsive, but Jesus made no mention of these frailties. He simply said, "Follow me"; and Peter followed. He failed, but he kept his will set on following: he denied, but he did not desert; and one day Jesus turning to him said, "Peter, when thou hast fully recovered thyself, strengthen the brethren." In these words Jesus looked forward to the day when, as a reward of faithful obedience to his command, Peter would become strong enough to sustain the wavering faith of others by his example. Peter at last became a new man in Christ, but he never thought of himself as faultless. Writing his letters to those of the Dispersion, he speaks words of strength, but they are the words of a man who in humility and by the help of God is still struggling on.

It is not the thought that this gradual transformation is wholly the result of one's

own effort. If one were left to fight his way single-handed upward toward excellence, the task, even if possible, would require more than an ordinary lifetime. From the human standpoint the full Christian life is a surrender of the soul to God; in its divine aspect it is the life of God in the soul. The will which is devoted to God is energized and made capable of something greater than was previously known. All growth comes through the expression of a life-principle, which may be solicited, or directed, but which is itself original. We sometimes think it possible to add graces to a life from without. This is the method of a false culture which says, "Take a man as he is and add to him." But that method spells failure. God's method begins within. "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." All the graces of character are from God, though it please him to attach them to obedience. Growth in character is increase in capacity for spiritual appropriation, whereby the power of the Eternal becomes available to us.

A traveler from Japan has said that in that country, arctic in winter, tropical flora are to be found. Scientists explain this phenomenon by saying that the land is volcanic,

and beneath the surface is a heat with which the roots are in contact. The inworking of God is a source of constant renewal in the life. There is no grace or goodness possible to us but finds the secret of its growth in him. Beneath and beyond all, there is a source of energy producing for those who seek them those states of soul which are desirable. Life is triumphant as it realizes in itself this power of spiritual renewal. This is the vindication of the claim that obedience to the will of God is the condition of the perfect life.

Not long ago a prominent layman in the church absented himself from public worship because the theme for discussion was "Christian Perfection." He regarded it a waste of time to discuss a mere fiction. No man, said he, can be perfect in the absolute sense, and there is no other sense in which the term can be employed. This man was right, but he was also wrong. There is a perfection that belongs to the Christian, the only perfection possible to man. That is a perfect devotion to the ideal of life, expressing itself in a constant endeavor to apply the spirit of that ideal to every fact of experience. Such a devotion results in a perpetual growth toward the standard which the ideal presents. Other objects in our world are perfect by reason

of some function which they perform. Man is an end in himself, an end, however, which is implicit. Perfection, therefore, is progress; and since God himself is the end, and God is in all, we have the assurance that growth will finally reach its goal when man has attained to God. "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on . . . toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

CHAPTER X

LIFE'S GREAT PARADOX— SELF-ASSERTION VERSUS SELF-RENUNCIATION

Our discussion so far has dealt largely with the individual in his endeavor after self-realization. We have now to notice that the fullest life for the individual is not possible apart from the lives of others.

I

In the common mind self-interest and service are usually considered as rival terms. The former suggests a person following selfishly his own private gain; the latter, the soldier, missionary, or the nurse, who renounce life's comforts, even life itself, for a cause the good of which they themselves will never share. Here is a distinct opposition, and one is forced into the equivocal position of either being frowned upon by society as selfish, or submitting to a course that appears to be both irrational and unjust.

The teaching of Jesus has not escaped this

paradox. The very heart of his gospel was its exaltation of the individual. His message to men was the message of their own importance. He offered to the slave, the poor, and the oppressed salvation from debasing conditions, and an inheritance above the pomp of kings. Yet hand in hand with this appeal to self-assertion is the demand for self-denial. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life . . . shall save it." "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me." How are we to harmonize these two apparently contradictory demands?

Dr. G. Stanley Hall, in his recent work, *Jesus the Christ in the Light of Psychology*, explains this discrepancy by the claim that these statements represent different stages in the development of Jesus' thought. "If Jesus said all that is ascribed to him about the Kingdom," says Dr. Hall, "those who seek to know his mature views concerning it are in the position of one given every saying of a great man on a great theme from childhood on and told that they are all put forth at the same time, stage, or level of his development."[1] That would mean that in the earlier part of

[1] G. Stanley Hall, *Jesus the Christ in the Light of Psychology*, ii, p. 359. New York, Doubleday, Page & Co. 1917.

his career Jesus thought much of self-assertion —"What should a man give in exchange for his life?" In his later teaching he came to emphasize the value of life for society—"Whosoever would save his life shall lose it." According to Dr. Hall, the consciousness of Jesus was not perfect from the start, it developed toward maturity, and therefore his later words are the only true representation of his message to the world.

If Dr. Hall's claim is correct, it is an exceeding misfortune that the sayings of Jesus were all transmitted to the church as being of equal value. This misfortune has filled the Christian thought of the centuries with confusion. But is it correct that there is an inherent opposition between these two groups of sayings—those admonishing self-assertion and those requiring self-denial? On the surface they appear discrepant; but if we look more closely, we find that in reality they are in agreement. Each is true, but not in itself alone. It is true only when taken with the other. "What should a man give in exchange for his life?" This statement is true, there is no more significant insight in our civilization. But, "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it." The goal of life is to make the most of oneself: and how shall this be

done? Not by self-preservation merely but also by self-renunciation.

