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# *Humanism States Its Case*

*By*

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The Lowell Institute Lectures,
delivered in King's Chapel, Boston, Massachusetts,
during February and March, 1932

*1933*
*The Beacon Press, Inc.*
*Boston, Massachusetts*

TO MY WIFE AND CHILDREN

# *Foreword*

This book owes its origin to a series of lectures delivered on the Lowell Foundation which attempted to deal with the purpose of Humanism within the general field of theology. The subject deserves more ample treatment, particularly on the historical side. Inasmuch as the number of lectures was limited to six, a fuller discussion was impossible and must be reserved for a future time.

No attempt was made to distinguish between Humanism and Humanitarianism, inasmuch as both movements result from the same basic consideration, the primary importance of man in the general scheme of things. The entire discussion was purposely limited to a consideration of this fundamental assumption, because with it Humanism either stands or falls.

The humanistic system of thought, like any other, needs to be defended against its enemies and its friends: against its enemies in order to guard it against willful misunderstanding of its legitimate claims; against its friends because of their failing to realize its limitations and their consequent misapprehension of its possibilities.

A disagreement between two opposing opinions is never so great as the adherents of the respective opinions like to believe. Differences are apt to be sur-

face differences. In the present warfare between the Humanists and their opponents, a large share of the controversy is due to an inability on the part of both parties to differentiate between distinctions of primary and of secondary order. Theism contains more humanistic elements than the Theists themselves recognize, whereas the implications of the humanistic doctrine do not clash so sharply with the theistic teachings as the Humanists are likely to admit. In many cases the contending parties are stating the same truths in different terms. This fact should be recognized by anyone trying to reinvestigate the question, and such a person should consider it his primary task to search out and eliminate all contrasts of opinion which arise, merely from a different use of words. At present the problem looms larger than it should, because the points of difference have not yet been brought back to their irreducible minimum.

When this has happened and the issue between the Humanists and Theists has been clearly stated, it will be discovered that important differences of opinion remain, although fewer in number than thus far has been supposed. All of these, in the end, may be reduced to one cardinal disagreement relating to the method which should be employed in the discovery of truth. It is my opinion that the entire theistic-humanistic controversy goes back to the old dispute regarding the advisability of using either the inductive or deductive method in the search for truth. It is scarcely

needful to relate that one's theological outlook undergoes an important change depending upon whether one uses the one approach rather than the other.

The author hopes that the following chapters may contribute somewhat to the clarification of a problem which at present is needlessly involved.

J. F. A.

Harvard University, February, 1933

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# *The Historical Background*

IN his recent book, *Yes, but—*, Dean Sperry reminds us of the fact that progress in theological thinking is never along a straight line. Man, if truly religious, is concerned with two realities, God and man. It is a psychical impossibility to focus our attention on two objects at the same time, and hence there is a constant shift of interest; our thoughts go manward and Godward in turn.

No one can doubt the historical accuracy of this observation. We have made headway by a succession of tacks, but the tacks have not been equally long. More thought, by far, has been devoted to God than to man. The fourteenth century had a well developed theology, whereas psychology and sociology are not quite one hundred years old. I wonder how many of the one hundred and sixty nine volumes of Migne's *Patrologia,* 250,000 pages all told, deal adequately or at all with human problems. Not many, I venture to guess, as compared with those that deal with questions arising from the concept of God. It is not without cause that men call a School of Religion a School of Theology, even today. For the habit which makes us decide all religious problems with reference to God rather than with reference to man is still strong.

So tenacious, indeed, is this custom, that a temporary interruption of its functioning causes surprise and even a measure of alarm. When a teacher of dogma is dealing with the first three centuries he experiences a feeling of safety. He may not agree with the results of patristic speculation, but he does not question the general direction in which thought is moving. Its course is normal, Godward. Hence, when explaining the system of the Fathers, the inadequacy of their reasoning does not unduly disturb him. He may disagree with them, but he does not try to find excuses for their teachings. There may be flaws in their logic, but it is comforting to know that thought, in general, is traveling in the right direction, so that there need be no reason for alarm.

This feeling of certainty begins to ebb when he comes to the Renaissance, and it quite leaves him when he reaches the Age of Enlightenment. Something appears to have gone wrong here. The trouble is not with the content of thought, quite the reverse, your teacher may find much to admire in this connection; but the direction in which thinking is traveling seems abnormal, it is manward. The impression grows upon him that important factors have been omitted, purposely omitted. He does not understand the unusual phenomenon of man asserting himself and declaring his own desires and needs to be all important. It is irregular. A suspicion of irreverence comes over the puzzled instructor. What is one to think of this lack of humility on the part

of man in the presence of God? It seems neither normal nor right.

Moreover, this change of interest comes often unexpectedly. It is true that in history no change appears unheralded, but one might wish the announcement to be in somewhat clearer tones. Indeed, the contrast between the old and the new frequently is so great as to be disturbing. Explanation no longer explains. It might be possible to mention in one breath Thomas Aquinas and Dante, without receiving a shock, but Thomas and Boccaccio! How can one bridge the gulf between two beings with such an entirely different outlook on life? There is no continuity here, no longer can one apply Hegel's doctrine "the real is the reasonable."

Your teacher finds it somewhat hard to "justify the ways of God to men" and he becomes painfully aware of the fact that a simple explanation of the unusual sequence of events does not quite suffice, there is need of apologetic explanation. Periods of purely humanistic reasoning may have existed, he admits—but then—. And now apologetic expressions creep in; such periods are needed as a necessary reaction to—or as wholesome criticism of—. The troublesome moments of human self-sufficiency appear to have no right to stand on their own feet or to have a life of their own; an unsuccessful attempt is made to explain them with reference to their opposites, the periods of Godward thinking. The latter are taken as the positive factors in the succession of historical events, the theses by whose grace the antitheses

have a bare right to exist. No need to look for excuses here, it all seems solid and safe. You may lecture to your heart's content upon St. Anselm without excusing yourself in the least, but Voltaire requires a careful introduction.

At present we have again entered upon such a disturbing period in which the tendency to explain facts with reference to man's interest is increasing. Knowledge of things as they are in themselves, deemed impossible by Kant, by many in our day, is thought not only impossible, but even unimportant. Importance is assigned only to that which vitally concerns the individual or the human race. As in Fichte's system, although perhaps for a different reason, the "I" again posits itself. It may seem a weak foundation upon which to build the structure of reality, but by many it is thought to be the only possible one—Prometheus struggling against the gods in his own right.

The name which we give to this developing system of thought is Humanism, and by so naming it we greatly disturb the feelings of the more exact among our historians. It creates confusion, they say. For the term Humanism has a very precise meaning, it alludes to a re-awakening of interest in classical culture, which took place in the fifteenth century. Hence, we should not use the word except in reference to this particular event. This is all the more necessary, because there is a sharp contrast between the two movements. Fifteenth century Humanism looked back, in the hope of restor-

ing some of the lost values of the past; twentieth century Humanism looks forward, creating its values as it progresses. It is a new thing, and it would be better served if we could find a new name for it.

Whether or not a new name is necessary need not concern us at this point, but it is interesting to note that Humanism makes the impression of novelty upon men's minds. In point of fact, it is not new at all, except in its application to present day conditions, but unquestionably it creates the illusion of being so. It has ever been the same throughout the entire course of history. Whenever thought moved Godward, men have been under the illusion that the truth which they accepted was as old as eternity itself, but when it turned again in the direction of man the world seemed to think that it had entered upon a new era. The historians of the day were apt to describe the new phase of thought as a new birth, an awakening.

Exclusive interest in human affairs, I repeat, occasions surprise whenever it appears in history. It seems unusual, an interruption of the normal trend of thought. Therefore, a period in which it occurs gives the impression of standing by itself without connection with that which went before. Like Melchizedek, it is believed to be without genealogy, having neither father, nor mother, nor beginning of days.

The late Dean Creighton, of Cornell University, was in the habit of saying that a Humanist always impressed him as one who believed that the world had

started yesterday. The remark is not without basis in fact, for a keen sense of historical continuity is not the most striking quality in the mental make-up of the average Humanist. He lives in the present and works for the future; the past leaves him more or less indifferent. He suspects, in fact, that it has saddled him with a doubtful heritage, and he would rather not give it much of his time and attention. The world, the true, the significant world, he believes, was indeed born with him and with those who share his interests. He agrees that something like to that which he preaches has been taught before, but he insists that his emphasis is new, which likewise makes his gospel new; and, strange to say, his opponents agree with him, although they count the very thing in which he glories, the newness of his gospel, a reason to distrust it.

It is the object of this chapter to prove that the humanistic doctrine of our day has been taught before. In the realm of thought, there is little that is new under the sun. This well-known fact proves to a pessimist the uselessness of thinking and convinces the optimist of the truth, that while life endures certain vital human interests will endure as well, even though they have no other purpose than to keep man's mind active.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that much of our present day thinking is but the re-adaptation of former opinion to present needs. Humanism is no exception; it, too, has had its past history. The difficulty lies in discovering the precise teachings of the Humanists of

our day. Could we do this, we should have no difficulty in pointing out like teachings in the past. This, however, is very hard to do. Humanism is impatient of definition and, indeed, rather prides itself upon the fact that it is so much alive that it cannot be forced into a strait-jacket of limiting terms. Hence, the number of definitions is great. Occasionally, curiously enough, a book is written upon the subject of Humanism which gives no definition of the term at all. The writer has found it difficult to compress the full meaning of the humanistic attitude toward life into a few sentences, so that his definition has expanded into a whole book. I may not hope to succeed where others have signally failed. Yet, in order that we might understand one another, it is well that we should mark the limits of our term, even though this marking may lay no claim to precision.

F. C. S. Schiller defines Humanism as "a philosophical attitude which regards the interpretation of human experience as the primary concern of all philosophizing and asserts the adequacy of human knowledge for the purpose." Humanism is here described as a method of interpretation. Judging merely from Schiller's definition, one might well conclude that its primary object is a dispassionate reflection upon the facts of human life, and its method of inquiry a simple analysis of the situation as it presents itself before us. That this is contradictory to facts, Schiller would be the first to admit. The definition is incomplete because it makes no men-

tion of the conclusion to which the analysis of the situation leads. It may be interesting to know that human knowledge is adequate to the purpose of interpreting human experience, but it is more important to learn what conclusions it reaches with regard to the content of that experience.

Curtis Reese, in his volume, *Humanist Religion,* refers to Humanism as "a philosophy of human control in contrast with all forms of fatalistic determination as applied to human situations." Here clearly is the complementary half to Schiller's definition. Humanism may be said to be "a system of thought which assigns a predominant interest to the affairs of man as compared with the supernatural or the abstract and which believes man capable of controlling those affairs." Even this definition is inadequate, inasmuch as it leaves out important points, but it is correct as far as it goes and it will at least serve as a basis for further discussion.

It must be carefully noted, however, that this definition deliberately refrains from making reference to belief or disbelief in the existence of the Deity, nor does it mention materialism or the mechanistic explanation of the cosmic processes. The popular belief holds that a Humanist is necessarily an atheist and materialist and, hence, a mechanist. This does not follow by any means. There is great latitude here. Many Humanists use the term God and have a perfect right to do so, provided they make clear what they mean by

this term. It is not reasonable to limit the use of this term to the theistic interpretation of it.

If Humanism is what this definition states it to be it is no new doctrine. Its history goes back as far as the record of human thought. It would be an interesting and most valuable task to trace the steps of its development from the earliest days to the present moment, but within the limits of a single chapter this is not possible. This, therefore, must be postponed until later. At present only a few hints can be given of a possible way of dealing with the subject.

Even this is not so easy as it may appear, because, at the very outset, we meet with a difficulty. It arises from the composite nature of the definition of Humanism which I have been forced to adopt. This definition combines two assertions which stand in no necessary relation to each other:

A. It is legitimate that man should consider his own affairs to be of paramount interest to himself.

B. Man is capable of dealing with his own affairs.

Between the two assertions there is, I repeat, no necessary relation. It is conceivable that a man should think his life interests more important than anything else in the universe, while at the same time he admits that he has no power to regulate them. On the other hand, he may believe that he can control the factors which enter into his life, while at the same time he may consider life, as a whole, relatively unimportant. Theoreti-

cally, one may hold both opinions in combination as do the present Humanists, or one may hold either opinion without the other. The question which we have to determine is whether these two views have always existed in their present relation, or whether they have led a separate existence and have come together only recently. If the latter prove to be true, Humanism as we now know it, which combines the two opinions, would have no past history, it would be of recent birth.

It is my opinion that a belief in human life as supremely interesting has always been linked with a feeling of certainty that man can profoundly influence his existence. The reason for this is obvious. No man takes a deep interest in a matter over which he can exercise neither physical nor mental control. Such a thing is foreign to him. Interest springs from the very fact that an active relationship exists between ourselves and the object of our attention. Except for man's tacit assumption that he could control his life, his active interest in it would have waned. He would not have waged the struggles against hardships and danger with anything like the intensity which has characterized his efforts in that direction. We may be certain that, without man's belief in himself, human life could not have continued.

Early man did believe himself equal to the defense of his own interests. Indeed, he had only himself upon which to depend. He could not have relied upon the gods, for at the very first he knew no gods; they had

not yet emerged. A belief in spirits came earlier, it is true; but even that had not yet developed when man first rose above the lower levels of animal life. The very first phase of human existence must have been characterized by a supreme interest on the part of man in his own affairs, together with a strong conviction that he was quite capable of taking care of them. Here we have the crude, but effective beginning of that system of thought which today we call Humanism. Humanism starts from a natural instinct.

However, man did not continue in his early belief. His interest in himself did not wane, nor his attempt to exercise power over his own life, but certain difficulties arose on which at first he had not counted. As generation succeeded generation, life became more complex, and with increased complexity the danger of breakdown and defeat increased. An ox cart will function under conditions which would prove too much for a modern automobile. To the world of physical fact, which man shares with the lower animals, is added an entirely new world, created by his own imagination. New values are coined, new evils imagined, which are of specifically human origin, though it may be admitted that the roots sink below the human level. We now meet such terms as: justice, honesty, unselfishness, wisdom, and honor; but also their opposites: dishonesty, injustice, selfishness, and dishonor. Man's world becomes enlarged through the addition of imaginary entities whose presence is required for his

happiness and whose absence is felt as a distinct lack.

The wider his world becomes the more vulnerable it is, and the more difficult to defend it against harm. Is a man still equal to his task in the midst of these larger surroundings? He may be able to fight unaided against the forces of nature, but when, in addition, a battle must be fought on a higher level where the foes are invisible but equally deadly, what then? Moreover, the physical side of life changes its aspect as the mind of man develops. Reflection and imagination re-create the concrete world as much as they change the world of thought. When man arises from the animal level all things change; life and death become new experiences. The bare facts man may share with the lower creatures, but he does not share their interpretation.

Is it possible to imagine that in this new and much larger world man may still be equal to the task of self-defense?

The moment comes when man begins to consider himself quite unequal to that task, and it is then that the gods emerge. They are born from human needs. Precisely how their birth takes place need not concern us at this point. We may grant that the group mind, rather than the mind of the individual, is responsible for this new creation. We may also admit that the working of the group mind with respect to this matter is lacking in logical precision: that the whole process is more confused and on a level altogether more primitive than it is possible for us to imagine. The fact re

mains that, in some dim sort of way, man learns to recognize his inadequacy in the battle of life. He needs help, he needs it desperately, and it is hard for him to imagine that to a need so deeply felt there is no answer.

Therefore, the answer comes, gradually no doubt. It is born in the same human mind in which the need for the answer is first felt. How, we can only guess. No one knows with certainty how the primitive mind reaches its conclusions. To describe the process in modern terms is to misrepresent it. Yet, we may gain some approximate knowledge concerning it by reasoning from analogy with our own experiences.

How does the modern mind reach its conclusions with respect to a given problem? The way is as follows. First the question presents itself which calls for an answer. The answer not being immediately known we temporarily suspend our judgment. But the human mind cannot long remain in this condition. Suspense of judgment suggests the possibility of a perfect mental equilibrium. This is against the very nature of life, which is a condition of unstable equilibrium. We are, therefore, forced by nature to accept some sort of temporary answer as soon as possible, which means practically at once. The answer has neither the nature nor the force of a fixed conclusion. It means no more than a leaning in a given direction, it signifies nothing beyond the mere fact that the state of suspended judgment has come to an end. The stronger a man's mind, and the better trained, the longer he can put off the

moment when he is forced to reach a temporary conclusion. Even then the period will be brief. But a child or a man at a low stage of development will neither be able nor desirous to delay that moment at all; they will jump at conclusions at once.

The answer to any question is determined by our wishes or our needs. Modern man is no exception to that rule. It is his boast that he is objective. But objectivity merely means that for the time being he is capable of checking the power of his wishes, it does not mean that he is neutral. When strong evidence is presented to the contrary he may decide against the trend of his wishes, but when such evidence is not forthcoming his wishes or his needs determine the conclusions which he shall reach. Precisely the same thing happened in the case of primitive man. His needs suggested the answer to his problem. Inasmuch as no evidence to the contrary presented itself he reached a conclusion favorable to his wishes. This meant that in the course of time he came to believe in the existence of outward powers who would aid him in his needs.

The gods emerged for a specific reason. If the reason had not existed man's mind would not have created the gods, or at least not the type of gods which in fact it did create. The task of these gods was to help man in his unequal battle against the fearful odds of life. This determines their nature and their character. They are a means to an end, and if a means is to be effective it must fit the end.