II

First, we must emphasize that there is no particular merit in giving one's life away. There has been a great deal of loose thinking connected with our teaching concerning sacrifice. No virtue appertains to self-sacrifice as such. It must have a reason, sacrifice must be for something. Whatever merit it obtains is derived from the end to which it contributes.

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that a man's first duty is with himself. Life will always remain an individual affair; it can never become selfless. The good man is one who respects himself; the bad man has lost this regard. The strong man is one who is sure of himself; the weakling never knows whether he is equal to the test or not. We are separate beings. Each man must bear his own burden, fight his own battles, win his own victories. Not only so, it is incumbent upon every man that he shall be true to himself. We find the standard of our life within. No one else can tell us what duty is, what right is. What is right to you is right; what is truth to you is true; what is beauty to you is beautiful. Every man's world is great or

small, dull or glorious, with the size or shade of his own soul.

But a man is not a mere individual. He is the bearer of a common personality and the sharer of a common life. Life has its individual aspect; it has also its social aspect. We are called upon to recognize in others the same claims we make for ourselves. If my life is an end in itself, I am bound to grant the same as true of every other life. This was the significance of the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That injunction did not forbid self-love; it simply required that the rights we demand for ourselves we shall recognize as belonging to others also.

Again, we have not stated the whole personality when we have presented the claims of the individual as such. The person is more than a unit. It sustains relations with others, as father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter, neighbor, citizen, friend. Indeed, it exists in these relations. An isolated personality is inconceivable. The lives of individuals are so closely knit together that it is impossible to consider the good of one apart from the good of others. The good for every individual is a social good—a good from which he cannot exclude his fellows. All action is

prompted by self-interest, but the quality of the action varies with the character of the self. The interest may be narrow or expansive. It may seek to favor the self at the cost of others, or it may seek the good of the self in the good of others.

The relation of the individual to society, then, is a question of the size of the self. There are not two selves in each of us, the one egoistic, the other altruistic, duty requiring the sacrifice of the one to the other. Every actual self includes social relations, and is measured by the extent to which these are multiplied and enlarged. The development of personality implies an increase in identification with others' interests, and readiness to forego strictly personal ends that these may be realized. This means that as the life is broadened and deepened personal motives become more and more subservient to a larger interest and a larger good. Eucken has given splendid statement to this thought in an incidental definition of love found on one of his pages.[1] "Love is primarily not a subjective emotion, but an expansion and a deepening of life, through life setting itself in the other, taking the other up into itself; and in this movement

[1] *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal*, p. 231. London, Adam and Charles Black. 1912. The Macmillan Company, Agents.

life itself becomes greater, more comprehensive, and noble." This is simply a restatement of Jesus' words, "Whosoever shall lose his life shall find it."

Selfishness and unselfishness, as applied to a person, are not mutually exclusive terms. They are relative terms. They represent different degrees of breadth of personality. Selfishness is short-sightedness. It indicates an interest that is narrow and exclusive. As Professor Dewey has suggested,[1] the man who keeps his seat while ladies stand is simply narrowly unconscious of factors in the situation that should operate upon him. He sees only the seat, not the seat and the lady. This is the principle of all selfish action. It indicates a narrow interest, due to a narrow or indifferent self. Unselfishness, on the other hand, is not being devoid of self-interest; it is the broadening of that interest so as to take in the well-being of others. As unselfishness increases, regard for others' welfare assumes a more and more prominent place in motivation. A man who being alone flees from danger, is not selfish; but a man who thinks only of his own safety when there are others who might be aided, deserves our condemnation.

[1] Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 381. New York, Henry Holt & Company. 1913.

III

This conception of the relation of the self and the other needs emphasis to-day. In both religion and economics confusion here has resulted in serious loss. On the one hand, the way of salvation has been marked out as the path of self-annihilation. The self-regarding interests have been interpreted by themselves as constituting an entity which in principle and practice is wholly at war with the higher life. This is the self of nature, and it must be destroyed and another superimposed upon it if one is to live a saved life. The result has been a tendency in religion to asceticism. Whatever may have been the gains in the past resulting from a withdrawal from the world, for the literature of devotion asceticism has lost its appeal as a religious discipline. This is well, for the type of personality fostered by such discipline is both empty and ineffective.

The old view has also been, and is, a source of error in economics. It has made for the disparagement of the individual, the assumption being that the individual is the old self of evil which must be destroyed. Political and economic salvation is to be found in collectivism. Just what collectivism is is not made plain, except that it is the negation of all self-regarding aims and interests.