A god effective as a helper to man in his battle of life must understand human life, and in order to understand it he must share it. Apart from sharing, no complete understanding is possible. This means that the gods must have human qualities. They possess those qualities to a higher degree than man, but they are the same qualities. The superiority of the gods to man is therefore expressed in terms of quantity or intensity (which amounts to the same), but not in terms of quality. The notion of a qualitative difference between man and his god is of late introduction. Man has power, the gods have more power; man has wisdom, the gods have more wisdom. The gods join the qualities which they possess in superabundant measure to those which man possesses in insufficient measure. Thus, with the help of the gods, man's strength becomes augmented and he now succeeds in his undertakings, whereas before he failed.

It is important that the gods shall retain the human qualities which they possess or they will become useless for the purpose for which they were created; but they do not do this. The gods develop in the sense that they become more abstract. The far more concrete concepts, Ouranos, Kronos, and Rhea give way to the more abstract ones Zeus, Pluto, and Poseidon. Ἀθήνη γλαυχῶπις, once literally Athena, the owl-faced, becomes Athena with the flashing eyes. The adoration of Ζεὺς ἑρχεῖος, around whose altar in the courtyard of the old Aryan house the kinsmen gathered, gives way to

the worship of Ζεῦς πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν, Zeus, the father of men and gods.

To the degree to which the gods become more abstract they become more useless. They no longer have a definite function. One may readily understand why men should worship the rain-god or the god of thunder. These departmental deities have a specific and concrete task to perform, the intricacies of which they fully understand. One may call them by a modern term, specialists. They know how to meet the problems in their particular field better than any other god, and surely better than any man. One approaches the rain-god when rain is needed in the same way in which one would go to the carpenter when a table should be made. One may expect a reply to one's prayer, because these gods are capable of performing their tasks, and moreover they are interested in them; rain and snow, wind and thunder, have both meaning and importance to them. Above all, they share that interest with man, to whom thunder and rain equally have meaning and importance.

However, one cannot expect such interest on the part of a god who has become an abstraction and to whom we apply qualities which to us have no practical meaning, such as omnipotence and omniscience. What is one to understand by a being which knows all and is capable of doing all? Our experience has brought us into contact only with beings that have a limited knowledge and a limited sphere of action.

Naturally early man created the gods after his own pattern, and hence they were limited both as to knowledge and possibility of action.

We must admit that the concepts omniscience and omnipotence are human in their origin in the sense that they too have originated in the human mind, but it does not follow that they result from actual human experience. They are rather the result of an attempt to escape the unsatisfactory consequences of human experience by eliminating, so far as the gods are concerned, the boundary lines of knowledge and action which set a limit to our ability to help ourselves. By the removal of these limits the gods seem to become more efficient helpers to man.

The reverse turns out to be the fact, however, for by endowing the gods with qualities which are the very opposite of those which he himself possesses man not only increased the distance between himself and his gods, but he created an absolute gulf. Man and God thereafter became mutually exclusive ideas.

Then came doubt, doubt first of all as to the wisdom of entrusting our fate to gods which have so little in common with ourselves, and then doubt as to the very existence of the gods themselves. Doubt implies suspension of judgment and suspension of judgment is a state of mind which, as we have previously noted, cannot long endure. Hence doubt was quickly followed either by an affirmation or a denial, or rather, in most instances, by an affirmation coupled with a denial. The

affirmation took the form of an admission that the gods existed, but it was denied at the same time that their nature was correctly represented to us. The denial combined a refusal to admit that the gods have true being with an affirmation that the values, which were supposed to have their source in them, continue in human lives. The latter position shows a leaning in the direction of Humanism. It is indeed Humanism at a certain stage of its development.

From the adoption of this position a number of logical consequences follow which we shall consider in due time, the very first of which has to do with the nature of value. I am tempted at this point to deal with this important problem, but I must not yield to such temptation, and therefore postpone its consideration to the third chapter, the one on "Humanism and Ethics." For our present purpose it suffices to note that early Humanism ceased to look upon value as something which originated outside of man, a gift of the gods which he had to accept without question or doubt, on the plea that the gods knew what was good for him whereas he did not.

Humanism did not believe this any longer; we, not the gods, are the judges of what is worth while in life. Humanism preached from the text which Protagoras supplied, "*παντῶν χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος*," ("Man is the measure of all things"). By man Protagoras means individual man, if we are to believe the testimony of Socrates in *Theætetus,* 152A. Pre-

cisely how Protagoras deals with the problems which arise from his own teachings we do not know for certain. Does he escape Solipsism, does he desire to escape it? His book on Truth, which might have informed us, and which may well have been one of the most important philosophical writings which the mind of Greece produced, was burned by command of the public authorities. Our knowledge concerning Protagoras rests on a few direct quotations together with Plato's interpretation of his teachings which probably was unfair, unless we are to assume that Plato had no full knowledge of the issues involved, which seems unlikely.

In the midst of all uncertainties, one thing stands out as sure, in Protagoras' system of thought man is the center of interest because in the universe of the Greek philosopher there is nothing more interesting to contemplate. Man moreover is spiritually self-sufficient inasmuch as he is himself the highest judge of what is right and wrong, valuable or the reverse. There is no appeal from his judgment. Whether or not the gods exist is a matter of indifference to Protagoras. Diogenes Laertes quotes a fragment of his book on the gods, which reads as follows: "With regard to the gods I cannot feel sure either that they are or that they are not, nor what they are like with respect to their figure." To this must be added the testimony of Socrates in *Theætetus,* 162, to the effect that Protagoras banished altogether, both from his

speech and his writing, the question of the existence of the gods.

Still the significant fact remains that, in spite of his confessed ignorance concerning the existence of the gods, the supposed sources of all truth, the Greek philosopher dares to write a book upon the nature of truth. It clearly follows that he must have explained the nature of truth apart from any relation to superhuman beings, convinced as he was that human interpretations of reality, limited and imperfect though they be, are yet sufficiently significant to be dignified with the name of truth.

Protagoras made school; and he who would trace the line of early humanistic reasoning would have to examine anew the philosophy of the Sophists, so long misjudged, owing to the hostile criticism of Plato and Aristotle. The object of this new investigation would have to be an attempt to discover a clear relation to Humanism as we know it today. This might prove no easy undertaking, particularly in the case of the younger Sophists such as Enthydemus, Callicles, and Trasymachus, for it would call for a high degree of ability to be able to differentiate between the soul of their doctrine and certain exaggerated statements which they made for the purpose of attracting attention. This, in turn, would have to be followed by a reexamination of two systems of thought seemingly so hostile as Epicureanism and Stoicism. May one find in

them common factors suggesting an interest in man? There is no doubt that such can be found.

Leaving Greek and Roman philosophy we should then have to turn our attention to the history of the Christian church. It happens that Humanism is a system of thought particularly attractive to men and women who have religious interests, many of whom are church people. Hence the history of Humanism within the church is of paramount interest and should first claim our attention.

Can we find traces of Humanism in Jewish religious history previous to the foundation of the Christian church? Can we derive anything important from an investigation of the Wisdom Literature? And what shall we say about the early Christian church itself? Are there any traces of Humanism in early Christian literature? Surely there is a difference regarding this matter between St. Paul and the writer of the General Epistle of St. James.

Most important of all, what betokens the rise of Jesus, the son of the carpenter, to Godhead? Manhood is lifted to the level of divinity itself. This means, as I shall try to prove more fully in the fourth chapter, that the absence of human qualities in the Godhead is felt as a lack which must not be allowed to continue. Presently God the Father, that is, the God without human qualities, diminishes in importance before the ascendancy of God the Son, the God who possesses

human qualities. The love and the veneration of the succeeding generations go to Jesus, not to God. To him the holiest prayers are offered, to him the eternal hymns of the church are sung. Moreover, it is the manhood in Jesus which is worshiped, not the Godhead. Jesus the child, born from an earthly mother, is the ever returning theme to which the earlier painters devote their skill, not Jesus seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

Nor is this all, our investigation will lead us farther. What is the meaning of the veneration of the holy Virgin, who to all intent and purpose became an integral part of the Godhead? What is the meaning of sainthood within the Catholic churches? Surely some significance must be attributed to the fact that time after time the Popes have lifted the humblest of men and women to a level on which they were thought fit objects of veneration and where they became links between men and God.

How, moreover, is one to explain in this connection the theory of the efficacy of human works as held by the Roman Catholic church; how *synergism* as taught in the post-Lutheran period of Protestant thinking; how the perfectionist doctrines of the school of Spener and, far more important, of the Wesleyan communion? Finally, what is the relationship between humanist teachings and the doctrine of the dignity of man, the corner stone of Unitarian teaching?

Certainly all this is not full-fledged Humanism. Anyone who, in a public lecture, would dare to refer to the Methodist church as humanistic would find his morning mail interesting reading for the next few weeks. But the elements are present out of which Humanism will be born. Man is at the center of interest, religion is believed to exist for him, rather than for God. It is denied that salvation is the result solely of an act of will on the part of a power outside of man. Man's co-operation in the matter of his salvation is thought both possible and necessary. Truly we have certain factors here which in combination make up the humanistic doctrine of our day. It is naturally true that in these so-called non-humanistic systems of thought these factors do not reach the full development to which they attain in Humanism itself.

And yet, immediately the question arises whether this last statement can be defended. Is it correct to say that in partially humanistic or even non-humanistic systems of theology the factors which make up Humanism are less well developed? This is not necessarily true. The fact is that in those systems such factors do not appear in a pure state. They are mixed with foreign ingredients. Hence they do not function as they would under more normal circumstances, but the elements in themselves have sufficient strength. A thing is weak only when it does not perform to an adequate degree when the circumstances are in its

favor, not otherwise. An electric battery does not act normally when it is short-circuited, but that does not mean it is lacking in strength.

Thus with the elements of human thought. They fail to manifest their presence when the circumstances for their manifestation are not favorable. They are there nevertheless. They may be active, too, but due to unfavorable conditions they may be forced to show their activity in an indirect way, which means that they use channels which are not their own.

Our supposition, that in non-humanistic systems of theology purely human factors are either weak or absent, does not square with the truth. On the contrary, they are often present to a remarkable degree of intensity. However, due to the presence of other elements they are either hidden or they do not function in their own right. It would not be difficult to show that even in historic Calvinism the human interest is far greater than appears upon the surface. Creaturely activity is frowned upon, it is true, but merely because it is not deemed safe for the creature. Human inactivity and a passive submission to God's decrees takes its place, but let no one suppose that the reason for this is found in the fact that man has fully forgotten his own interests and has thought only for the glory of God. The motive of self-interest is very strongly present. It is safer for man not to struggle with divine decrees. Man's security is the true motive rather than the enhancement of the glory of God. When we ex-

amine the development of Christian thinking we discover a great deal of what I should wish to call crypto-Humanism, Humanism that has gone into hiding. It is a worth while task to hunt it out in its places of retreat for the purposes of further examination. It is worth while also to determine why it has gone into hiding.

It goes without saying that in addition to the history of crypto-Humanism, Humanism not in hiding must receive ample consideration. Why is it that whereas, normally, man advances his claims timidly and indirectly, at certain periods in history this timidity suddenly disappears and the rights of man are boldly asserted? How is one to explain the transition of the Middle Ages to the Renaissance? Do the Middle Ages, and with them Godward thinking, cease to be, or do they merely go into hiding? Or is it possible to believe that Godward thought is continued in its opposite, in thought that travels manward? All of these things need to be studied from a new angle. In doing so, we shall get a more correct understanding of the course of history and of the importance of the forces which lie back of it. Above all we shall learn to assign to man his proper share in the shaping of events.

Our sense of proportion needs to be restored. No Humanist of the past or of the present will contend that all history is man-made. Man is a part of a larger whole. There is outside of him that, the nature of which we do not fully understand, but which beyond

doubt affects his life. The problem for the future is to discover to which degree man's life is self-determined and to what extent it is not. Humanism contends that our power of self-determination is far greater than we have thus far supposed. It would make man the true center of his universe and the captain of his soul.

It maintains that its views may form the basis of a satisfactory form of religion, of a sound structure of ethics, and of a system of metaphysics which shall busy itself with problems, not of imaginary nature, but of living importance.

Whether or not this contention is correct we shall endeavor to consider in the following chapters.

# II

# *Humanism and Metaphysics*

DOCTOR EATON in his *General Logic* makes the correct observation that the notion of fallacy is largely psychological. "No one," he says, "would call fallacious an argument which has no persuasiveness." The argument may be false but the error which it contains is so obvious that it lacks power to deceive. As an argument it is no longer dangerous. To call it fallacious would be to assign to it a power which it does not possess. "A true fallacy," and again I am quoting Dr. Eaton, "can be defined as an argument that seems conclusive to the normal mind but which proves upon examination not to establish the alleged conclusion."

One of the most frequent logical fallacies is the one which arises from a false assumption. This consists in making a claim which would be judged unwarranted by any opponent who understood the real character of the problem in question, and which we ourselves judge valid only because we do not possess full knowledge of the implications. This error in its inmost nature is not logical, but psychological. No mere stupidity prevents us from understanding our mistake in judgment, nor are we deliberately trying to deceive ourselves. The error is occasioned by an intense desire

on our part for a given result, which desire interferes with the clarity of our reasoning and causes us to believe a thing to be true merely because we hope it is true.

One of the most famous instances of a false assumption, a double one in fact, connects itself with the history of the ontological argument. St. Anselm, a realist, assumed on insufficient grounds that any concept present in the human mind, with absolute clearness, possessed logical necessity. He further took for granted that whatever is logically necessary is therefore real in the sense that it has true existence; in other words, he assumed the right to reason from *esse in intellectu* to *esse in re*. Inasmuch as he believed the notion of God to be present in his own mind with absolute clarity, he deduced from this fact its logical necessity and from this, in turn, its objective reality. The underlying fallacy is clearly psychological, not logical. St. Anselm wished nothing better than to give to the world a proof of the existence of God. In order to do this he was forced to assume the validity of deducing an objective fact from a mental concept, which he promptly proceeded to do. The fallacy was hidden from his own mind by the intensity of a psychical urge to obtain a worth while result.

It would be quite easy to multiply examples showing the same error in reasoning by carefully examining the history of human thought. I scarcely know a system of philosophy which does not, in some of its

phases, prove the truth of the contention that strong desires play havoc with human logic. It is not without cause that begging the question is the most frequent of logical sins.

We are face to face with this very difficulty the moment we attempt to determine the sense of the term metaphysics itself. It pays, by the way, to look up the explanation of the word in a general dictionary rather than in a technical one, because it will indicate which meaning the lexicographer desires that an average mind shall attach to the word. How is the term explained in Webster's *Unabridged Dictionary*? We learn that "Metaphysics is the science of real as distinguished from phenomenal being, ontology; a science of being with reference to its abstract and universal conditions as distinguished from the science of concrete being."

Here we have a number of assumptions of the very first order. We are asked to take for granted that being may be either real, that is, as it exists in itself, or else phenomenal, that is, as it appears to us. We are furthermore urged to believe that it is possible to know being apart from appearance; we could not hope, it is urged, to create a science of being unless such knowledge were possible. Finally, it is assumed that abstract and universal conditions exist which may be recognized by us and which will be discovered to be different from conditions which adhere in concrete being. With apologies to the writer of a well known book on travel, one is tempted to exclaim, "So this is metaphysics!"

If this is indeed metaphysics one wonders how it is going to be possible to write a chapter on "Humanism and Metaphysics" with some expectation of proving that a relation exists between the two. For it is scarcely possible to think of a notion more foreign to the humanistic temper than the one which relates to being as it exists in and for itself, as differentiated from being as it appears to us. Humanism is a system of thought which definitely explains truth with reference to man's concern in it, whereas metaphysics, judging from our dictionary definition, explains truth apart from man's concern in it. The one system positively excludes the other, provided, of course, that metaphysics is indeed what our definition, explicitly and implicitly, describes it to be—to wit, a type of knowledge apart from human interests and desires, dealing with ultimate reality as a complete whole.

Is it? I began this chapter with a consideration of logical fallacies which arise from false assumptions. I referred to St. Anselm's ontological argument as a noteworthy illustration of such a fallacy. One wonders whether we have not here another example of the same kind, more dangerous because far wider in its application. It is assumed, on what grounds is not plain, that such a system of metaphysics as the one described is *possible*. That, moreover, it is the only system possible deserving of the name metaphysics, the inference being that whoever denies the validity of this definition denies the possibility of metaphysics in general. It seems

clear that the very matter which requires proof is taken for granted, so that the validity of the definition cannot be allowed until the proof, now lacking, be supplied.

The history of philosophy answers the question whether a philosophy which deals successfully with absolute reality is possible. It is certain that attempts to create such systems of thought have been made, notably by Plato and Hegel. Whether they have succeeded in their undertaking is a question of appreciation. Their claim to success has been often enough denied and consequently is not universally admitted. But, and here I am quoting Professor Dewey, "such denials have contented themselves with asserting that ultimate reality is beyond human ken. They have not ventured to deny that such reality would be the appropriate sphere for the exercise of philosophic knowledge, provided only it were within the reach of human intelligence." The claim to success has been denied, but the attempt to succeed lauded.

A metaphysic dealing adequately with the concept of transcendent absolute reality may not exist, but it should exist. This has been the verdict of many thinkers. If an insuperable difficulty against its realization should present itself, we should be obliged to admit that no system of metaphysics is possible, none surely which will answer the intelligent needs of the human mind.