The relation of the individual to society must be one of community, not of antagonism. So far at least as our American ideal is concerned, organized society exists for the purpose of maintaining the rights of the individual. That social organization is best which secures to the individual the fullest chance for self-development. But self-development implies increasing interest in social harmony and a fuller recognition of the rights of others. The social theory that ignores the claims of the individual is grossly impractical; while the individual who denies the claims of society is blindly narrow. Only by participating in certain social arrangements, such as family, friendship, school, organizations for trade and for government, can the individual realize the good of life. His liberty becomes real through the opening up of social avenues of self-expression. But at the same time responsibility is born. He becomes aware of the dependence of his own welfare upon the maintenance of and compliance with social requirements, and susceptible to others' rights. As the individuality enlarges, this sense of responsibility grows, until one becomes more and more ready to sacrifice personal rights in the effort to gain larger liberties for the less fortunate.

Jesus was neither an ascetic nor a collectiv-

ist. He mingled in the world's affairs and sought his salvation in and through them. He set out with the individual in his endeavor to establish a redeemed society. He recognized that the only society possible is one of individuals, and that such a society is a success or a failure according to the nature of those individuals. He declared that the greatness of a disciple consists in lowly service. A disciple must not think of himself alone; rather let him work on behalf of others for their welfare in a self-denying spirit. Thus alone his own supreme and proper welfare as a member of the Kingdom can be secured.

IV

The question is, then, How shall we acquire the larger self, the broader interest? The answer is that it cannot be done by fixing attention upon oneself. The man who thinks only of his own private interest is false to the larger self. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it."

The question here is one with the central problem of all morals: How shall we get men to resign the lower for the higher good, the immediate for the more remote? What is the sin of the sensualist? It is that he seeks his own satisfaction without reference to higher

ends. What is the sin of the egoist? It is that he chooses the narrower instead of the larger interest. The principle of the sin in each case is the same. What is lacking is not knowledge of the good so much as the ability to rate the higher above the lower and give oneself to it.

Christianity offers to impart this ability, and promises to do it through the contagion of a great personality. It is an ultimate law that the soul's affections can be changed only by the touch of a greater soul. Men know what is good, and yet remain in bondage to that which is base, until they are won to the service of the good through the impress of another whose life is dominated by the supreme Spirit. The Kingswood colliers were a coarse and brutal lot, given wholly to sensuality, until they came under the spiritual impress of John Wesley. Then their desires were changed, their horizons broadened, and a new and higher form of life was produced. And so it always is. Education, as the term is customarily understood, cannot produce the larger life. If the affections remain unchanged, education may result only in a cultivated villain, who employs his acquired faculties in the service of an enlarged self-interest. A trained intellect does not necessarily imply an upright

life. Education in the larger sense of the drawing out or unfolding of the possibilities of personality does constitute a saving discipline, but this is vastly more than intellectual instruction.

It is the supreme merit of Christianity that it has inspired in men this personal abandon, this interest in the larger good. Not only has Christianity created in the multitudes the desire to make some sacrifice for others' sake, but it has begotten in individuals in each generation that readiness to devote their lives to human well-being that has given us the missionary, the martyr, and the reformer. How has this been accomplished? Why did Paul choose poverty, suffering, prison, and death? Why did Savonarola risk his life at the hands of a frenzied mob? Why did Livingstone die for the sake of the black man? Why have the Lord's servants in all ages toiled on joyfully knowing they themselves would not see the fruits of their labors? Because of the example of Christianity's Saviour, the example of his cross. That cross brought to men a new sense of duty, reenforced by a sublime faith in God. It has fired a few great-souled men and women in each age with a holy self-abandon, and they by their word and example, as representatives of the cross, have been

lifting the generations out of self to higher things. Christianity as a process of heart-culture, is justifying its claim to be a fountain of energy for the creation and maintenance of the spiritual self.

It is not difficult to multiply examples of lives that have been broadened through contact with the spirit of Jesus. In the city of Glasgow was a painter fast gaining prominence in his art. In the course of a series of pictures representing the life of his city he chose as a model a poor mother and child. The mother was in rags, and carried her babe along the wintry street. When the picture was completed he stood back and looked upon it, and suddenly a strange emotion took possession of him. He saw his own life over against the struggling multitude and he knew that henceforth his interest must be identified with theirs. He thought of the life of Jesus, and that life became a challenge to him. He resolved to forsake his art and become a city missionary. After a few years spent in Christian work in his native city, again the circle of his interest widened. He decided to go as a missionary to Africa, and there among the tribes of Uganda he spent the remainder of his life endeavoring to bring cheer, enlightenment, and hope to that benighted people.

This briefly is the story of Bishop Tucker, a man who was led from a narrow self-interest to identify his own welfare with the well-being of the world. He is one of a long list who, beginning with the apostle Paul, have filled every age with the hope of better things. And whatever else may be involved, the world's hope to-day lies in the multiplication of such lives. Humanity has looked forward from the beginning to the coming of a new age. However much races have differed concerning the time or method of appearance of that age, all have agreed regarding its character. It must be a time of peace and of good will. Peace is possible only when men individually and as a class learn to regard each other's interests as their own. Therefore let him who hopes for the millennium seek to develop within himself, and to inspire within others, that disposition commended by Jesus when he said, "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it."

CHAPTER XI

LIFE AND DEATH

THERE are principles in our world that in their operation manifest themselves in different ways, and these manifestations sometimes take the form of apparent opposites. Failing to detect the underlying unity in these manifestations, we often look upon them as separate and unrelated, or even as antagonistic, and lift to the dignity of distinct principles what are but varying expressions of one fundamental law. Much of the confusion and many of the seemingly insoluble problems of life arise from this failure to trace the roots of so-called opposing forces back to a common source, and seek their explanation by relating them to one another.

Nowhere is this statement better exemplified than in our thought of life and death. It is customary to think of these terms as representing an eternal opposition—one, the effort to build up, the other, the endeavor to tear down; one, the law of self-preservation, the other, the method of destruction. We would scarcely think of attempting to har-

monize them, much less of unifying them. And yet perhaps just this is the key to the mystery of life and death. What we call life and death are progressive stages, the one unfolding into the other, the crest and trough of the wave by which eternal life in time presses forward to its fulfillment.

I

It requires little evidence to show that man has always looked upon death with an attitude of dread.

> "Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
> No life that breathes with human breath,
> Has ever truly longed for death."

From the beginning death has cast its shadow over the face of human life. Life is good, and it has in it the promise of good to come; but death destroys that promise. In its presence all the values that make life desirable wither away. Love and hope and joy are gone; the reason and righteousness of things is destroyed; the sanctions of conduct are removed; the human heart stands bowed beneath a weight of longing and loneliness. For if life stops at the grave, its worth, for the individual at least, is reduced to a minimum.

This instinctive dread of death has been reenforced in our day by the attitude of science.

The growth of materialism has brought science under the sway of sense, and in the light of the senses death seems supreme. Psychology scoffs at the possibility of the soul continuing its existence after the dissolution of the body. For what is the soul? It is a function of the physical organism. Does not consciousness depend for its existence upon the brain? Is not every act of a conscious being the result of cerebral action? Is not injury to the brain followed, not only by partial or complete loss of consciousness, according to its severity, but also with disorder in the moral life? This being the case, how can one reasonably believe that consciousness persists, or that the soul survives after the moment of death?[1]

II

While man has always had a dread of death, he has never been satisfied to believe that it is the end. Six thousand years ago, the Egyptians recorded their belief in a life after death; and from that day to the present, that assertion has never been silenced. For, if the senses declare that death is extinction, other voices protest against that declaration. Instinct and affection cry out against it. Our

[1] The Materialist's argument has been summarized by Haeckel in *The Riddle of the Universe*, chap. xi.

spiritual possibilities declare against it. In the world everywhere are dim analogies that suggest transformation rather than extinction. Night passes into day, winter into summer, youth into manhood. Francis Thompson, with his marvelous gift for similitude, sets forth this fact in his "Ode to the Setting Sun":

"It is the falling acorn buds the tree,
The falling rain that bears the greenery,
The fern-plants molder when the ferns arise.
For there is nothing lives but something dies,
And there is nothing dies but something lives.
Till skies be fugitives,
Till time, the hidden root of change, updries,
Are birth and death inseparable on earth;
For they are twain yet one, and Death is Birth."[1]

The commonest things are born again through death. Shall man alone, who transcends them all, be but for a day? He will not believe it.

It was not the intention to grant the claim of materialistic psychology, that its evidence proves that death is the end. No one will question the assertion that consciousness and the brain are in intimate relation. This is a matter of common observation. But it has not been shown that the former depends upon the latter. Indeed, there is strong evidence that the reverse is the case. No less a thinker

[1] The Works of Francis Thompson, Poems, vol. i. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons.

than Weismann has maintained that the body is dependent upon the soul. The life-germ, in the process of its development, wins the power of clothing itself with a material body, and of laying it aside again. Death, then, is not the master of life; it is the servant. Life chooses death as a means of better fulfilling its function. "I consider death," says Weismann, "as an adaptation, and believe it has arisen by the operation of natural selection." Death has not been from the beginning. As the structure of the organism becomes complex, life, for the purpose of utility, sets a limit both upon its size and its duration. Life is continuous and unending; the forms in which it is manifest change and pass away; but it does not change, nor does it cease to be.[1]

This argument, of course, does not justify belief in personal immortality. It performs, however, an important service: (1) in silencing what has seemed to some an unassailable objection, (2) in suggesting a principle that may be carried over into the philosophy of personality. This principle is that only through death can life realize itself. There is a sense, however, in which the evolutionist has offered

[1] See Weismann's two lectures, "The Duration of Life," and "Life and Death." Dr. W. H. Thomson has presented this argument from another standpoint in *Brain and Personality*, chap. viii. Also Flammarion, *Death and Its Mystery*. New York, The Century Company, 1921, chap. ii.

direct support to belief in the survival of the person. For millions of years, so he declares, life has been struggling upward through multitudinous forms, and for what? To reach at last its culmination in a person. In man life has achieved a form that gives meaning to the whole. In man a goal is reached that justifies millenniums of pain and travail. But now, having achieved this goal, is man, the product of the ages, to be but for a day? It cannot be.