At this point Humanism asks a simple question. How

do you know that the human mind will be benefited by a system of metaphysics which deals with ultimates primarily? No one can expect us to accept, without further proof, your assertion that this benefit actually exists.

The answer on the part of the Absolutists will be that such a system of philosophy will benefit us by rendering our world more intelligible, because it will help us in unifying our experience. Human life and, hence, human thinking are confused and discordant, because they connect themselves with the uncertain, the changing, the ill-integrated. How can one expect unity of experience, and the mental rest which results, if the object of our experience is without inner unity? How can one hope to create a system out of factors which change every moment and elude our grasp? The very notion of system presupposes a degree of fixity. In human life the only certainty is uncertainty, the only thing fixed is change. If we insist on creating a system of metaphysics by employing the factors which constitute human life, we shall have to change our system as often as the facts themselves change, which will be constantly. The maxim of Heraclitus, *πάντα ρεῖ*, will then become the universal law, but this would rule out the possibility of knowledge, of science in the true sense of the word; it would lead to absolute skepticism. All we should be able to know is that we cannot know.

No one denies, the argument against Humanism continues, that the factors which make up human life

form a part of the material with which philosophy has to deal, but it does not deal with them for their own sake. Those facts are important only because they reveal certain unchangeable laws, general principles. It is the business of philosophy to study them in order to determine their nature and the relation which they bear to one another, and thus to point out the existence of an ultimate system, closed within itself. Inasmuch as we have now rid ourselves of the accidental, knowledge becomes possible. We are now ready to understand the world, to apprehend its true significance. The changeless must give meaning to the changing, the eternal to that which is in time. Ueberweg's maxim, *die Philosophie ist die Wissenschaft der Principien,* will thus be validated.

To this argument Humanism makes at least two objections. It would again point out that even if we grant the desirability of a philosophic system revealing ultimate principles, the fact remains that we do not have it. Platonism is dualistic and hence unsatisfactory. Even if we deny the dualism of Plato's system of thought by refusing to assign reality to the Platonic world of matter, counting his world of ideas as the only significant element in his system, we are not rid of trouble. First of all the Platonic idea is not a general and ultimate principle in our sense of the term; secondly, the realm of ideas is not an integrated whole, although Plato declares it to be that. It lacks true systematic unity, at best it is a condition in which things are placed together. It

is one thing to assert that the κόσμος νοητός is an interrelated organic unity of logically arranged ideas subsumed under the idea of The Good, and quite another to make this assertion acceptable, which Plato emphatically does not succeed in doing.

Nor does the Hegelian philosophy solve the problem. It has an advantage over Platonism by reason of the fact that it is not dualistic, but it does not succeed in convincing us that Reason controls and holds together all isolated facts any more than Plato could convince us that The Good was capable of doing that. If anywhere, Hegel should have been able to prove this to us in his *Philosophy of History,* but there the argument is scarcely compelling. It takes more imagination than most people possess, or ought to possess, to discover traces of the development of the Highest Reason in the chaos of the Middle Ages which Hegel pictures to us. Granted then that a philosophy of ultimates is desirable, where is the one that will convince us?

The second objection is of even more fundamental importance. It urges that a complete theory of ultimate principles, even though it existed, would not benefit us in the least. It would not help us in unifying our experience, for the purpose of making our world more intelligible to ourselves, because of the fact that it would not be dealing with our world. Philosophy is born from simple human needs, definite and concrete in their nature. It seeks to give an answer to the many "whys" which come up in the mind of man; surely this was its

original function. The "whats," which relate to the essence of things, develop later, but the "whys" came first. Why illness, why sorrow, why injustice, why life itself, why death? It must be admitted that an answer to those questions involves in the end the solution of ultimate problems. He who can explain the inner nature of the flower in the crannied wall will also know what God and what man is. Yet those questions originally had no reference to ultimate reality. They were simple, straightforward inquiries to which early men supposed an answer could be given, quite as simple and straightforward as the question.

Even when it was realized that the answer could not be simple, it was nevertheless taken for granted that the reply related to the problems of the individual human life, and not to something which existed quite outside of it and was wholly different from it. If the early philosophers had employed our terminology they would have said, "The absolute furnishes no answer to a problem arising in the field of the non-absolute, the unlimited does not solve the difficulties of the limited, nor the eternal of the temporal." The answer to any problem must be found in a field in which the problem arises; indeed, the problem itself must, either directly or indirectly, suggest the answer. The solution for the perplexities which beset human life is in that life, and has its roots in the very difficulties which press for solution. To use a system of metaphysics dealing with absolute reality for the purpose of having it explain the

meaning of concrete facts is to try the impossible. Like explains like, not unlike. Philosophy, in order to be useful, should stay close to the source from which it sprang—human experience.

To this argument an Absolutist would reply that we must not expect a system of thought to remain what it was in the beginning. It may start as a simple and concrete inquiry, but as it develops its aims multiply, its outlook widens, it takes in more and more ground. This the Humanist would admit, but he would insist that if by more ground we mean entirely different ground, and by more aims, entirely different aims, we no longer have the same system of thought. Growth should mean logical development from the original roots. If philosophy started as an attempt to render our world intelligible, it should continue to focus its attention upon our world. If it does not do that, philosophy has changed its nature and can no longer be used for the purposes for which it was originally intended.

To this, Absolutism answers that it desires nothing better than to render our world more intelligible, and that it is for this very reason that it makes use of the idea of ultimate reality. For the process of clarification involves the subsumption of conflicting notions under a wider concept which embraces them, smooths out the conflict and thereby renders the concepts themselves more intelligible. The more general the concept the greater the number of conflicting notions which can be subsumed under it. Ultimate reality, being the most

spacious of concepts, would embrace the largest possible number of conflicting notions and would furnish the greatest chance to eliminate discord, and to render our world more comprehensible. By way of concrete illustration, a conflict between two individuals may disappear as soon as both realize that they are members of a larger whole, the family. The concept family gives them a clearer idea of the limits of their rights as individuals and hence a better insight into what it means to be an individual. The larger notion renders their world more intelligible. This process may and must be carried on as far as possible; we should reason from family to township, from township to state, from state to country, from country to world.

This argument has certain merits, but it leads to consequences in thought which no one will readily accept, the principal one being, as we have seen, that the most general notion is the most influential in rendering our world more intelligible. This clearly is not the case, because the more general the concept the more vague it becomes, the more out of touch with the concrete facts through which conflicts and problems arise. Again, by way of painfully concrete illustration, when two people differ about the color of curtains to be selected for their drawing-room, it is obviously nonsensical to believe that the problem will be straightened out if both recollect that they belong to the same world.

Moreover, by constantly broadening the concepts under which we subsume our more limited notions we

end by altering their nature and thereby create a contrast between the wider concept and the narrower one, which presents a problem in itself. It might not be impossible to prove that the mere quantitative difference between the two ideas, family and world, is so great as to introduce a qualitative distinction. This at least is certain, that the moment we proceed from the broadest limited concept we know to the idea of the Absolute, we introduce a qualitative difference which no amount of reasoning will obliterate. To ask that the notion of the Absolute shall serve for the purpose of clarifying perplexities in a limited and concrete world is to desire that two contradictory notions shall explain one another, which is not likely to lead to satisfactory results.

Thus the dialogue between the Humanist and the Absolutist would run, but curiously enough the Humanists in their conflict with Absolutism are not primarily concerned with proving that they have an adequate metaphysic; they rather take this for granted. It is their opponent's case that needs to be scrutinized, they feel. Being Humanists not only, but human as well, they fail to understand why the Absolutists do not recognize the weakness of their own cause. The Absolutists are on the defensive, the Humanists reason. The burden of proof is clearly on them, and the world is waiting for the proof, but thus far in vain.

When Luther, in 1529, met Zwingli at Marburg in order to discuss with him the question of the Eucharist, it is reported that with chalk he wrote upon a table

these words, *Hoc est corpus meum*. He then added, "I have not come here to discuss with Zwingli the merits of the dogma of consubstantiation, I shall limit myself to contradicting him if he happens to differ from me." Much in the same spirit the militant Humanist does not regard his opponent as a person with whom he would discuss a problem that might have two sides. There is no need of such discussion. Your Absolutist patently harbors wrong ideas. The interesting question is not so much to discover what those ideas are as why any sensible man should hold them at all. The Humanist thinks that he discovers two reasons, the first an historical one, the second of a more immediate nature, but upon the whole less excusable than the first.

Let us discuss the historical reason first. It relates to a fact entirely familiar to anyone who has some knowledge of Greek history. Life in the city-states of Greece was characterized by sharp distinctions.

The ideal scheme for the state in Plato's republic is not a matter of pure imagination, but reflects existing conditions. In the first place, we have the slave class to whom is left all of the unskilled labor. The artisan, the skilled laborer, is only just above the slave in social rank, then come the merchants, then the soldiers, and finally the rulers of the state. The ruling classes know nothing of manual labor, they do not respect it, and do not trouble themselves with understanding the mental processes which play a part in it. An interest of this sort is very modern indeed.

The Greek does not willingly divide his attention among various objects of possible interest; to do this, he believes, results in loss of efficiency. A man is intended by nature to do one thing, and to do that well. Nature creates shoemakers and masons, equipping their minds with a special aptitude for making shoes and cutting stones; they are, as we might put it in a modern phrase, born shoemakers and born masons. Socrates, when describing to Glaucon the ideal republic in the second book of Plato's *Politeion,* says "And the shoemaker was not allowed to be a husbandman, or a weaver, or a builder, in order that we might have shoes well made. But to him and to every other worker one work was assigned by us for which he was fitted by nature, and he was to continue working all his life long at that and no other, and not to let opportunities slip, and then he would become a good workman."

Why then should the statesman, or the poet, examine the notions and ideas entertained by an artisan? He could not do it, not being a born artisan, and he should not do it for it would detract his mind from his proper business. Now it happened that the Greek philosopher, like the Greek statesman, came from a class of men which was not occupied with the practical tasks of life. Socrates is supposed to have been a sculptor, but one gets the impression that he did not work hard at his trade. Surely, Plato did not busy himself with any practical labor.

The philosopher, like the statesman, has no need for

the kind of reasoning which the artisan must employ continually. Not having need of it he naturally does not come to know it, and not knowing it he does not learn to value it. Practical knowledge to the mind of the higher classes soon comes to be an inferior type of knowledge. It does not get you anywhere in life, not, let us say, beyond the stage of semi-slavery. It suffers from a *vitium originis,* and therefore the Greek philosopher condemned it in the sense that he did not attribute the rank of true knowledge to it. True knowledge does not relate to matter at all, nor to any practical concerns. It has to do with the world of ideas, the supernatural, the pure forms to which the things of earth have but a bare resemblance, a likeness no greater than might exist between a concrete, and quite unsuccessful work of art, and the dream which lived in the mind of the artist but which he could not make reality.

True knowledge refers to that which has existed from eternity, for the Platonic ideas have been since time began. Your knowing them does not affect them in the least. The process of knowing is not dynamic, it is quite passive. You allow the object to be known to make an imprint upon your mind, and this imprint you seek to preserve as carefully as possible. To know is to remember the things which have been taught you.

One may imagine the influence which presuppositions of this sort were likely to have when Platonism became the basic philosophy of Christianity. Translate the Platonic phraseology into terms of Christian

thought and what do you get? A God residing in the high heavens, remote from all things earthly, whose mind is occupied with thoughts of ultimate and transcendent nature, quite undisturbed by whatever is limited and imperfect because the limited and imperfect do not possess true being and are, therefore, incapable of influencing divine thought.

Precisely the same thing happens whenever Platonism comes to affect later systems of philosophy. As often as this occurs, metaphysical concepts and concrete reality part company. Metaphysics becomes closely related with formal logic. Ideas develop, and relate themselves to other ideas, unhindered by any interference on the part of the world of sense. Harmony reigns, but by dint of suppressing the elements which create disharmony—the stubborn facts of life. Both theology and philosophy become thoroughly de-humanized.

Even as in Platonism itself, in the succeeding systems, knowledge becomes mirror-knowledge, it reflects reality rather than dissects it for the purpose of rearranging its parts. At no time does it seek to create a new thing. It is directed to the past, not to the future. Plato's poetical notion of ἀνάμνησις naturally associates itself with this mental process. By intuition we recog nize as true the facts before us. The notion of the truc has been slumbering in us, and when a situation arise: answering to the pattern within, we accept it as right We are learners, not creators.

Humanism seeks the source of anti-humanistic spec·

ulations in Platonism, and in criticizing this system it passes judgment upon the derivative systems as well. An added criticism results from the reflection that the obstacle to change in the right direction results not merely from historical considerations, but from an attitude of stubbornness on the part of the anti-Humanists.

Absolutism in philosophy, and transcendentalism in theology, are voluntaristic. They result from a will to believe, although not quite in the Jamesian sense. They show no desire to test the results of thinking in a *practical* way. Absolutists dislike the term "experimentation"; it calls up mental pictures of laboratories, test tubes, and measuring instruments. Of these they have rather a horror. To be sure, there are institutions which are called psychological laboratories, but the adjective "psychological" does not redeem the noun "laboratory" in the least. It is keeping bad company. One does not measure concepts nor weigh them. Science deals with quantitative judgments, but philosophy with qualitative judgments.

All of which Humanism would dispute. It urges that there is no good reason for dividing reality into two halves, labeled quantity and quality, as if they were wholly different. It is quite unwise to leave the supposed quantitative half to men who weigh and measure, as though weighing and measuring were an inferior occupation which had nothing to do with speculative thinking. What is the difference between saying that a

bar of iron is two inches too short and therefore inadequate to the purpose for which it is intended, or the statement that an attempted solution of a purely mental problem is inadequate to its purpose. There is no true difference, in both instances we are measuring and discovering the measure to be faulty.

The method of exact experimentation is not inferior, on the contrary it is superior because disturbingly dangerous to loose thinking; inexactness is readily detected. As long as we are dealing with ultimates, on which judgment cannot be passed, we may feel safe. It is merely a question of first assumptions of an abstract nature; one premise is likely to be as good as another because little can be done to verify its correctness. Criticism can be applied only to improper deductions drawn from our first premises, but the initial assumption itself is beyond any danger of criticism, provided we keep it sufficiently abstract.

The history of philosophy abounds with illustrations of unverified assumptions starting with the first attempt at philosophizing by the Ionian physicists. Questions of ontology, related as they are to the ultimate nature of things, belong to this order. At least, they belong to it as long as the ultimate nature of things is explained in terms of being, rather than in terms of function. The essence of the world is spirit, someone will tell you, but you are not told, except in vaguest terms, what is meant by spirit. Or again, the essence of the world is matter, and you are left with the notion of an extended

something. What this extended something is, what it does, except stretch from one point to another, you do not learn. It becomes a very easy matter for metaphysical Absolutists and for transcendental theologians to spin out their systems, to link thought to thought without trouble or possibility of interference. The result is, what one might expect, a harmonious system, but harmonious because more is left outside of it than is left in it.

For that very reason metaphysics ceases to be useful and profitable to man. If the object of philosophizing is the unification of human experience, the mere elimination of the factors which cause disturbance does not benefit us in the least. We do not cure a diseased tooth by drawing it, but by treating it. Absolutists and Transcendentalists, Humanism maintains, run away from the sphere in which practical problems arise, to another in which problems of the same sort cannot possibly present themselves, and then believe that they have solved the question, whereas they have not even faced it.

They are taking us with them to a different world, not the world of our experience. We discover a new set of conditions there, but they seem foreign to the circumstances with which we are confronted in our daily life. The problems with which we are asked to deal appear unreal. The very terms used in connection with the attempted solution of those problems seem quite as unreal as the questions which are presented for our

consideration. A man may give his life to the pursuit of the study of ultimate reality, but he appears to derive no practical benefit from it; he remains quite as helpless with regard to the actual difficulties of life as he was before. We test the value of a tree by the fruit which it produces, and wisdom by the useful consequences which result from it. If there is no fruit we condemn the tree, and if there are no useful consequences we judge that there was no wisdom.

We need a reconstruction in philosophy, Humanism concludes. Reasoning hereafter must deal with real problems, recognized as such by men of sound common sense. When a teacher, together with his pupils, study the problems of philosophy the result *ought* to be that the students say, "Yes, these are the questions which we have often asked ourselves, and to which we greatly desire to have an answer because it would make a difference in our lives." The consequence should *not* be that the students say, "Why, in heaven, does any sensible man ask such questions; for whether we receive an answer to them or not does not matter in the least."

The initial step toward the reconstruction of philosophy which Humanism deems necessary, is a change in the *direction* of philosophical thinking. It must face the future rather than the past. It has not done so. Philosophy has repeated Pilate's question, "What is truth?" As though truth were something completed before the beginning of time, something fixed which may be approached closer and closer until it is seen face to face,

and then recognized for what it is. If it were that, it might be studied in the past quite as well as in the present, for it would bear no relation to time nor development in time. Indeed, under those circumstances, truth might be studied somewhat better in the past than in the present because, farther away from present disturbing conditions, it would seem to present a somewhat clearer picture of itself; there would be an added perspective.

To this, however, Humanism objects. The eye turned toward the past does not see the truth, it sees a completed portion of it. This is not sufficient. A tree is what it is plus that which it will be; truth, equally, is that which it is plus that which it will be. There is no closed world, no world, to quote Professor Dewey, "consisting internally of a number of fixed forms and having definite boundaries externally. The world of modern science is an open world, varying indefinitely, without the possibility of assignable limit in its internal make-up, a world stretching beyond any assignable bonds externally."