III

It must not be forgotten that in the very nature of the case proof is impossible with regard to the possibilities of life. Life is not a theory, nor is it reducible to theory. It is a force; it is not a matter of knowledge but of belief.

In *The Riddle of the Universe* Haeckel scoffs at Kant's dictum that the immortality of the soul is not an object of pure reason, but a postulate of practical reason. "We must set practical reason entirely aside," he says, "together with all the exigencies of emotion and moral education, etc., when we enter upon an honest and impartial pursuit of truth."[1] Exactly, and having done so, one conclusion

[1] Ernst Haeckel, *The Riddle of the Universe*, p. 202. New York, Harper & Brothers. 1900.

necessarily follows—a denial of everything concerning life that is not the product of rational inquiry.

But is this method justifiable? Who can tell what electricity is? or who will attempt to demonstrate the possibilities of electricity? There are certain fundamental truths that have nothing to do with knowledge; they have to do with conduct. This is so of all the essential facts of life. Knowledge may, as Bergson says, petrify the stream of life, cut a cross-section in it, and analyze it. But that which it represents is no longer life. Life is force in application. It is "a continually growing action." It is a constant effort toward the creation of new forms. It is the act by which the form is shaped. One may analyze what it has been, and yet be unable to prophecy what it will be. So far as that prophecy is possible, it must be based upon assumptions necessary if we are to live at all. Immortality is not an object that may be observed, nor a truth demonstrable by logical reasoning. It is something that can be known only as it is experienced, and must otherwise be received on faith. Life at best is a great act of faith. The aims which give it value are aims that cannot be attained in the world of sense. To accept them is to believe in more time, to

deny them is to negate life itself. To live at all one must find the strength to affirm the eternity of the human spirit.

IV

The idea that the true meaning of life is realized only through death is not new. It has haunted the mind of man from the earliest time. Plato taught that only through death can life come to its own. Socrates welcomed the hemlock because it set his spirit free from the prison of mortality. But Plato's thought, so far as it relates to the nature of immortal life, is wholly negative, and death has no other relation to life here than that of providing an escape from it. Therefore Plato's teaching falls short as a philosophy of life and death.

It is only when we approach the gospel of Jesus, that we find this idea given in positive form—that the relation of life and death becomes vital. In brief, the teaching of Jesus is that man is able to rise, here and now, above the conditions of time, into the divine life. This he does by renouncing the lower and more material interests and seeking the higher and more spiritual. This renunciation prompts the birth of new powers and possibilities that are enduring. Thus life in the

flesh becomes a continuous process of death, whereby in each conquest over the lower self the higher life is realized. The final dissolution of the body, therefore, is the culmination of this process, or the death of death. Thereby the life of the spirit wins its full freedom. This higher spiritual life abides, for it shares the nature of the Eternal.

1. There was no trust more confident in Jesus than the belief that death for him was not to be the destruction of his person. This trust did not arise because of a consciousness that his relation to God was unique. It belonged to the view of life he offered to all men. The kingdom which he proclaimed had as its essential element the idea of eternal life. Every disciple partakes of this benefit upon the earth, and continues a sharer in it in spite of earthly death. The ascent of Jesus to the heavenly life through death was to be shared by each of his followers. They are to pass from the earthly existence into participation with him in the life of the Father's house.

2. Furthermore, the last discourses of Jesus give prominence to the thought that after his death he would yet remain in relation with his disciples. Death, he assures them, is only an outward separation; in reality he

would be in helpful union with them. Not only is the idea of his continued personal existence emphasized, but of his living participation in their lives. Through death his personal influence was to be multiplied. He would be with them in a more real sense than he had been before.

These are days when the broken ties resulting from the war have turned the thought of large numbers toward the spirit world. They are inquiring anxiously as to the relation which their lost ones sustain to them. While one must guard, and especially in time of grief, against being led astray by superstition and fraud, nevertheless we must not overlook the most patent teaching of the religion of Jesus, that those who leave us are still in helpful relation with us. It may be outside the range of possibility for us to communicate with them, or they with us. Jesus' view of life, however, presupposes as unquestionable this truth which has ministered so much comfort to sorrowing hearts.

3. Jesus refrained from speaking in detail regarding the nature of life after death. Once, however, he was challenged by the Sadducees to defend his teaching in this regard. The Sadducees seem to have been unable to conceive of life in other than sensuous terms.

Jesus, therefore, repudiates the sensuous character of eternal life, and asserts that it must be conceived under spiritual forms. These forms he defines merely in one word, "union with God." The indissoluble relationship which men sustain with God as their Father is the source of eternal vitality. This has in it the germ of an endless growth, whose inner principle is to seek through death the emancipation of spiritual being.

4. This everlasting life is the true life of man. It is not something grafted on to man's natural being. It is the issue God purposed for every child of his. It contributes value to man's earthly existence. The life of the poor, the despised, the persecuted, is worthful in its light. Even affliction becomes trivial, or serviceable, since the true worth of life lies not in the permanence of the physical, but in spiritual being. Man belongs to eternity by birthright. To know himself, and realize his possibilities, is eternal life.

V

This thought of Jesus became the dynamic of the early church. At first, after his death, the disciples were overwhelmed with sorrow at the idea that he was gone from them forever. But in a little while there came to

them the belief that he was still alive, their confidence returned, and with it a clearer understanding of what he had said to them before his death. This belief brought not only a rebirth of courage but the triumphant conviction of the truth of his Messianic claims. Now inwardly grounded, they set out to preach Jesus in the face of a world's skepticism.

No conception ever inspired in the mind of man has been the source of greater comfort than this. Thereby fear has been destroyed, and life and hope and consolation are born. Many a heart has turned away from the tomb to resume its tasks with an abiding peace that otherwise could not have been. This teaching of Jesus has given humanity the secret of strength. It has armed the soul against weakness, failure, and discouragement. Live in the spirit and you share the divine omnipotence. The body is no longer a clog, a prison, or an enemy; it is an implement of the spirit. It is a necessary condition in the process toward the soul's completed being. Death becomes the gateway to a fuller life. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." As the grain of wheat through the law of decay releases the life-principle and rises up in multiplied form, so the life

of the soul is conceived as finding through death its deliverance and fruition. Here is true consolation. For this vision faithful souls have been able gladly to work and wait, confident that they would see again familiar faces and hear the old sweet words of love.

CHAPTER XII

THE RISEN LORD

THE resurrection of Jesus is the fundamental fact of the Christian religion. Christianity did not begin with the teaching of Jesus, his miracles, nor his blameless life. When Jesus died upon the cross, and his body was laid away in Joseph's tomb, his followers went back to their homes disheartened. His disciples put away their hopes and gathered in that upper room hallowed by their last meeting with him, and talked of the light that had shined only to be snuffed out forever. "We had hoped that it was he that should redeem Israel"; but now that hope was gone.

No more bitter day can come to a man than the next morning after death has entered his home. The hope that sustained through the days of the fight is gone; the battle is lost. Life still goes on, but a cloud hangs over it that shuts out the light of the sun. Why has the morning come again? Why does life go on when its motive is lost? Not otherwise was it with the disciples that morning after the crucifixion. It is significant that the evan-

gelists leave no record of that day. Why should they? There was nothing to record. The Master is gone, and his disciples return, each to his place, hopeless and bereft.

But suddenly all this is changed. One fact restored the disciples' faith, and sent them out to win the world. Into their solitude a messenger came who said, "The tomb is empty. He is not there." They hurry forth to see, and "entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side arrayed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he saith unto them, Be not amazed: ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, which hath been crucified: he is risen; he is not here. . . . He goeth forth before you into Galilee."

This message became the impulse of a new life. Sorrow vanished, courage returned. They set out led by the Spirit of the living Lord to proclaim his kingdom. Christianity, as a religion of spiritual power and renewal, was born on that day. The resurrection of Jesus made Christianity.

But strangely enough, no fact of Jesus' life has been more fiercely assailed than his resurrection. Especially is this the case in our own day. Ours is an age of criticism, when everything must present itself before the bar of investigation. Nothing can escape. Truth must not

base its claim upon long recognition, nor divine authority. It can stand only on the ground of evidence. No doctrine has suffered more from this attitude than the resurrection of Jesus. Not because the evidence is inadequate, but because of a reaction against miracle that has prejudiced the case against the resurrection. The attacks that have been made have ignored the evidence largely, while they base their rejection upon opposition to the supernatural.

It cannot be too often emphasized, that to reject the resurrection of Jesus on the ground of the impossibility of miracle is to create another miracle as impossible as that which we hoped to avoid. For if Jesus did not appear after his death, how are we to account for that mental state which gave birth to Christianity, and created the Christian Church and the Christian Sabbath? How did it occur that a group of men whose leader had been put to death as a criminal, and who were staggering under the shock of this disaster, came suddenly to regard him as the Master of life and death? A tree is the fruit of its environment; not otherwise is it with a mental state. Yet here is a group of cowards, upon whose leader the curse of God has come, and who have no hope but that all is ended, but

who in the short space of six weeks rise up to declare that he who was slain is alive, that the curse has been turned into blessing, and that the seal of heaven is upon his life and work. These two states of mind are in absolute quarrel with each other. They are understood only on the ground that during those six weeks the revelation of a new force entered these men's lives, and that force was none other than belief in the miracle of the Risen Lord.

Ordinarily, we reverse the legitimate order of procedure in our treatment of the question of the resurrection. We insist upon beginning with the resurrection as a cause, whereas the natural order of procedure is to begin with a group of facts and work backward to a sufficient source. What occupies the man of science first are the phenomena of nature. The study of electricity did not begin with the establishment of a law, and then its application to the facts. It began with the lightning and similar phenomena; it adopted certain hypotheses to account for these phenomena, and finally settled upon the one that comprised the greatest number of facts.