Philosophy may be, and must be, anticipation instead of recollection. This does not mean that our interest in the past should become less intense, it means that it should become an interest of a different sort. The purpose of the study of history *used* to be the satisfaction of our sense of curiosity. Its object *should* be an attempt to supply us with material useful for controlling the future. On the surface, history reveals to us nothing

beyond a number of facts in a given relation. This relation appears as a necessary one, and, hence, fixed in its nature. When, however, we look below the surface we discover that this is not so, that the relation is accidental, and, therefore, may be changed.

The discovery of past truth now becomes more than a recognition of its condition, it becomes a recognition of possibilities arising from a condition. Metaphysics in reference to a *fixed* truth is tantamount to a becoming aware of the fact *that* a given relation exists between a number of factors. At best, it may rise to the level where recognition becomes an insight into the reason *why* this relation exists in the form in which it presents itself, but it will go no farther than this. In other words, we recognize *that* the past is as it is, and perhaps even *why* it is as it is. But the concluding step we do not take, we fail to understand how out of the past the future may come forth, more particularly, we fail to understand our possible part in the shaping of the future.

The omission of this last step prevents us from understanding the past and the future both, for we cannot comprehend the past apart from the future. To sever the past from the future, which is what all backward-minded thinkers do, is to cut a part from the whole in the futile hope of better understanding the part. But no one can know the root apart from the flower.

Philosophy which turns its back upon the future is

no philosophy, because it lacks the prophetic element. I once heard Professor Hocking say that there should be a degree of "Clerk of Philosophy" as well as one of "Doctor of Philosophy." The implication is clear, a clerk registers past events, he does not forecast the future. Philosophizing is thinking systematically for the sake of the unborn days. To the faculties of recollection and recognition, imagination should be added. Philosophy is an art, it does not copy, it re-creates, it may even create anew.

Humanism believes that we need a dynamic metaphysic which will give up juggling with notions of sheer being and which will give us an insight into the function of being. And when we are speaking of function, intelligible to us, we are speaking of the world which we know and, therefore, of the world in which we live. We have then given up notions which can mean nothing to us: the Absolute, the Unlimited; we are talking about the Definite, the Limited, the Relative, the things of the here and now.

Philosophy arises from specific human needs for the purpose of serving those needs. It therefore must deal with the sphere in which those needs arise. This, Humanism maintains, is not a request of shallow minds which have no understanding of the greater and deeper problems which connect themselves with the search for truth, it is merely a common sense request. It is precisely the *common* sense requests which should be heeded, for philosophy is not for the few, for the spir-

itually delicately nurtured. That was the Greek notion, when philosophy was a plaything for men who spent their time upon the Acropolis. Since then, Christianity has taught the world that the understanding of the highest and the best is for all, for the man that watches the stars, and for the man that digs the ditch. Nor is that a request impossible of fulfillment, for both are men, and at the very core of their being differ less than their outward occupations would lead one to expect. The needs of men are never far apart.

What then is left of the type of philosophy which we have always associated with some system or another? How can we still hope to teach it if the elements of systematic stability, to which we have grown accustomed, have left it?

Of philosophy is left all that deserves to be left, that which gave it its name in the first place—love of wisdom; love of wisdom as applied to human experience, for outside of that sphere wisdom clearly is not possible. Now, wisdom has nothing to do with the acceptance of a number of final explanations concerning ultimate reality. It has something to do with a method of handling facts in an intelligent manner. A smith who knows the nature of iron and who, on the basis of that knowledge, makes it serve his purposes is a philosopher in a practical sense. He possesses wisdom with regard to iron, which is not essentially different from possessing wisdom with respect to the human soul. For the root meaning of wisdom is "to know" as

the German verb *"wissen"* still clearly indicates, and knowledge is not determined by the object to which it is applied, but by the qualities of the person who possesses knowledge. The great gift which we may expect from philosophy is a method which will serve us in handling the facts of life. Philosophy is a method of dealing with facts, rather than the attainment to a fixed, unalterable result.

If this be true, where then lies the difference between science and philosophy? In a sense there is none; that is the reason why the Ionian philosophers were called physicists. Science, too, desires a method by which facts may be controlled. Whether or not the method is the right one is determined by experimentation and verification of the experiment. Insofar as metaphysics wishes the same, it is a type of knowing like that of science; only, as the word metaphysics itself indicates, it comes after physics or, if you will, after concrete science. It is not different, but it is more inclusive. It affects not one sphere of human interest, but all spheres in combination, even as the study of æsthetics does not apply to painting alone, but to all things that may be beautiful.

Philosophy desires to make our experience more orderly in that it teaches us the method by which facts may be brought into orderly relation. It is we who introduce the relation and, hence, knowing and experience cease to be mere copying, they become active, purposeful.

If you ask Humanism whether it possesses the meta-

physics of which it speaks, it will answer you that it is in the making. If you should ask the same question a thousand years from now it would still say "it is in the making." But meanwhile it would point to the fruits of its work, due to the method which it is employing. Those fruits it would have you examine.

# III
# *Humanism and Ethics*

IT obviously cannot be the aim of this chapter to prove that Humanists have a system of ethics. No one denies this because no one questions the keen moral insight which characterizes the adherents of the humanist doctrines. Nor would I attempt to say which specific ethical doctrine is most consistent with the general principles of Humanism. Humanists disagree in the matter of ethical theory almost as much as do their opponents. My object is merely to offer the arguments of Humanism in defense of the theory that it presents an adequate basis for *some kind* of ethical system.

It is precisely this which its opponents deny. They believe that any sound theory should rest upon premises which cannot be questioned, either now or at any future time. These first assumptions must show stability, this is the very sign and token of their inner worth. The anti-Humanists fear change in moral theory as they fear it in religious theory. They identify the fixed and the certain. A house should be built on a rock, not on sand. A house built on sand may be as good a house as the one built on a rock, but it will fall when the rain has undermined its foundations and when the wind has blown against it. The question to be determined is whether Humanists rest their theory of ethics upon such

a stable foundation. The answer given by the anti-Humanists is unequivocally, no, for Humanists base their theory on life itself, a most unstable foundation.

Do Humanists recognize the instability of this basis for their ethical theory? Their opponents believe that they do not. No charge is made of willful neglect on the part of the Humanists to make proper investigations touching the soundness of the basis of their doctrine. They are perfectly honest but they are mistaken. Their system appears to work as well as anyone else's, why should they believe that there is something wrong with it? As long as a house shows no cracks it is natural to assume that its foundations are sound. It is nevertheless very unwise to make this assumption; one courts unpleasant surprises. A careful man will avoid those by looking somewhat deeper into the matter.

I retain until this very day a lively recollection of my unsuccessful attempts to master the intricacies of algebra. On infrequent occasions I have been known to find the correct answer to a given problem. But when my teacher would investigate the method employed in arriving at the result it would soon become clear that I had no right to my conclusion. For, no conclusion, though correct in itself, will stand unless the method employed in obtaining it will bear investigation.

The method employed by the Humanists to create an ethical theory must be investigated, above all, the soundness of the basis upon which the theory rests. It must be remembered in this connection that a theory of

ethics is more than a mere theory. It is a doctrine of behavior which involves the necessity of the practical application of its teaching. In this it differs from many other theories. If I have a correct understanding of the beautiful I am under no moral obligation to create beautiful things, indeed I may be unable to do so for physical reasons. But if I am able to distinguish correctly between good and evil I am morally forced to give practical evidence of that fact. To this proposition both Humanists and Theists would, of course, agree, but they differ regarding the nature of the compelling force which is behind any theory of human action. Is right right because God wills it, or because I, judging from my own human experience, recognize it as such?

This question cannot be answered until we have first settled another problem which concerns the nature of the concept right. Is right an absolute or a limited idea? If it is absolute, then clearly it cannot have originated in a limited mind, but if it is limited there is no reason why this should not have been the case.

Normally the Christian church has identified the right and the good with the "absolute right" and the "absolute good." In this, as in other things, it has allowed itself to be influenced both by Jewish tradition and by Platonism. The moral demands of Jahweh upon his people were absolute in their nature. They naturally related to finite actions, but within the realm in which they were applicable they allowed for no exception or variation. If the Lord desired that men

should do no work upon the Sabbath day, they were to understand by no work, absolutely no work. When practical considerations made strict obedience to such a law impossible, the believing Jew would temporize; but he knew quite well that he was doing this. The nearer he came to an absolute fulfillment of the divine commands the more virtuous he would consider himself to be.

Good intent plays no part in the Jewish moral code, it is the action itself which counts, it must be wholly in accordance with the law. When Uzzah stretches forth his hands to keep the ark of God from falling, the anger of Jahweh is kindled against Uzzah and he smites him because he puts forth his hand to the ark. Uzzah's good intentions to keep God's ark from receiving injury are not considered, because Uzzah had sinned against the decree of Jahweh which said that the ark must not be touched with human hands, for whatever cause.

Again in Matthew 5: 48, when Jesus counsels his followers to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect, we meet with an absolute moral demand. Perhaps Jesus believed his disciples incapable of living up to his command in the strict sense of the word, but to do so remains their ideal obligation nevertheless. Insofar as they fail to obey this counsel of perfection, they sin. God, being perfect, cannot ask less than perfection from anyone else. The æsthetic demands which an artist makes upon his pupils naturally conform to his highest

ideal of the beautiful, why should not the moral demands which God makes upon man conform to the highest possible idea of the good?

Platonic thought could only accentuate the moral teachings which Christianity borrowed from the Jews. It is debatable whether Plato identified God and "the good," but it is not open to question that in Plato's system "the good" is a divine quality, superior to all others. It is the integrating force in the world of ideas. Yet, in spite of its superiority its activity is limited, it is operative only in the world of ideas and it bears no direct relation to earthly things, much less is it able to link them together into a unified system. Man, nor the world in which he lives, have true reality. We, chained as we are in our cave, unable to turn our eyes toward the light, see but the shadows on the wall, and we do not even guess that those shadows resemble but imperfectly the real which is outside of our line of vision.

"The good" is that which never varies, for if it did change it would have to vary either in the direction of the better or the worse. If it changed for the better then clearly it could not have been the absolute good, and if for the worse it would no longer be "the good." Moreover, in the latter case, it must have contained an imperfection which made this change for the worse possible and therefore it could never have been "the good" in the absolute sense of the term.

This discussion seems unprofitable and very far away from our present practical interests. Yet it must be con-

tinued, for after all, as Humanism would endeavor to prove, this notion of the absolute, unchangeable good is still a part of Theistic reasoning, and one of the causes why this system, on ethical grounds, is objectionable to Humanism. For whoever identifies "the good" with God's concept of it, and then proceeds to remove God from this earthly sphere, removes the highest good together with its author, and forever places moral perfection outside of the reach of mortal man. If, on the other hand, as Protagoras maintains, we are the measure of all things, moral perfection will be within our reach. Not moral perfection in its absolute sense, it is true, but the relative state of perfection which has some relation to what may be normally expected from man, provided he is willing to use all of the powers at his command. There is no practical hope of any fruit resulting if the demand upon man bears no relation to his ability to perform.

This fact will become abundantly evident when we examine a system of ethics which more than any other operates with absolute terms, Calvin's system. Such an examination will prove exceedingly valuable for we shall be able to learn not only what was the prevailing ethical theory in 1560, when the last edition of the *Institutes* was published, but also to what extent Calvin's teaching has influenced subsequent ethical thinking.

The first two chapters of the second book of the *Institutes* gives us the gist of the matter. There Calvin tells us that the thoughts of God are higher than the

thoughts of man. It follows that we are unable to think God's thoughts after him, in consequence of which it becomes impossible for us to recognize the perfection of the divine law. But this is not the whole of Calvin's explanation. If God's thought were merely higher than our own, the difference which now exists might diminish in time. Granted that man has eternal life before him, he would at last come to see the excellence of God's moral requirements.

Unfortunately the processes of God's thinking are not merely on a higher plane than those of man but they are also of an entirely different kind; more than that, divine thought and human thought are opposites. To man's mind two plus two make four, to God's mind two plus two may make six or eight or any number. It follows that although God tries to explain to us his law in Holy Scripture we do not recognize its perfection because we are mentally incapable of doing so. "It thus appears," Calvin writes in the *Institutes*,* "that none can enter the Kingdom of God save those whose minds have been renewed by the Holy Spirit. The man who trusts in the light of nature has no understanding in the spiritual mysteries of God. Why so? Is it because through sloth he neglects them? Nay, though he exert himself it is of no avail; they are spiritually discerned. And what does this mean? That altogether hidden from human discernment they are made known only by the revelation of the Holy Spirit so that they are accounted *foolishness* whenever the Spirit does not give light."

* Inst. II, 2, 20.

Nor is this all. The matter is aggravated by the circumstance that we do not recognize the fact that God's thoughts are *different* from our own. We think them merely *higher.* We believe that we have some insight into the truth, as much, perhaps, as a child might have in the affairs of a grown man. The true condition of the human mind we fail to understand. Some say that man is blind. It were indeed a blessing if that were all that ailed him. In that case, being conscious of his blindness, he would not attempt to determine for himself the nature of the right and the wrong. Man is not blind, he sees; but, inasmuch as his mental sight is affected, he misinterprets whatever it is that he does see. Moreover, he does not know that there is anything wrong with his spiritual understanding. "Satan craftily hiding the disease has tried to render it incurable." Hence man is forever at war with God, simply because he does not recognize either him or the true nature of the divine law. The divine precepts seem unreasonable to him, yea, foolish. The promptings of the devil lure him, because they do not make upon him the impression of something evil, rather of something good.

The only possible cure is a miraculous act on the part of God through which the human mind is changed into the very opposite of that which it is now. Man's mind having been renewed may now be instructed in the truth. He will recognize the excellence of God's commands when they come to him, he will know them

to be different from, and altogether superior to, the promptings of the devil. But man's power is limited to a *recognition* of the good when it presents itself to him. We must not suppose that he is capable of setting up an independent ethical standard which conforms to his own human ideas of what is right and wrong, and which is the result of his own experience.

Moreover, in Calvin's system the power of man to recognize the good as good simply means that he trusts the source from which the good comes to him. It does not imply that he knows anything about its inmost nature. He does not know why the good is good. That is God's secret which he does not intend to reveal to anyone. The reason for all things depends upon the inscrutable will of God, and is hidden in his "secret council." There is a reason; we must never suppose that the acts of God are arbitrary. When God tells us that it is right to do a certain thing it is indeed right.

Inasmuch as the divine reasons behind God's demands do not become clear to us, they often make upon us the impression of being arbitrary. Calvin does not dodge the issue, he never does that. He fully admits that the reason for any of God's actions, or indeed for any of his teachings, passes our understanding; but, when we are changed by God we accept the divine commands and doctrine quite *apart* from understanding their grounds. Before we were converted we scoffed at them because we did not understand their reason, now we do not scoff but our understanding is still darkened.

"I admit," Calvin writes, "that profane men lay hold upon the subject of predestination, to carp or cavil, to snarl or scoff. But if their petulance should frighten us it will be necessary to conceal all the principal articles of faith, because they and their fellows leave scarcely one of them unassailed by blasphemy. A rebellious spirit will display itself no less insolently when it hears that there are three persons in the divine essence, than when it hears that God, when he created man, foresaw everything that was to happen to him." * It is clear that we accept God's commands because they proceed from him and for no other cause.

Calvin's teachings represent the thought of his day, but they also affect greatly the minds of some of the best thinkers who came after him. It is not possible to deal with this matter in detail; we, therefore, must limit ourselves to the statement that the official theology of most of the Protestant churches leaves us with the impression that a command has moral value by reason of the *source* from which it comes and not because it shows internal evidence of its merit. It is on this basis that traditional theology has attempted to justify the clearly immoral directions which Jahweh gave to Samuel, Saul, and David. They came from God and the source from which they sprang justified them.

Why is it that, whereas Calvinistic theology has been largely discarded, the basis for Calvin's ethical theory is still widely accepted? Men no longer believe in the corruption of the human mind, and many would admit

* Inst. III, 2, 4.

that we can indeed think God's thoughts after him and have some understanding of the reasons which led to the development of our present moral code. They would even go so far as to admit that to a large extent man himself is instrumental in constructing this code, but they are not willing to give up the divine sanctions. Some one other than man must guarantee the working of the code. We come back again to the gospel parable of the house built upon a rock. Morality must have a solid foundation, and man's experience is *not* considered to be a solid foundation.

This does not mean that such men believe the moral code to be fixed. They are quite willing to admit that change is not only desirable but imperative, and they point to the fact that the divine plan provides for it. The morality of the Old Testament is not the morality of the New Testament, because the people in David's day lacked the ripeness of mind which we discover in Jesus' contemporaries. God knew this and provided for it in that he adapted his requirements to man's ability to live up to them. God still continues to do this, these men go on to say. He gradually leads us in the direction of ultimate perfection. Our present ethical theory is by no means perfect. We are still upon the threshold of moral discoveries. We are only beginning to look upon war as a great wrong; the time will come when we shall take that for granted. The next hundred years will see important changes in ethical theory which will affect many things which now we look upon as moral

axiomata. We are continually discovering wrong where we did not know it existed, and good where, before, good was not found. Nevertheless, the moving agent behind all of this change is God, and we are only his instruments. He raised us above the purely animal state; he has led us to the point which we now have reached, and he will continue to guide us in the future.