The character of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is unimpeachable. No other fact of history has been better attested. It

is not simply angels proclaiming to women that Jesus is risen, nor the finding of the tomb empty, that is advanced as a reason for accepting this fact. It is based upon the same kind of evidence as that upon which any human knowledge depends. All the New Testament records testify that Jesus appeared to his disciples, and to others, after his death. These people could not be mistaken. They knew him, and identified him by indisputable marks. They were too many, and too diverse in temper, to enable us to attribute their belief to hysterical enthusiasm. They not only believed themselves, but they proclaimed the fact in the place where Jesus died, and to the people who had seen him put to death, and in one day three thousand accepted their testimony.

But in case this evidence should, for some reason, be rejected, then we must insist upon the employment of the scientific method in our consideration of the case in hand. Here we are, surrounded by a group of facts—related results, which require an explanation. The Christian Sabbath is an effect for which we must find an adequate cause. For twelve hundred years and more Saturday was observed as the Sabbath. Why the change to Sunday? Here is the Christian Church, with its sanctuaries, schools, and homes of mercy,

scattered over the world. Whence did it come? Here are multitudes of transformed lives—men and women, who through faith in a living Christ have been lifted out of selfishness, worldliness, and low ideals, up to a higher and purer life. These phenomena require an adequate explanation. The resurrection of Jesus provides one that comprehends all the facts. No one has been able to suggest another. Faith in the risen Lord does not rest upon the resurrection as an historical fact. It rests upon the existence of a world of love and grace in the midst of which we live and for which we must provide an adequate source.

There is, then, a greater evidence which presents the spiritual fact which the resurrection is intended to convey. That evidence is stated briefly in the words, "He is risen; he is not here. . . . He goeth forth before you into Galilee" (*Eng. Rev.*). The manner of the resurrection is secondary What we need to know is that the Lord is with us, leading the forces of civilization, and that he will be with us to the end. Of this fact the resurrection is the assurance; of the resurrection this fact is the evidence. The resurrection of Jesus is the point of transition, where he who was a single figure in history becomes the Lord of the ages.

1. For two thousand years He who was dead has been leading the forces of civilization. When they have halted, his word of command has been heard; when they have wavered, his hand has led them back.

This statement is writ so large that it scarcely requires evidence to support it. I take but one instance. That is our conception of time. Of old there was no universal time-measure. Early peoples dated events by the foundation of their city or the reign of their king. But Jesus stamped his name upon the calendar of the civilized world. He began a new era, alive with meanings drawing their inspiration from him. Here was furnished a point of time about which might be assembled the facts of history. From henceforth time was divided into two divisions—before Christ and after Christ. There was one event that stood in such vital relation to all history that all before it was preparation and all after it result. And to-day business and politics, legislation and literature are all adjusted to the chronology of Jesus.

How does this come about? How is it that a native of a subject province, a Man who during his lifetime exerted a narrow influence, who was cast out by his own people and died a criminal's death, has written his name

across the face of human history? He was a great teacher, but the world had had great teachers. He died as a martyr, but in this he was not alone. The answer is to be found in the fact that He who died is still in the midst of his people, directing the forces of life into new channels. He is risen from the dead, and goes before you. Whatever we may think of the event in Joseph's tomb, Jesus has been living in the life of the centuries, a spiritual fact working in the midst of men from out the unseen world. Despite continued opposition, his spirit has taken hold of the life of the race; it has awakened, inspired, and instructed that life, and lifted it up toward better things.

"But," you say, "this does not argue that Jesus rose from the dead. Other men, about whom no such claim has been made, have left an abiding influence behind. Plato lives and Cæsar lives." You miss the point. The civilization to which we refer has not drawn its life from the personal influence of Jesus as transmitted through his words, but from the conviction that he is alive and in the midst of his people. This was the dynamic that impelled the early messengers of the cross, that made them equal to any task. This is still the motive power of all Christian

endeavor. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Plato could create a school; Jesus created a civilization. Plato's influence was a memory; Jesus' influence has always been a presence. The belief in a living Christ has been the sustaining power of the Christian believer. It has inspired in the missionary that spirit of personal abandon necessary to the spread of the gospel in the land of danger. It has begotten a confidence that has lived and labored in times of failure and defeat. The Christian has not only found instruction in Jesus' words, and direction in his example, but he has been sustained, day by day, amid the toils and dangers, the temptations and losses of life, by the sense of an abiding Presence.

2. He goes before you to-day. You may not call yourself a Christian man, you may not belong to the Christian Church; but tell me, where do you get your ideals of right, the ambition you have to do good and to make humanity better?

What is the intelligent motive of effort in behalf of the common good and the increase of happiness to-day? What incentive lies back of our world of philanthropy? The desire to make the conditions of life more favorable. But is this desire sufficient to

create a civilization that has as its aim to banish disease and lengthen life, to lessen trouble and lighten toil, unless it have back of it a supreme sense of the value of human life? Our civilization, comprising its manifold agencies for enhancing the meaning of man's existence, was born of an awakened sense of the value of the human personality. And whence came this sense of value? Human life, though endowed with its loves and hopes and aims, is an empty thing if these are shut within the limits of the world of flesh.