We recognize in the arguments of these men the thought of Lessing's *Education of the Human Race.* God so created men that even in this life they are able to discover the factors which may combine into a tenable moral theory. God might leave them to search for themselves but the process would be a lengthy one and hence God aids mankind by revealing to it his truth. The moral factors, whether or not discovered in this life, are, of course, God-given. It is not to be supposed that man could create them independently; behind the whole process of human education is the divine plan. God knows what he desires to do with this world, therefore all things are made to work together for the realization of God's ultimate plan. Good is good because it is the power which helps God in the realization of his purposes; evil is evil because it is the force which attempts to thwart God in the realization of his desires. The end will be, as Lessing tells us, a new, and final, message; the eternal evangel promised us in the books of the New Testament; the revelation of God's final word to us which will make the education of the human race complete.

These words seem to have a modern sound but in reality they do not represent a modern view. This doctrine, which has been taken over, practically without change, by the Transcendentalists of the present day, is still Calvinism shorn of some of its more unpleasant features. For God is still behind the scene. It is his will which is the ultimate cause of all that happens, his purposes determine all action. Moral human behavior is not the natural and necessary result of a law immanent in human life. It has nothing to do with human life as an end in itself. Human desires, pleasure, and pain are of no ultimate consequence. Moral life comes to be identified with absolute obedience to the divine law, which is not our own law. We become a means to an end, which is not our own end. We never become ends in ourselves.

I repeat that this teaching still represents the opinion of the Transcendentalists of our day. What are the motives behind their belief? Is it the same distrust of man which influenced the mind of John Calvin? Yes, and no. They have long given up a belief in man's total depravity, but they have by no means arrived at the point where they are willing to admit man's self-sufficiency. They do not beat upon their breast and call themselves miserable sinners, but neither are they much satisfied with the moral progress which mankind has made throughout the ages.

If they could only find evidence of a lasting moral success, all would be well, but where, the Transcenden-

talists ask, is this to be found? History is disappointing after all. Man advances without question, but the rate at which he makes progress is disappointingly slow. Two steps forward are followed by one backward; sometimes man loses in one year the whole distance which it has taken a lifetime of effort to gain. Is it possible that Spengler's theory of the returning cycles is the correct one? Is progress merely movement in a circle, rather than going forward in a straight line?

Clearly man appears to be insufficient to the task of self-education. It is not ill will on his part which incapacitates him; in this assumption, our contemporary Transcendentalists admit that Calvin was wrong; it is rather a question of man's general inability. A thorough analysis of our mental and moral condition soon reveals our limitations. We are not responsible for those limitations, they are inherent in manhood; but it is our duty to reckon with them. It is no crime not to be able to jump over a house one hundred feet high, but it is foolish to attempt it if we know beforehand that we do not have the physical qualifications. Let us recognize that we are inadequate to the task of moral self-education. We cannot help recognizing this immediately we understand what is involved in the task. What is the nature of this task?

It may be described as an attempt to create a moral code sufficiently perfect to guide us in our actions. Now if the word code means anything at all it signifies a set of dependable rules or regulations relative

to the subject to which the code applies. The fact of their dependability is proven by the results obtained when one adheres to the rules. This result must be satisfactory in the majority of the cases. No moral man, for instance, would object to the general proposition that honesty is the best rule. There are, it is true, instances when it is a matter of doubt as to whether or not I should speak the truth. But in most cases, say nine out of ten, the rule is dependable, hence we accept its general validity.

There is, therefore, a certain degree of fixity about moral regulations which makes us trust them. Their application may vary from moment to moment, but the rule applied is always the same. It is, I repeat, this invariableness which appeals to the human mind. The expression "shifting values" impresses us as a *contradictio in terminis.* A piece of property which is worth thirty thousand dollars today, tomorrow ten, and the day after that twenty thousand dollars is not a valuable piece of property to a man who desires to invest his money in first mortgages. Again, an honest man is one who is dependable in his business transactions at all times; there is no such thing as intermittent honesty.

To values, moral or otherwise, we attach more than temporary worth; they must possess durable worth. Hence, our Transcendentalist continues, it is unreasonable to suppose that their origin is to be found in a human life. It is too short and it is too changeable. Values may manifest themselves in a human life but they are larger than that life itself; they must have

their origin elsewhere. This applies to moral values as to all others. If some Humanist should object that the facts do not bear out the contention, that no permanent values can be shown anywhere, that *change* and not its opposite is the invariable rule, the Transcendentalist would point to the eternal background of this change. After all, not change as such presents a problem, but unaccountable, erratic change. A wise government, for instance, will constantly seek to change the life of the nation in the direction of improvement, but behind it all will be a well-considered plan which will give evidence of constancy of purpose. Old laws will be abolished and new laws formulated, but whatever happens will have reference to the goal which is to be reached.

It is the fixedness of the goal which introduces the element of stability, even though the way toward it may not be a straight one. Thus God, keeping steadily before him the final goal toward which all creation moves, makes every event within the universe count. In this way the erratic element is taken out of change, reason restores unity and introduces the quality of certainty. It is to be remembered that only God can introduce this element of stability. Man cannot do so, for he cannot find it anywhere within his own life. We need not blame him for this, but we must admit it as a fact. Hence man-made moral laws are always shifting and, therefore, not dependable. It is wise to leave the matter to God, who alone possesses the quali-

fications for the task of moral education of the human race.

Humanism readily admits that this may be the correct solution of the problem, provided it can be proven that the premises from which we started our considerations are tenable. But are they? There is no compelling reason to make us believe that this is the case. This whole argument, typical of Theistic reasoning, arises from a desire to escape rather than to solve the difficulties presented by a perplexing problem. Inasmuch as no true solution of the difficulty is known, a solution is imagined. The imagined solution works, as may be expected. Granted the existence of a God, wise enough and powerful enough to cause all things to work together for ultimate good, no difficulty worth mentioning is left. We simply entrust to this God the care of all things, notably the care for the moral education of man. God explains to man the meaning and importance of his plans and likewise the need of living in accordance with the eternal laws through which those plans are slowly developed and realized. Man recognizes this need and without further question accepts the rules of behavior by which God desires that he should regulate his actions. The moral problem is solved, there is no flaw to be discovered anywhere.

Humanism quite agrees that there is no flaw in the logic anywhere. But the whole matter is conditioned upon the actual existence of a God who directs our

motions, which is the very question at issue. We are not allowed to reason from the desirability of a condition to the existence of that condition. This would be to repeat the mistake which St. Anselm made in connection with the ontological argument. We may believe in the existence of a God if we wish, there is no law against it, but we cannot prove the fact. Now, moral teachings are concrete rules for human behavior which should rest upon a concrete foundation and not on a mere supposition, no matter what the nature of this supposition may be. If no system of morals is possible unless it leans upon the eternal foundation of God's wisdom, then, Humanism believes, we may be regretfully forced to admit that we must get on without such a system until the day comes when the existence of God will be a proven fact. It would be better to admit this, and know the worst, than to go on deceiving ourselves.

But, to say that an adequate system of ethics is not possible, except under the conditions mentioned, is to beg the question. Why should we maintain that an imperfect moral understanding is equal to no moral understanding? We have no perfect comprehension of the law of the beautiful, but no one can deny that we make beautiful things. We have no perfect understanding of the laws of nature, but no one can say that we are wholly ignorant in the matter of physics and chemistry. All life is a question of trial and error, of partial

success and partial failure, but it does not follow by any means that, as a whole, it is a total failure.

If we say that God directs our life and formulates our moral laws, in order to guide us to a desired end, we have created a problem quite as difficult to solve as when we admit with Protagoras that man is the measure of all things and personally responsible for his choice as between good and evil. For, in the former case, all evil in this life must be referred to God rather than to man, inasmuch as he is the creator and director of man's life. We are then forced to accept that God is personally responsible for every injustice at any time committed, for all wars that were ever fought, for every untimely death, for every mean thought and ungracious word. A general may not see what every soldier does; he is, nevertheless, held responsible for all acts committed by those who are under his command. After the same manner we should be obliged to hold God responsible for whatever happened inasmuch as all of these things, whether good or evil, are but a part of his plan. Moreover if we attribute omniscience to him we could not even say, what might be said in defense of a general, that he could not be aware of what all men were thinking and doing each moment of their lives. Calvin tried to circumvent this difficulty by saying that God willed the evil but that man was responsible for it, but we could scarcely accept this as a fact in our day and age. To the author of all things

would go the praise for any success obtained, but also the blame for any failure suffered.

By referring the rules of conduct by which we regulate our lives to a supra-mundane and perfect source, rather than to human and limited experience, we introduce a new problem more difficult to solve than the old one. This always happens when we seek for the answer to a question away from the field where the question arises. The new problem which calls for a solution is the difficulty of proving that the supra-mundane source of moral information exists.

Even though the existence of God could be proven, the problem which still would be seeking for a solution would be how God could teach man to lead successfully a human life, in spite of the fact that he has never led such a life himself. By definition, God is *The Other*. Qualities are attributed to him which man does not possess: perfect wisdom, and total sinlessness. Anyone who possesses those cannot even imagine the difficulties which present themselves in a human existence. How can one in full possession of his eyesight imagine to the full the hardships which beset a person who is born blind? This cannot be done. Shall we then expect one whose eyesight never failed to create a standard for the practical behavior of those who never had any eyes, particularly if the standard presupposes the possession of perfect eyesight? This sounds unreasonable, and yet, this is the very thing which we expect God to do. He creates the moral law for us, founding it on his own

idea of "the good" which, in the nature of the case, is above our understanding. How can we profit by such a procedure?

Humanism maintains that the difficulty which arises at this point is not theological, but psychological. When I ask a small child to live up to the level of a grown man I do not help it, but I confuse it. A true psychologist in dealing with children tries to become as much like a child as possible in order to understand its problems. In this he usually fails. But at least he has the advantage of once having been a child himself, and of, even now, not essentially differing from it, inasmuch as both he and the child are men. But God never was a man, moreover he is quite different from men, how then can he teach men to live as men should?

You will note that Humanism defends itself against the attack of transcendental moralism by showing that whatever the nature of its own weaknesses, the case of the opposite system is far more serious, so serious indeed as to render it useless. Usually this form of defense is unsatisfactory because it leads to an impasse. By disproving the contentions of my opponent I do not necessarily render my own case plausible; both he and I may be wrong. But if the situation is such that only two explanations are possible, the disproval of the first establishes the right of the second one, unless one believes that it is impossible to arrive at any conclusion whatsoever.

If Humanism can prove that we do not, and cannot,

live by a set of absolute moral rules of supra-mundane origin, it follows that we do live by a set of moral rules relative in their nature and of a this-worldly origin. If a Transcendentalist should say, "Very well, but that is not morality," the Humanist would answer, "That may be so, but that is all there is and somehow we manage to live by it." If you tell me that only a perfect house is a house, and that therefore the dwelling in which I live may not lay claim to such a title, I could only reply, "If your contention is true, no houses exist at all, but I get along very well, in whatever it is in which I am living." It is always possible to set up a standard of perfection so high that nothing will answer to it, but that does not prove that the standard is justified.

What greater sanction could any ethical theory need than the fact that action regulated by it produces happiness among men? It is the result which justifies a moral rule and not its origin. Even if it could be proven that God was the author of the moral law we should still have to demonstrate its worth by its results. This clearly proves that we, men, are the judges of its validity and that our own experience supplies us with the necessary means which enable us to prove its worth. Why did even Calvin reject as valid many of the laws given by God to the Israelites, although he readily admitted their divine origin? He argued that it was no longer practicable to obey them in the sixteenth century. As long as it was a question of abstract

creedal statements Calvin brooked no variation from the thoughts of the fathers, but when it came to practical matters he changed his theory. After all he had to manage the civic affairs of the city of Geneva, and if one mode of action did not prove successful he was obliged to accept another. Practical considerations have a forceful way of changing abstract theories.

But is there no fear that we shall disrespect the moral law if its origin is purely human? Humanism doubts this. Occasionally one may hear a sermon in which the minister contends that with the increasing disbelief in a personal God immorality increases, but it would be very difficult to prove this statement. One might ask the question, "To what extent did faith in a personal God check immorality in the Middle Ages?" The answer would be, "To a much smaller degree than is usually imagined." Even though we admitted that faith did check immoral behavior, we are by no means sure that it created its opposite, moral behavior. Humanism agrees that the love of God has been the cause of many magnificent actions performed by men. But love and fear are not in themselves moral motives. No matter how splendid the deed, if it is done merely for the love of someone else, its splendor is no moral splendor, because there exists an ulterior motive, inasmuch as not the moral action is the first consideration but rather the attempt to please some person. Only a sense of duty produces a moral action, but a sense of duty arises from a personal judgment regarding the

merits of a given case. This means that in matters of duty human considerations play a part to the exclusion of all others because all things are referred to us for final decision. Therefore, being our own judges, when a moral decision is to be reached, we obey our own law even though we may seem to obey the law of God.

Humanism concludes that insofar as we have got on at all we have done so by the use of humanistic principles; we have referred all moral matters to man and not to a power outside of man. Why should we allow our theory to differ from our practice? This unfortunate habit has worked havoc in religious theory, why should we permit it to do the same in ethical theory?

We need no system of absolute ethics, if we had it we should not know what to do with it. After all our life is brief and the decisions which we have to make affect conditions of a temporary nature. The concepts right and good are conditioned all the time by the temporary situations to which we have to apply them. It is difficult to speak of rightness and goodness in the abstract. A theory is right and good which fits a given situation. This naturally does not mean that both concepts have meaning only in relation to *one single* situation. Life is more than an agglomeration of single facts. The facts of life exist in relation one to another, from which it follows that there must be a relation between one good act and another. We may speak of rightness and goodness in a general sense, but this is not equivalent to absolute rightness and absolute goodness.

Those concepts have meaning only within a human life and they lose their meaning for us when we extend them to cosmic dimensions. There is no invariability about them. They have no absolutely fixed content. We say that a thing is right and good whenever it fits a given situation, or a number of situations resembling one another. The permanent element is the quality of fitting.

It is better to face the situation as it is, Humanism maintains. God may exist, but nevertheless man in his moral struggle depends upon his own understanding of what is right and wrong. A divine revelation is no help, we must verify such a revelation in our own experience, after all. In the end, our own concepts of right and wrong decide. Why seek to borrow what cannot be borrowed, and which, though it could be borrowed, would not truly be our own. Let us trust man's sincerity in trying to improve his own moral status. Morals are simply ways of behavior by which we try to render living easier. They help us to do away with friction and to create harmony. This is in the interest of all, as our common sense will tell us. An appeal to an outward agency is not needed, our self-interest will assert itself.

One of the brightest pages in Dickens' immortal *Pickwick Papers* is the one on which he tells us of Mr. Pickwick's endeavors to slide on the ice in spite of his advanced years. All goes well until the ice breaks under him and Mr. Pickwick disappears from view. As he again emerges into sight Mr. Snodgrass calls out, "Keep

yourself up for an instant, for only one instant." "Yes do, let me implore you, *for my sake,"* roars Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. "The adjuration," Dickens continues, "was rather unnecessary, the probability being that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so for his own."

This little scene does not inaptly illustrate the common sense teaching of Humanism. Man is in the water and he must swim, no one else can do this for him, therefore he will do it himself. It is needless to fear that he will give up the struggle, for he does not like to drown. We need not add any superfluous appeals of loyalty or reverence for any principle not involved in the immediate necessity. He will swim none the better for that.

Does this reduce human life to a mere scramble for safety? Not at all, there is plenty of room for unselfish endeavor, heroic action, and display of noble sentiment. Humanism does not think it needful to spend much time in proving this obvious fact. It points at human life and invites you to judge for yourself. Reverence, loyalty, and sacrifice are a part of life too; they have their share in our struggle which without them could not be won. But we need not seek for the origin of those qualities outside of life, because human life itself is a sufficient explanation of its own elements.

# IV
# *Humanism and Religion*

A SHORT while ago a minister said to me, "It may be that a renewed study of the history of the Christian church will reveal that the development of Christian thinking is coexistent with the development of the doctrine of Humanism."

This minister was not a Humanist, but, on the contrary, an avowed Theist. His remark simply meant a recognition of the fact that speculative reasoning within the Christian church has a twofold object, Man and God, and that historically both concepts show signs of a related growth. He believed that the development of the concept man had not yet received the attention of which it is worthy. This is quite correct and I believe that this opinion is shared by many broad-minded Theists.

Humanism, however, goes beyond the mere assertion that the idea of God cannot be entertained apart from the idea of man. It groups religious values first of all around the concept of man, and it deals with the problem of God in the second place only. This clearly shows where its preference lies. A Humanist is not one who necessarily denies the existence of God: he may deny it, he may doubt it, or he may accept it. He may admit that a belief in God, could it be entertained, would

greatly enrich our religious experience or he might agree with the statement made by Professor J. S. Huxley, "the sense of spiritual relief which comes from rejecting the idea of God as a supernatural being is enormous." Humanists differ widely on that point, but all insist that a true religious experience without a belief in God in the theistic sense is possible.

All Humanists agree, moreover, that an experience in which the thought of man does not play an adequate part is religiously impoverished. A mystical experience in which the consciousness of self is blotted out, Schleiermacher's sense of utter dependence upon a power outside of ourselves, long accepted as positive evidence of the existence of religious life within, do not, Humanism insists, furnish that proof. For the fruit of a religious experience in the true sense of that term is fullness of life, and how can fullness of life follow upon self-effacement?