Any object acquires its value from its destiny. Things of little worth become worthful when they are made subservient to a worthy end. A block of refuse marble, outside the gates of Rome, becomes a treasure of art, when chosen by Michael Angelo as the instrument of his genius. Even so the human personality, valueless as a thing of time, gains merit when its destiny is revealed. Man, as a child of eternity, rises above the ills and hurts of time. His life wins an end within itself, and henceforth the aim of human endeavor is to employ the things of time so far as they are helpful, to eliminate them so far as they are a hindrance, to the attainment of that end.

The resurrection of Jesus brought to the

world a revelation of the destiny of human life. In the presence of the risen Lord belief in the eternity of the soul was born, and with that belief a civilization that seeks, through education, philanthropy, and the mastery of nature, the fulfillment of that destiny. And every man to-day who believes in education, science, and charity, and works for the betterment of human conditions, lives under the inspiration of a conception of life that was born of the broken tomb.

It is no mere accident that Christianity is the only type of civilization that has made for true enlightenment and for progress. Every other civilization has lacked the incentive to progress, because it has failed of its conception of the destiny of man. Christianity alone possesses the energy for advancement, for it alone reveals what man is to be and imparts the power to realize that end. The religion of Jesus, unlike other religions, calls a man, not to the performance of acts and ceremonies, but simply to the task of self-realization. Its very motive is development. But that motive would be powerless, were it not for two facts: that in the person of Jesus is given a demonstration of the possibility of life, and that the risen Lord has impressed upon the world a belief in the eternity of life. Under the in-

spiration of these two facts Christianity has become a power that has made for the emancipation and elevation of the human person and the awakening of the higher energies of man's nature. It has filled the heart of the world with a hope that has created new views of what man is to be and new agencies for the realization of that being.

3. He goes before you for the days that are to come. Humanity marches into the future under the inspiration of a dual hope, that the race will attain to a new world, that the individual will attain to a new life. This twofold hope was born of the resurrection of Jesus.

The other day, when the Great War began, and the ear of the world was filled with stories of the barbarities of cultivated nations, men of little faith complained, "Christianity has failed." This complaint was an unintended tribute to the power of Christianity. Why, Christianity has failed? Why not, education has failed, science has failed, humanity has failed? No, we have considered humanity a failure, and have not hoped greatly that science or education could redeem it. But we have believed that Christianity was accomplishing, and would ultimately accomplish its redemption. And why Christianity? It has

given to the world the ideal of a new age, but this has not been the dynamic of the future hope of the generations. Plato gave in his *Republic* a vision of what mankind ought to be. The dynamic of the world's faith for the future has rested in those words appended to the Great Commission, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Humanity has accepted the challenge of Jesus to bring in the future kingdom, because it has believed that he was present, working with it, and that in that presence resides a power that makes the impossible attainable. That belief was born of the word of a risen Lord.

Sin is the world's great problem. The hope of the future lies in breaking the power of sin. The bringing in of a new age is not primarily a matter of legislation, nor of education, but of regeneration. So long as sin remains, man's happiness is marred, and his possibilities destroyed, no matter what other gains are made. Therefore, from the beginning, humanity has looked for one who could save from sin. This Jesus claimed to do, not merely by reason of his own example, but through his ability to bring into life a saving power. Belief in that power, and therefore the hope of a new age, was born on the day of the resurrection. For two thousand years the Chris-

tian army has been marching toward the future, laboring and praying for the coming of that age. If Jesus is no Saviour, if the rock of belief in his Saviourhood is removed, all the worse for the world. Its hope of a redeemed humanity is gone. But while unbelief complains, millions in whose lives the reign of sin has been broken rise up to reaffirm their hope of a new world because of their experience of the power of a present Lord.

Furthermore, he goes before you into the valley of death. Life for each of us is filled with uncertainty, but in nothing is that uncertainty greater than in the event of death. Death is the great omnipotent fact, with which everyone must reckon, yet about it we know nothing except that it will come. The when, the how, the where are hidden from us. To-day the babe is snatched from its mother's arms, to-morrow the youth is taken in his strength, or the wife and mother in her womanhood. If we could only "wrap the drapery of our couch about us and lie down to pleasant dreams," but we cannot. No ministry that can come to human life can contribute more greatly to man's contentment and ambition than that which can create the belief that death is not an enemy but a friend. This the resurrection of Jesus has done. It has put

in place of the grave the sun-lit splendor of the New Jerusalem. It has filled human hearts with a glad ambition to make the most of themselves and of their time here, not because death is the end, but because it is the true beginning.

Then let us rejoice in a risen Lord whose presence is certified, not by extraneous evidence, but by a world of life and love and hope, which bears witness to him every day.

"The Lord is risen indeed.
He is here for your love, for your need—
Not in the grave, nor the sky,
But here where men live and die;
And true the word that was said;
'Why seek ye the living among the dead?'

"Wherever are tears and sighs,
Wherever are children's eyes,
Where man calls man his brother,
And loves as himself another,
Christ lives! The angels said;
'Why seek ye the living among the dead.'"[1]

[1] Richard Watson Gilder, "Easter." Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company.