As in Fichte's system Humanism posits the self. Here is its starting point, here the factor which does not admit of doubt. All else rests upon assumptions which as often as not arise from mere desire; men believe to be true what they hope may be true. The fact, however, that I am is not open to doubt; I must accept it or stultify my mind. It is plausible that the highest and most worth while experiences of life should group themselves around this center of certainty rather than around a mere assumption, an unproven fact. If it were otherwise we should have to suppose that the very

thing which is most important in a human life can do without a sense of certainty, that life most abundant may rest upon an unstable basis. This is contrary to all probability.

Yet, it will be found that most definitions of the term religion do not reckon with man as an important factor. A religious experience is not usually defined as the discovery of the Kingdom of God within, rather more often as the discovery of the Kingdom of God without. To be sure, no one would deny that religion is an inner experience, but it is usually explained as a modification of our inner state resulting from a relation existing between ourselves and an outward power.

Professor E. B. Tylor proposes "the belief in spiritual beings" as a minimum definition for religion. Sir James Frazer tells us that religion is "a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life." Jevons, in his *Idea of God,* says "the many different forms of religion are all attempts to give expression to the idea of God."

It is true there are other ways of defining religion although their number is not so great. I only need to refer to Matthew Arnold's famous phrase, "Religion is morality tinged with emotion"; or to Whitehead's words, "Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness." Or again to the definition by Salomon Reinach to which Huxley refers in his *Religion without Revelation,* "a body of scruples which impede the free

exercise of our faculties." These last three descriptions, for better or for worse, center about man; to that extent they differ from the normal explanations.

Humanism is somewhat timid about defining the term religion. Definition means limitation. Does one wish to limit the meaning of the term religion or not? Yes, and no. We cannot render ourselves intelligible without defining the limits of our concepts, but there are occasions when it is difficult to know where those limits are to be found. Humanism agrees with F. C. S. Schiller that many of the empirical manifestations of religion accord ill with any of its definitions. It also agrees with him when he warns Mr. Bradley that "since the publication of James' *Variety of Religious Experiences* even the hardiest apriorist would shrink from dogmatizing about what religion might mean without troubling to inquire what psychologically the various forms of religious sentiment have meant and do mean."

No short definitions help us here. They leave out more than they take in; or else, by reason of their very brevity, they merely restate the problem in different words without solving it. Professor J. S. Huxley's definition is an example of this. He tells us that "religion is a way of life." Very well, but what is a way of life? Until I know this, I have gained no increased insight into the matter.

Most Humanists answer the question, "What is religion?" by describing to us the effect which religion has on man. Having described the effect, they then try

to determine whether or not that effect is beneficial. If it is found to be beneficial they conclude their investigation by endeavoring to discover whether this beneficial effect may be had even if we leave the idea of God out of our religious concept.

To the question, "What is the effect of religion upon man?" the answer is, "It stirs him, it releases energy within him." It should be added that this release of energy is not a casual occurrence, but that it is intense in its effect and that it continues over a considerable period of time. As long as the religious emotion lasts it absorbs all of man's inward power and claims the whole of his attention.

How do we know that religion has this effect? From the testimony of men who have undergone an experience which they themselves have termed religious and which was equally so-called by men competent to study their case. They all agree that in an experience truly called religious, man's whole being is taken up so that there is room for naught else. We may accept without question that the effect of religion is the turning of man toward an object of absorbing interest with the whole of his being. Here we have a definition in terms of function to which all Humanists would agree, because it states an effect, the accuracy of which may be verified.

We may well ask, however, whether this definition does not cover too much ground. Many things, not ordinarily thought religious, may claim the whole of our attention: business, politics, science, or even a con-

suming hatred of our enemies. May we connect those urges with the concept religion? We may, if we agree to the proposition that religion cannot be defined to be less than life's supreme interest, by the side of which all else becomes secondary. Men have given their life's blood to their business or their scientific pursuits, whereas to their church they have given an occasional check when they have thought of it. Such men are not Jews or Christians or Mohammedans, they are first of all bankers or astronomers or haters of their enemies.

Even hatred may become a religion if it stirs the whole of our being. The Mohammedans who overran Europe and North Africa in the seventh and eighth centuries, the Dominicans who persecuted heretics in the late Middle Ages, were fierce haters of their opponents before they were anything else. They did not spend their time in investigating whether the doctrines of the Mohammedan or the Roman Catholic religious fellowships were correct; they took that for granted. It is quite certain that a course in the metaphysics underlying the faith which they so eagerly defended would have bored the Mohammedan warriors to extinction. They would have fallen asleep over it. Hating was their religion, and where their treasure was, there was their heart also.

It is not always possible to connect the concept of religion with the worship of a definite personal God. Wherever the thought of such a God actually enlists the whole attention of a given man this may be done,

but only then. Often this is not the case, but even then we may have to concede to a man a religious sense, if he has found in life some other object of interest so intense that it has weaned him completely from all indifference. It is possible, of course, that such a man may be worshiping the rankest of idols, but he is worshiping. As long as the impulse is there, the direction of the impulse may be changed. Reflection and experience may unite in substituting other gods for the original objects of worship. In many cases the process will complete itself in more ideal ways. The important thing to recognize is, that when our attention is wholly focused upon an object of intensest significance to us, a religious process has started.

It is this very completeness of interest which is felt as a supreme value. Its effect is unification of the activities which together make up life; this is sensed as inward harmony. Whereas before reason and will were at variance, now this is no longer the case. Before, our efforts were scattered. We tried one thing after the other but to no purpose. We stumbled from one event to another as a stone which falls down a mountain side and hits the projecting points merely because they project, but obviously not by reason of choice or preference. Convictions we had few, not even intense prejudices. We floated upon the stream of life without purpose.

Now imagine ourselves suddenly changed under the influence of some mighty impulse. Into our life comes

a great love or a great hatred; a longing to find that which no one has yet found, or a passionate desire to defend from evil a great cause, suddenly recognized as such. We are converted, not necessarily to a dogmatic opinion concerning God, but to something more important, to the overwhelming desire to use every ounce of strength toward the attainment of an end which suddenly seems incomparably desirable. Gone is the indifference, gone the half-hearted way in which we lived from one day into the other. We now know what we wish. Our whole life changes. Inward discord disappears as by magic, inward harmony reigns, harmony which is not rest, but supreme co-ordination of all efforts toward the reaching of a goal. Even as the highest will of the general makes one fighting machine out of hundreds of thousands of soldiers, who know nothing except his will and march according to his plans, thus an absorbing central interest in man comes to dominate every factor in his life. Muscle and brain, word and deed, inward experience and outward circumstance, insofar as it is under our control, all is made to contribute to the acquirement of the one thing which stands at the center of life, the thing which we worship, for which we live, for which we would die.

This is religion, the force which binds together the loose ends of life until it becomes one. If it does less than that, if it is less strong, less intense, it is not religion. It may be carefully reasoned conviction, a measured opinion of the truth, it may be a beautiful

thought which comes and goes and scarcely leaves a trace. But it is not a fire which burns and even consumes.

This is religion, but it is obvious that this explanation does not satisfy inasmuch as it is incomplete. It relates only to the effect which a religious experience has upon man, which is a matter concerning which there is no disagreement between Humanists and Theists. The difference of opinion has to do with the causes responsible for the religious experience. Where is one to search for those? "In God," the Theist says. "In man himself," the Humanist answers.

It is extremely difficult to decide between the two for no one can disprove the statement that it is the thought of God rather than any other which creates unity in my life and gives intelligent direction to my actions. Any account of an inner experience must be accepted as it is given because there is no way of verifying it. The utmost one can do is to say, "You misinterpret your own experience," but it is very hard to furnish the proof for that assertion.

The only way to establish whether the thought of God rather than any other is instrumental in unifying the life of a person is to ask him the question, "What do you mean by God? Which are the specific divine qualities which you deem to be operative in your life?" His answer will then reveal one of two things, either the qualities which he values most are those which belong to God as distinguished from man, such as

omnipotence and omniscience, or those which God shares with man, such as love, mercy, and justice. In the latter case we have ground for believing that such a person values God only insofar as he is *like* man. This is really a form of Humanism. For to believe in man is to believe in human qualities, it matters little whether those qualities are found in a strictly human being or not.

A more dependable way of informing ourselves concerning this matter is to read the record of history. A single religious experience is insufficient to furnish us with an answer to our question. History deals with mankind as well as with individual men. It therefore gives us the general rule as well as the exception. When we trace the historical development of the idea of God we arrive at the same time at an understanding of those needs of mankind to which the God-concept is the answer. Again we ask, which are the qualities in God which mankind has valued most, those which belong to God as distinguished from man, or those which God shares with man?

We shall answer this question by tracing briefly the development of the concept of God insofar as it affects Christian thought. We must naturally look for its beginning in Judaism, for the first Christians were zealous Jews and desired to be nothing else but that. In Judaism, under the influence of prophecy, the moral qualities of God had become accentuated. Jahweh ceased to be a desert god with a much restricted sphere

of action, whose power is solely revealed in concrete activity either in favor of his friends or to the hurt of his enemies. He becomes the just, the loving, the merciful. At first he is the God of Israel only, but that, too, changes. We read in Isaiah 19: 23, 24, "In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall worship with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Jahweh of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

The idea of God is broadening and therefore becoming correspondingly less concrete. God the world-wide easily becomes God the infinite; God the just is readily identified with justice. This process of abstraction is never quite completed in Judaism, but it goes very far. No human eyes can see God; to see God is to die. The High Priest meets Jahweh once a year in the Holy of Holies, but this is a place from which all light has been excluded. God's name must not be pronounced; it is death. The holy name must not be written down; it is sin.

Christianity takes over from Judaism this belief in a God far removed. The influence of Greek thought promotes, rather than retards, this process of abstraction. Jahweh of the Jews never loses touch with his people or the world in which they live. But the god of Neo-

platonism is transcendent to such a degree that no qualities can be predicated of him. We cannot speak of his will or his thought, his justice or his mercy. Any attribute is but a limitation and would deprive him of his perfection. Plato influences Christianity through Neo-platonism, and hence the God of the earlier Christians is a transcendent God.

To the degree to which God becomes transcendent he equally becomes useless. The Christians were simple people, slaves many of them. Their problems were most concrete. They wished for freedom, for a larger measure of security from the ills of this world. These they could not secure for themselves and hence they turned to God for aid. If this life should hold out no promise of certainty and happiness, there remained at least the hope that God would secure for them these gifts in the world beyond the grave. A God transcendent, dehumanized, because lacking in all human qualities, could not help them in their need. He would not understand their needs. Another God, a more human God is needed.

Hence the deification of Jesus. Jesus is a man born as we are, who ate and drank and suffered pain, and in the end tasted death, as do all men. Still, the impression which he made upon his generation, and the generations following, was extraordinary. So extraordinary, indeed, as to furnish proof that simple manhood, in spite of its limitations, may greatly impress other men and be helpful to them. The early Christians turned to

Jesus for help rather than to God. If it be argued that through Jesus they turned to God after all, it still remains true that they turned to Jesus *in the first place.* "They have taken away my Lord," John makes Mary Magdalene say when she cannot find the body of Jesus in the tomb. Those words mean more than the fact that she cannot find the body of her dead master; one senses behind them the outcry of her soul that her protection is gone, her source of security. This Jewish woman cannot have supposed that with Jesus, God himself had died. She might have turned toward Him, but somehow it did not seem the same as turning toward Jesus.

The early Christians which followed her shared her feelings. The devotion of the early church went to Jesus, the Man-God, rather than to the Father, the God without human qualities. Understanding of human life could be expected only from a God who himself had shared a human life. When Jesus became a member of the Trinity the object was none other than to supply anew to the Godhead the human qualities which it had lost. I do not mean, of course, that this was the conscious aim. Jesus' elevation to Godhead was not premeditated. It was a slow process, completed after more than three centuries as a result of a psychological necessity, clearly evident to us, but scarcely apparent to the earlier centuries themselves.

The effect of Jesus' deification was not lasting, for the same processes which had brought about the dehumanization of the Father now brought about the partial de-

humanization of the Son. Gnostic influences tended to accentuate the spiritual part of Jesus to the neglect of his human part. The church struggled against this and from its point of view quite rightly, but it was nevertheless profoundly influenced. Jesus gradually becomes an abstraction, although never to the same degree as the Father.

This may account for the elevation of Mary and the saints. Neither Mary nor the saints officially became a part of the Godhead. A late communication from one of the Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States has stressed the fact that Mary was a creature and not to be worshiped. This, without doubt, has been the teaching of the church, but the humble follower kneeling in the attitude of prayer before the statue of the Holy Virgin cannot be expected to remember whether he is venerating or worshiping the kindly influence whose help he solicits. When veneration is charged with the intense affection which characterizes the attitude of the Roman Catholics regarding Mary, the distinction between veneration and worship becomes a mere technicality and is psychologically unimportant.

The fact remains that Mary and the saints supplied the human elements which were lacking both in God, and to a less degree, in Jesus. Images were made of the saints to help men remember their human origin. Most remarkable of all, the church allowed images to be made of Jesus, although he is definitely a part of the

Godhead, and this in spite of the Mosaic law which forbids us to represent God to the senses by means of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below the earth. It is true that it is the human part of Jesus which is being portrayed, but this makes it all the more important for our present consideration. The church allows the worship, under a human form, of one who is known to be a God. It is a subconscious attempt to prevent Jesus from becoming a mere abstraction.

A detailed study of this interesting phenomenon would lead us too far, but I must find time to suggest the extreme importance of the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist in this connection. Here, too, we have a most determined attempt to keep the idea of Jesus concrete. The church has been willing to compromise on many matters, as the history of the Reformation makes abundantly clear. Justification by faith rather than through works, the celibacy of the clergy, the question of papal infallibility, the precise extent of the papal power, all of these problems the church has been willing to discuss with a view toward moderation of its doctrine concerning these matters, but never the change of the elements of the Eucharist into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ. At this point the church has been uncompromising, adamant in its attitude. The church rightly felt that by giving up this doctrine it was sacrificing a thing most precious, the human element present in Jesus, without which wor-

ship of Jesus would become psychologically impossible.

The history of the Christian church clearly shows that man's worship is essentially a veneration of his own qualities, no matter whether they are found in God, Jesus, or the saints. God is worshiped because he is a helper; and helping is essentially a human act. Jesus in time takes the place of God the Father because human qualities are more evident in him than in God. When the process of abstraction removes him in turn far from the human sphere, the saints partly take his place because no one can doubt either their human qualities or their human origin.

Within the Protestant churches the development of humanistic thought is less easily detected. The reason is found in the fact that the Protestant church has a greater leaning toward abstract reasoning than the Roman church. The Calvinistic churches, which are typically Protestant, removed from their service most of the concrete elements. The central part of the Roman service is the mass, which is an appeal to the eyes; and therefore necessarily concrete. The central part of the Calvinistic service is the sermon, an appeal to our ears and through them to our reasoning power, and hence, in its nature, far more abstract than the mass. Moreover, the sermon is likely to deal with ultimate reality which emphasizes its abstract nature.

Yet concrete elements are not lacking. Many of Luther's teachings are definitely related to human life

as it exists in this world. The grace of God comes to us in this life, and shows its presence through our acts. True, good works do not justify a man, faith alone; yet faith fruits in works. A Christian performs good works as naturally as the sun shines. Human activity is not wholly eliminated.

Even Calvinism has its human interests, be it in a somewhat more limited sense. The Calvinistic doctrine is not entirely without its doctrine of good works. Certainly, God does not select a man on account of his good works; even after his election his deeds have no merit in the eyes of God. But to the eyes of man there is a difference, in the sense that the acts of the one called by God have the outward appearance of good. At all events Calvin is intensely interested in practical good. Geneva was a well governed city, one of the best governed cities of sixteenth century Europe. Calvin's doctrine of the State has gained the greatest practical influence upon later political theory; it shows radical utilitarian tendencies which have not been sufficiently recognized. Calvin may frown upon "creaturely activity," but his practice does not quite agree with his theory. In theory, God was considered to be the sole cause of all happenings, in practice, Calvin and his followers work as if there were no God to aid them. Calvinism, on its practical side, has distinct humanistic elements.

This chapter cannot be concluded without making

reference to two movements within the Christian church which have greatly aided in increasing man's importance within the realm of theological thinking. The first one is the spread of Methodism, one of the greatest factors in saving the world from the evil consequences of extreme Calvinism. No church has been more insistent that we shall use the talent for self-improvement given us. Nor do I know a religious community more hopeful of man's success, if only that talent be used. It is no mere accident that William Booth started his career by being a Methodist preacher. Through their doctrine that, with the help of God, a free, full, and *present* salvation may be earned by the repentant sinner, the Wesleyan churches have done their full share in restoring to man the dignity of which Calvinism had robbed him.

The second movement is that of liberalism, which in the early part of the last century was represented in the United States by Universalism and Unitarianism. The Universalists believed that God in his wisdom recognized in man certain qualities which he deemed worthy of preservation. Hence God preserved the bearer of the qualities together with the qualities themselves. The presence of evil in man is by no means denied, but it is thought that in the warfare between good and evil good must eventually win. The Universalists were avowed Theists, as were the Unitarians, but their emphasis upon the indestructibility of good in man, or, in other words, upon *human* good, makes this move-

ment a very interesting one to study in connection with the development of humanistic thinking.

The Unitarians like the Universalists, were originally Theists, yet their revolt against orthodoxy does not wholly arise from considerations affecting the being of God. The dignity of man is a fundamental dogma of Unitarianism. When God created man, the work of his hands was not a failure, it was dignified and worthy. It is fully admitted that human beings are imperfect, but it is denied that man's imperfection renders him wholly unworthy. On the contrary, man is slowly changing for the better.

The same qualities which give dignity to man likewise give dignity to God. Unitarianism does not use two measures of worth, one for man and one for God. God is worshiped not merely by reason of the fact that he is God, but because he possesses qualities worthy of being honored, qualities which he shares with man. Significant in this respect are two sentences in Channing's Baltimore Sermon: "We respect nothing but excellence, whether in heaven or on earth. We venerate not the loftiness of God's throne but the equity and goodness in which it is established." Channing, in his famous sermon, clearly makes man the measure of all things, for man determines what is good and equitable, and he decides whether or not God is a fit object of worship. Channing's approach is essentially humanistic, and, like all others, he should be judged by the method which he employs rather than by the results which he

obtains. It is entirely logical that Channing's church, the Unitarian, should contain proportionately more Humanists than any other.

The historical portion of this chapter has become lengthy indeed, but an appeal to history saves time, inasmuch as a fact already established in the past requires no further consideration. In closing, however, certain questions must be considered which are not of a strictly historical nature, but which concern Humanism at the present stage of its development.

The chief accusation leveled against present day Humanism is that it leaves no room for worship, and that, therefore, it has no religious value. This Humanism denies. It draws attention to the fact that worship is never directed toward a higher being as such, but to certain qualities resident within that being which are the very causes of its greatness. Upon examination it will be found that the qualities which we worship in God are the very ones which we value in man. Not God's infinitude nor his omniscience draws our admiration, but his justice and his love. Whenever God becomes depleted of purely human qualities, worship becomes psychologically impossible and the loss has to be made good before God can again become an object of veneration. The method employed has been the elevation of some human being to the Godhead, of which fact Jesus' deification is the most noteworthy example.

Humanism would wish to know why, if it be possible that a given quality be worshiped in God, that

same quality cannot be worshiped when it is found in man. Surely, justice and mercy are the same wherever we find them. Their worth is not affected by notions of measure or degree, so that God is valued over man because he possesses these qualities in a greater measure. Quantity obviously plays no part in the determination of excellence. A painting of the first rank does not differ from a painting of the second rank because its beauty is quantitatively greater, in the sense that it reaches a greater intensity. At whatever point the two paintings are actually beautiful the intensity of their beauty is the same. The greater picture reaches that intensity at more points, that is all. Whatever falls below a given degree of intensity simply is not beauty. Or let us take an even clearer example, the idea of accuracy. Accuracy is a fixed concept. Whenever a man falls short of being accurate he does not display this quality to a less degree than someone else whom we call more accurate. Either he is accurate or the reverse. We call him less accurate because he is accurate at fewer points than someone else who surpasses him.

Whenever justice or love are displayed, whether in man or God, they are the same qualities and equally worthy of admiration. The fact that a given quality lodges in God rather than in man has nothing to do with the matter, because a quality is admirable in and for itself, quite apart from the person in whom it is found. "We venerate," to quote Channing again, "not the loftiness of God's throne but the equity and good-

ness in which it is established," which implies that those qualities are neither more nor less valuable because they are related to the throne of God. They would be just as valuable if found in the humblest of individuals.

Humanism believes that worship in the sense of "paying reverence and homage" is a possible attitude of mind even though we leave the idea of God out of the reckoning. It frankly admits that in a humanistic sense worship is no longer possible if we identify this idea with prostration before the object of our admiration, but Humanism wonders whether that type of worship still suits our time and our temper. The Kingdom of God is a concept which originated in a period of history when men looked upon conditions existing within a kingdom as quite normal. The world had its kingdoms where one person ruled and all the others obeyed. This condition of affairs was not felt as objectionable even as late as 1685 when Hobbes, in his *Leviathan,* explained why the monarchy is the most useful form of government.

Would the same condition, however, seem useful or even tolerable to us in our day? Humanism doubts it. The absolute monarchy has virtually ceased to exist, the limited monarchies are decreasing in number. Democracy is our ideal where earthly relations are concerned; why should this ideal be useless in the realm of religion? Even Theists would agree that the relation between God and man is one based on sacred rights which either must respect. If this relation is best de-

scribed as the one existing between father and child then surely those rights are present and any infringement on them would disturb its sacred nature.

Worship, even in the sense in which Theists use the term, has ceased to be prostration before the object of veneration. This idea must now be explained as extreme reverence for certain qualities, deemed excellent, which are present in the object of our veneration. Why, then, should not those qualities arouse the same feeling of reverence when they are found in man? Surely the notion of the immanence of God has been with us long enough to make us familiar with such a possibility. Nine sermons out of ten have something to say about finding God in man, honoring him in man, loving him in man. It is but a short step from honoring and loving God in man to worshiping God in man.

Again it is said that Humanism can never produce a religion because its emotional life is at a low ebb. I have on my desk a letter from a well known professor of theology, a thorough liberal, who makes this statement in strong and convincing terms. I am inclined to agree with his opinion that Humanism at its present state of development still undervalues the importance of the emotions. I shall have more to say about this in the chapter on the "Criticism of Humanism." Nevertheless, neither he nor I would maintain that Humanism is lacking in emotional life as a necessary consequence of its teachings. Why should this be the case?

It is not feasible to maintain that only such realities are

capable of moving man which are high above him and, in their nature, different from him. Experience teaches us a different lesson. We love that which we know best and which is most like to ourselves. Humanism is inclined to argue that the strictly divine qualities, which we as men do not share, do not touch our emotions in the least, unless we call utter confusion emotion.

I have always admired Otto's book, *Das Heilige,* as a masterful analysis of an emotional condition, called religious, but I have never been convinced by the main trend of its argument. *Das Numinose, das Fascinans, "das Moment des Tremendum"* do not connect themselves with human experiences to which a definite value can be attached; they betoken to me variations of plain bewilderment.

No Humanist would deny that religion has a place for awe. However, awe is not equivalent to the mental state of a man who says, "I do not know what it all means but I am impressed just the same." Such a condition ends in *credo quia absurdum.* Awe arises from a keen understanding of the essential greatness of the qualities displayed in the object before our mind. This feeling can never arise in connection with such attributes as omniscience or omnipotence, for we simply do not know what they mean.

Humanism would urge that a satisfactory religion is possible on a humanistic basis, a religion which contains all of the elements which make religion valuable: awe, reverence, and, above all, the capacity of so stirring

human emotions that men are weaned from indifference and thereafter pursue the aim most worth while to them with whole-hearted, undivided attention. Life once chaotic, through religion, becomes an integrated whole.

Let us consider one final matter. Humanism has been accused of being narrow in its interests. It pays attention to man, but it will go no further, it refuses to relate him to his larger environment. A pupil of mine once expressed it as follows: "Humanism concerns itself with the picture but it refuses to place it in its proper frame."

To this accusation Humanism makes answer as follows: "It is true that thus far we have no settled opinions regarding man's relations to his larger surroundings. We are, however, not unwilling to entertain opinions of this sort, but until now we have had no time to formulate them. Give us time, time to experiment and more time to verify our experimentations. Do not ask us to give opinions until we are ready to prove our arguments."

Humanism, in its religious, metaphysical, and ethical sense, is not a fixed system whose value is found in the results already obtained; its merit lies in the fact that it is a useful and dependable method for finding truth. It starts with that which it knows best, man, not with that which it knows least, God. It is therefore sure of its starting point, which is an important matter. Humanism cannot predict how far man will be able to

travel into the unknown regions. Will he find sure evidence for the existence of God? The answer fails, but many Humanists hope that this will prove to be the case. Surely they do not desire to be considered Atheists, nor would they deem this just, because they do not believe that anyone who seeks, with all of his might, the highest that may be found should be so called.

Humanism believes that it is making a contribution to the solution of the religious problem. It does not expect everyone to agree with it, but it begs all men interested in religion to investigate the humanistic teachings with an open mind. This investigation may lead to disagreement on the part of the investigator, but also, it feels sure, to a measure of respect and even of good will for this particular attempt to discover the truth which finds its origin in a great love of the truth.

# V

# *The Criticism of Humanism*

IN the four preceding chapters, I have tried to make clear the principles of Humanism. I thought it fairest to make this system state its own views regarding theology, ethics, and metaphysics. This could best be done by using the method of the dialogue. A hypothetical opponent of Humanism, whether on religious, ethical, or metaphysical grounds, states his objections to this system of thought; conversely, a hypothetical Humanist defends the humanistic doctrine and in turn urges his objections to Theism, Absolutism, and Transcendental Moralism. I knew of no method by which it was possible to deal with the problem in a more impersonal way. I have, of course, no reasons for hiding my own convictions regarding this matter, but a series of lectures on the Lowell Foundation is not intended, I believe, to make propaganda for a specific view. Its aim is to be informative, to state the whole of the problem and to allow the readers to reach their own conclusion regarding the merits of the case.

Inasmuch as the leading part in the argument was taken by the Humanists, the criticism of humanistic doctrine did not have a free scope. It answered argument by counter-argument, but the nature of its at-

tack depended entirely upon the targets which it pleased the Humanists to set up. This should be corrected in the interest of fairness. It seems altogether just to devote this whole chapter to an account of the criticisms made upon humanistic doctrine. We may then in our last chapter proceed to a consideration of the final answer made by the Humanists to their critics. Such an answer should be partly an attempt to refute their criticism, but also, in part, an honest admission of error or weakness wherever its critics have clearly demonstrated that weakness or error exists.

I wish to acknowledge at this point a debt to Professor Robert J. Hutcheon of the Meadville Theological School who, in a brief but thorough study of Humanism in his book entitled *Humanism in Religion Examined,* has clearly summed up the chief objections which have been made against the humanist doctrine. I also wish to make grateful mention of a sermon sent me by Professor Charles Lyttle of the same institution in which this Humanist shows a keen appreciation of the shortcomings of his own system, together with an equally keen insight into the ways in which those shortcomings may be remedied. That I have profited by Lawrence Hyde's *The Prospect of Humanism,* by Berdjajew's *Der Sinn der Geschichte,* and by the writings of Professor H. B. Alexander and Joseph Wood Krutch, I merely mention in passing.

Dr. Hutcheon quite correctly states the case as follows: "There is no need of being concerned with the

popular reaction against Humanism. It goes without saying that people who live on the level of pictorial thinking, where the anthropomorphic gods appear, cannot understand or use the more conceptualized thinking of a higher level. If Humanism is to be refuted it must be shown to be inadequate to those who live on the thought-level at which it appears." In other words, it is quite obvious that Theists of a certain kind should be dissatisfied with Humanism, but the question to be answered is, why should Humanists be contented with their own teaching?

The obvious answer is that this teaching meets their needs. Humanists are living on a level of thought different from Theists and hence for their full satisfaction demand a different interpretation of the truth. This in itself creates a problem. Is it to be supposed that men living on different levels of thought are so dissimilar as to have wholly different needs? This seems scarcely possible. We must guard ourselves against the danger of confusing superficial distinctions with essential differences. Man often introduces the notion of absolute difference, judging from surface indications, when nature itself does not do so at all. It is the way of man to divide, and of nature to unite. Nature never differentiates between two things without at the same time creating a relation between them.

A man living on a different level of thought from one of his fellows is not necessarily wholly different from him, because the two levels of thought, although

differing, are yet related. In all probability, the one person is very like the other. He may select for his attention a given part of reality more frequently than the man from whom he is supposed to differ, but there the dissimilarity between the two ends. At some time in his life he will find it necessary to turn his attention to other parts of reality as well. In other words, a man who habitually lives on the level of conceptual thinking at some time in his life will experience the need of living on the level of pictorial thinking, whereas the reverse is equally true. Indeed it is not possible to separate the two. Concrete thinking and abstract thinking do not differ essentially, but are only two phases of the same mental experience. They are complementary to one another.

There is, I repeat, no reason to believe that men who live on different levels of thought are essentially different, and if this be true it follows that their needs must be much the same. In the end, the Theist and the Humanist need the same kind of spiritual food because both are men. Mental life does not differ greatly from physical life. Physically all men differ, nevertheless their bodies require the same material substances, be it in differing degrees. If they do not receive those, they become under-nourished. This is equally true of human minds. They likewise differ, consequently the constituent elements of the spiritual nurture which they require should be differently related, but in all cases

the same elements must be present. Omit one of them and the result is an under-nourished mind.

It is foolish to believe that men can live by use of the reason alone. Dr. Hutcheon is no doubt correct in his assertion, that the needs of men are rooted in their passional and volitional nature quite as much as in their speculative intellect. It is our misfortune that we so often forget this. We have the habit of placing feeling and volition on a lower level than the intellect. They do not operate in a manner quite as restrained as reason. We are afraid of them because it is hard to control them. The intellect is a horse broken to our use, but the passions are impatient of the reins. We would wish to dismiss them as disturbers of the mental peace.

When we chance to be present at a camp meeting and watch the uncontrolled outpouring of emotional life, we are shocked. We sense it as something wrong, something of which we have reason to be ashamed. "Presently," we say, "those men and women will be taught to restrain their emotions, reason will assert itself and will burn with a clear, white flame. Education is needed to lift them to a higher level of self-expression." But if this should happen is it certain that no loss has taken place? Can reason take the place of feeling and give an equivalent of value, granted the possibility of the conversion of the one into the other? This is a problem not easily solved. Theists contend that the Humanists have solved it and solved it in the

wrong way. They teach, it is contended, that mere feeling should be changed into a controllable and dependable process of reasoning and that thus a gain will be made.

I have no desire to determine in this chapter whether or no such a belief naturally connects itself with humanistic reasoning. It suffices at present to state that Humanists are said to be holding such a belief, and one may admit that the accusation is not wholly without grounds. Indeed, it would be strange if we should find no foundation for such an opinion. Let us remember that Humanism usually appears in the course of history as a thought-system, critical of erratic expressions either of the feelings or of the will. It has shown but scant patience with the things it set out to criticize. Sometimes it has used ridicule as a weapon of attack, as did Erasmus in his essentially humanistic book, *The Praise of Folly*. At other times it has used strictly logical arguments for the discomfiture of its enemies. It has never sought to defend its own position by the use of proofs supplied either by the human desire or the will; its appeal has been to reason always.

A man makes the tools which he employs in his work, but conversely the tools employed influence the man using them. A constant use of syllogistic reasoning must have its effect upon the mind occupied with this type of reasoning. It comes to think of it as the only possible form of argumentation. This is quite wrong. Logic has no true power to persuade. I may

force a man into making admissions which heretofore he refused to make, but this is not equivalent to persuading him. There is profound psychological truth in the well known proverb: "Who is convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

Humanism forgets this. It lacks, in spite of the name which it bears, a sufficient knowledge of man's psychical make-up. Abstract reason does not determine our ultimate decisions, it merely tries to render them plausible. The choice between right and wrong, belief and unbelief is pre-rational, as Schleiermacher well understood. It finds its origin in that part of human life which had become fully developed long before reason was added as the last of the human faculties.

No chain of reasoning can make certainty more sure, nor can it persuade us to accept what we have refused to believe for far deeper reasons. Scholasticism may not have been far wrong when it told us that the best use which we could make of the intellect was to furnish us with reasons for the truth of those things which we had already accepted in faith. Shall we not restore to its former dignity apologetics, so long in evil repute? Is not this precisely what we are doing these days when, by use of reasonable argument, we press the claim of the irrational elements in religion? Is not Otto's book, *Das Heilige,* a persuasive argument for the fact that any significant judgment must take its rise in a passional interest?

Humanism seeks to do what no one has yet suc-

ceeded in doing, to persuade the heart of man by the use of syllogistic reasoning. Let it take note of what Mr. Hyde tells us in so persuasive a manner. "The only philosophy that is worth having is the one which has come into being through the individual's expressing in terms of severely abstract thought a consciousness which might alternately, given another type of temperament, have expressed itself in terms of poetic creation." Or, to put it quite simply, however much a philosophical system may appear to be the product of pure speculation its significance is dependent as much upon its creator's emotional as upon his intellectual endowment. How may Humanism hope to succeed as long as it continues to undervalue the emotional life? The question is no longer whether Humanism will be able to persuade its enemies of the value of its contributions to the body of truth, but whether it will continue to satisfy its own friends. For they, too, are men and count nothing human foreign; they, too, will starve unless their souls are fed with what is indeed the bread of life.

Humanism not only lacks emotional life, but, if one is to believe its enemies, it also lacks a sense of sin. It is over-optimistic regarding man's capability of meeting unaided the difficulties of life. I well remember a remark made by Professor Roessingh of the University of Leyden after a two months' visit to the United States. "This country," he said, "is filled with eighteenth century optimists." He came here shortly after the World War, sick at heart by reason of the great catastrophe.

Mankind had failed to live up to its promises, it had returned to a state of barbarism which seemed to belong to the earliest periods of human history. Europe was broken, nothing seemed possible now, none of the hopes once cherished could now be fulfilled.

The very moment he entered this country he found himself in a new world. Serious men and women appeared to be unaware, it seemed to him, of the great depths to which the human race had sunk. They were always speaking about the future as though the way to the future were quite unobstructed. It seemed to him as if the Age of Enlightenment had suddenly come back, with its reliance upon human strength, its certainty of victory over nature without and temptations within. All men appeared to believe in the progress of mankind onward and upward forever. One could not impute this to the lack of seriousness of the American nation, but rather to a certain unawareness of the true state of affairs, due, in part, to the great distance which separated us from the scene of the war; due, as well, to the unparalleled prosperity which this country enjoyed for so many years.

Humanism, in the days of Professor Roessingh's visit to the United States, had not quite reached the proportions to which it has since grown. To what extent he came in contact with it, while here, I have no way of knowing. Had his acquaintance with it been more extensive he might well have characterized it as the typical and unescapable result of inborn American optimism.

This, at least, is the opinion regarding this philosophy expressed by another European scholar, Dr. Adolf Keller. In his latest book, *Der Weg der dialectischen Theologie durch die Kirchliche Welt,* he devotes to the consideration of Humanism a part of one page, which part proves to be a rather remarkable example of how much can be said in criticism of a system of thought within so short a compass. He ends his few remarks by telling us that religious empiricism and Humanism have become, for the larger part religious nihilism. Nothing is left but an ill-founded cosmic optimism.

Ill-founded optimism as the result of insufficient knowledge of man's inner state; this is the fundamental trouble which vitiates all humanistic thought, its chief critics tell us. Humanists trust man because they do not know him. Ignorance of the facts is an unsafe basis upon which to explain facts. Humanism is superficial, it trusts to luck, hence it will satisfy only men who rather carelessly live from one day into the other. It appeals to spiritual adventurers, men who like to take chances and who fail to realize the full power of evil within man because they have never taken time to pay a sufficient amount of attention to the problem involved in the question of evil. The humanistic solution of the difficulty is no solution at all; it is a gamble, and it will not satisfy the more serious mind.

A human mind unable to understand the full import of the problem of evil will not have a keen sense of

sin. Yet, by the sense of sin, we measure the intensity of the religious life within man. Would anyone call a self-satisfied man religious? The history of the Christian church gives evidence of the fact that a man's turning toward God is directly dependent upon the degree to which he feels his own moral insufficiency. Jesus, Paul, Augustine, Luther do but illustrate in their own superior lives the universal law which decrees that a deep sense of religious values cannot exist without a keen consciousness of moral lack. Take away the sense of sin and what is left of Christian teaching? The ideas of forgiveness and redemption, fundamental to Christian doctrine, cease to have any meaning. Even the idea of the love of God changes its nature because it is no longer the forgiving love of God with which which we are dealing. We may apply to Humanism the words which Roessingh once wrote concerning German Idealism: "We are disappointed on all sides, man's ethical personality fades from view and with it the moral antitheses as well as the concept of redemption and the particular idea of God which arise from them. Self-adoration is the unescapable consequence."

Humanism leads to man's self-adoration, this is the verdict of its critics. Their argument is very simple. If nothing greater than man can be found in the universe, nothing greater than man can be worshiped, hence man is forced to worship himself. Surely this destroys the possibility of all religion. For religion arises from a sense of need. Certain problems present them-

selves which call for solution. If man were sufficient to himself, no questions would arise. A machine which runs perfectly presents no difficulties outside of those which pertain to maintenance. All problems were foreseen before the machine was put into operation, and through its perfect construction all possible trouble was prevented before ever it occurred. If man were like such a machine, there could be no sense of inner conflict. Yet it is from inner conflict that religion is born, we have the testimony of history for this fact. When man feels himself unable to deal with his own difficulties he seeks for help from the outside; it is then, as we have seen in the first chapter, that the gods arise. How then can one argue the logical possibility of a religion without a sense of sin? I do not go to a physician until I feel ill. Men do not go to God until they experience the need for God. Now religion is nothing else but an effort to establish a relation between my own insufficient self and the source of all help outside me. Where there is no desire to establish such a relation there is no religion. Humanism has impoverished religious life by failing to see that a deep sense of sin is fundamental to the religious experience.

The indictment against Humanism is not yet complete. To a lack of a sense of sin must be added an unwillingness to admit the value of over-beliefs, of beliefs which relate to facts the existence of which cannot be clearly demonstrated to the thinking mind. It is curious that a system of thought which shows so great

a faith in man's unproven future should be so timid in accepting any unproven facts which are not directly related to man. Immediately you say, "I hope, I believe," Humanism counters by saying, "Very well, but do you know? Where are your proofs?"

No religion can exist unless it is willing to take the risk of faith, unless it ventures to make assertions substantiated by nothing else but the certainty that to a great need there must be a vastly satisfying answer. Dr. Lyttle when dealing with this question in his sermon on *Racial Morale,* writes as follows: "Consider the colossal presumption expressed by the trustful piety of the twenty-third Psalm. With a naïveté that under other circumstances we should pronounce stupendous egoism, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the infinite Intelligence and Will, whose outward majesty is to be measured in billions of lightyears, is regarded as tenderly solicitous of a most inconsequential peasant of Palestine, an infinitesimal swirl of bio-chemical ferment, as transient as, by cosmic proportions, he is tiny." And again: "What inward monitor has whispered to the hard-pressed individual that despite the rebuffs of sin and sorrow and failure, his minute spark of consciousness can never be quenched, but is destined to survive the failures of this life and the death of the body, and to go on growing and mounting toward moral development. Religion is the victory faith and the victory will of humanity."

What can take the place of those over-beliefs? Ab-

solutely nothing. Surely not critical reason. Reason, by the very fact that it is critical, deals with truth already established. It faces the past, not the future. One cannot bring the unborn day into being by means of syllogistic reasoning. We must rely on faith, hope, and determination for that. We may agree that hope, faith, and will must have an element of reason in them, but we cannot identify them with mere processes of abstract reasoning.

What, if it rejects imponderabilia, does Humanism have to offer? What does it have to offer not merely to the mind but to the whole man? For it must be stressed again and again, not the mind of man alone, but the whole man must be satisfied. A satisfied critical sense may leave a discontented heart even in the keenest of thinkers. What appeal can Humanism make? Insofar as it is a religious movement, how does it expect to fill its churches? Merely by saying that upon careful investigation it has found certain things to be such and such, from which it must follow that other things will prove to be so and so? Are these the arguments which fill the church of St. Peter's on Easter day? Is it reasoning of this sort which but a few days later will call together on the great square of Athens the multitude which waits in breathless expectation until the doors of the Cathedral open and the chief prelate appears, the lighted candle in his hand, from which presently the candles of all of those thousands will be lighted?

Has ever logical argument given men power to face

death, or persecution; has it ever called out their loyalty? What was it which made those hundreds of thousands—knights, monks, peasants, children, even—leave their homes to go to an unknown country for the sake of saving the grave of Jesus from the Mohammedans? Was it the logic of Pope Urban's sermon delivered on the field of Clermont, or the dialectical power of Peter the Hermit as he made his way through France toward Cologne? We are acquainted with the contents of Urban's address made on that memorable twenty-fifth day of November of the year 1095, and we know that not one of his arguments was an appeal to the critical understanding. His words were addressed to the emotions of the men before him, and so great was their power to persuade that the Pope was appalled at the consequences of his own speech and tried in vain to check the excessive enthusiasm which he himself had called forth.

Only by stirring the emotions can we provoke men to action, only by making them dream dreams and see visions. But Humanism, we are told, relies upon the sober intellect. It is afraid of stirring emotions which it cannot immediately control. How, then, can it expect to incite men to great deeds? I once heard a professional bicycle racer say, "A man who would win a bicycle race must not only spend every ounce of strength which he has, but he must spend many ounces of strength beyond those which he has." It sounded para-

doxical, but it is true. Can Humanism incite men to efforts which go far above their apparent power to perform? If it cannot do so, it has lost the day.

The criticisms to which we have listened so far have admitted the value of the humanistic approach to truth provided one can agree with its first assumptions. Its sins were explained to be mainly sins of omission. Values are left out which are needed in human life. But may we not find sins of commission? If we could prove that Humanism fails to make proper use of the method which it itself advocates, we could establish a serious indictment against it. It is precisely this accusation which some of its critics level against it.

How do they state their case? They begin by granting that Humanists, being mentally differently constituted, probably do not greatly miss the over-beliefs whose absence in the humanistic system Theists deplore. Yet, though they manage to get along on a minimum of imponderabilia, they cannot but demand that their own system give them all of the satisfactions which they seek. The value of any religious or metaphysical system is found in the fact that it tries to give a satisfactory explanation to every legitimate problem within its field. This emphatically means that it attempts to deal with *all* of the problems, not, let us say, with such questions only to which the answer is easy and not with those to which it is hard to make a reply. All true difficulties must be considered. No sane man expects this attempt to succeed in one hundred per cent

of the cases, or even in twenty-five per cent of them, but he does insist that a trial must be made to deal with them all.

This, Humanism, we are told, refuses to do. It presents us with a safe and sane starting point for our inquiry, but it will not push the inquiry far enough. It over-simplifies its work by performing only a part of it, and that the easiest part. One of my pupils was in the habit of saying that Humanism was quite willing to look at the picture of human life, but that you could not persuade it that a picture must have a frame in order to make it possible to appreciate it. Dean Creighton of Cornell, from another angle, made practically the same observation when he admitted that humanistic reasoning worked well enough within narrow limits, but that it broke down the moment you pushed your inquiry beyond those limits.

The objection against Humanism in this instance is, that it positively refuses to be pushed beyond the narrow limits within which its method is certain to work. It stops at the very point where the great and eternal questions present themselves. It will not talk about the frame of human life. To your inquiry how man is related to the universe about him, its reply is, "Ask science, we Humanists have nothing to add to what it teaches." To your question, "Whence did man come, whither will he go?" the answer comes, "We do not know, perhaps we may learn some day, but at present we have no certainty concerning these matters." And

if you should insist and say, "Perhaps you have no certainty, but have you no courageous hypotheses, no will to believe the unproven, no courage to accept in faith a great solution of the questions of life, merely because the solution is great, not because it rests upon solid facts?" even then the answer would be disappointing, for the Humanist's reply would be, "No, this is not our way. We would walk your way if we could, we quite clearly see the beauty, the heroic elements in that which you propose. But it costs too much to accept it, the danger is too great. We have seen the evil consequences of proceeding on the strength of unproven assumptions and we refuse to do so whatever the temptation. We have some knowledge of this life and the world in which man lives. We are willing to give our well-considered opinions concerning these two realities, but we are not going to venture upon cosmic speculations. Ultimate reality has had more attention than it deserves, it has turned man's mind away from limited reality and we have all suffered in consequence."

"Stoicism at best," comes the answer from the anti-humanistic camp. Humanism may teach a man to bear his fate patiently, even courageously, but it cannot teach him ought beyond that. It must inevitably lead to the deepest pessimism. It does not, and cannot, preach a gospel of joy. For ought it knows, life was created only to be relentlessly snuffed out by the cosmos which created it; a colossal grinding machine, as Professor Alexander calls it, "grinding out slow fatalities,

summoning man to the realization of his own weak, paltry and precarious being, a creating power which has no better interest in its own creation than the appetite of a Roman populace for gladiatorial shows."

We can but hope to muster enough courage to support ourselves during our brief voyage of life. "We see," the picture is Bertrand Russell's, "surrounding the narrow raft, illumined by the flickering light of human comradeship, the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour; from the great night without a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge; all the loneliness of humanity amid the hostile forces is concentrated upon the individual soul which must struggle alone with what courage it can command against the whole weight of a universe that cares nothing for its hopes and fears."

Shall Humanism invite men to join it in a faith like this; will they come if it should invite them; and if they come, what can it give them? Cut off from his larger relations, man is but a picture without a frame. The scene depicted has no depth, it is flat as though it had but two dimensions. Singularly enough it is the frame, which, though it may seem to limit the picture, gives it the appearance of infinitude, whereas the lack of the frame makes it a thing incomplete and therefore bound and limited indeed. Humanism fails to understand this.

The trouble with Humanism its opponents will tell you, is psychological and far more serious than

would appear upon the surface. It is a psychical trouble of a curiously paradoxical nature, for it is a combination of a superiority complex and an inferiority complex. On the one hand, we may diagnose it as a case of self-adoration, inasmuch as man considers himself the most important phenomenon in the whole universe. And on the other hand, it is an undervaluation of man, for man in his isolation, cut off from his cosmic relations, is a puny being indeed. Yet it is with this kind of a man, man isolated, man severed from his cosmic surroundings, that Humanism deals. Surely this is the result of an inferiority complex, for it is clear that Humanism does not dare to expand the concept man beyond the narrow and sure limits of this earthly life. It does not dare to dream, its enemies will tell you, lest someone should come upon it and surprise it at the moment when its eyes were closed to the realities of this world.

One gets the impression of some slow plodder who, without much imagination, has worked all the days of his life at his little task. He has saved up a little sum of money, penny by penny, and he has put his dollars away in a savings bank where he can watch them. When he grows old, he will draw a small income, and he will die in the satisfaction that he never owed a cent to anyone, that no depression has ever hit him because his money was too securely hidden. Such a man, without question, has led a decent life, an honorable life; no one can say a word against him because he has been

too shrewd ever to have made a mistake. But men like him did not build the railroads of this country, nor harness its streams, nor fly, a lonely pilot, across the stormy waters of the Atlantic. It takes more than shrewdness to do that, more than plodding patience. Men who do the larger things must be above the fear of being ridiculed on account of the vastness of their dreams. They make their own standards and measure reality not by inches and years, but in lightyears.

One can think of a more courageous attitude than the one which expresses itself in saying: "Behold me, I am what I am, and I pretend not to be one whit more than nature made me." Beyond that is the glorious daring of the man who says: "Though I am what I am, and no more than nature made me, I shall yet from the shore of this finite life of mine build a bridge into the vastnesses beyond, a bridge supported by faith alone. I shall build it farther and farther and farther until at last it shall touch the shore of a land eternal. Then shall I cross the bridge which my hands have made, and which my faith has supported, and I shall enter into the life more abundant."

"Rhetoric;" Humanism answers, "words only." "Words, perhaps," comes the reply from the opposite camp, "but expressing a profound truth." It is easy enough to test this truth by observing what is happening before our very eyes. Society receives its strength from those of its members in whom imagination and emotion control thought. They are the men who are

socially minded. They, as Joseph Wood Krutch expresses it, "have not yet lost the animal's innate talent of caring more for his race than himself." Humanism tends to an excess of rationalism, and hence to an excess of individualism.

For reasoning, though it may have elements of emotion, tends to lose those and to become a purely abstract logical function. With the going of the emotional element the desire to share what is experienced in emotion goes likewise. Logical thinking is never thinking for the sake of another, but thinking for the sake of thinking itself. We know the expression, art for art's sake. Translated it means, I do not care what anyone thinks about this thing which I have made, or whether anyone profits by it; there it is, take it or leave it, I care little, I am satisfied. Pure intelligence detached from emotion leads to supreme subjectivism. It may, it often does, lead to solipsism. Man becomes an isolated phenomenon in this universe. He does not feel himself at home in it because he is not truly a part of it. He becomes his own universe. No society made up of men of this sort can last, for its members, as Mr. Krutch expresses it, practice no virtues which have survival value. This also is the opinion of Professor Nikolaus Berdjajew in his book, *Der Sinn der Geschichte.* Humanism, he tells us, would wish to lift man to a higher level. It discovered man's individuality, freed it from its shackles, and gave it a chance to express itself. Indeed, it placed man at the very center of

the universe. But it made a colossal mistake. In freeing man it cuts him off from his spiritual surroundings and in doing so it causes his soul to starve. In denying that man is a son of God, it made him a son of nature only. Instead of being free, a Lord of life, he becomes life's servant. He is determined by time and place, a mere thing among things. To the exact degree to which Humanism denies God it denies man; the two are linked together with chains that cannot be broken. No tree can live, cut away from the roots which provide its sustenance. Humanism ends in Nietzsche. Its true Bible is *Also sprach Zarathustra.* Nietzsche, recognizing man's hopeless condition, advocates that man, as he now is, shall be annihilated. Man is either a laughing stock, or a sorrowful object of shame; we must do away with him. Nietzsche's teaching is not a gospel of heroism, it is on the contrary a most abject admission of defeat. Present man is good for nothing, let him be destroyed. Let us have in his place a Superman who shall be a law unto himself, a man wholly out of relation to his surroundings, except in the sense that he shall seek to dominate his surroundings.

Berdjajew makes Nietzsche one of the saints in the humanistic calendar. Paradoxically, he also includes the name of Karl Marx. Nietzsche destroyed man by setting up in his place a Superman, Marx destroyed man by making him a part of a system. The individual disappears, and in his place we have a superhuman empire

of Collectivism. Supposedly Collectivism is to be established for the sake of the individual, in reality it will prove to be at the cost of the individual. Marx does not trust man, only men. This system will lead to the utter destruction of ideals which have sprung from our conviction that each man is a son of God in his own right and, therefore, the object of God's solicitude. It surely means more to be a free-born son of God than a mere cog in a wheel. Marx's system destroys men and creates a machine. Hence the age of men has gone and the age of machines has arrived.

I have attempted to state objectively the criticisms leveled against Humanism by its opponents. It seemed only fair to give ample opportunity to these critics to state their case without interruption. Yet it goes without saying that Humanism must have some things to say in reply. I shall state the final answer in defense of the validity of its arguments in my next and last chapter.

# VI
# *The Future of Humanism*

WE have arrived at the end of our discussion. Our subject is by no means exhausted, it admits of a treatment far wider in its scope, and yet at the same time more detailed in its nature, than could be given to it in these six chapters. Perhaps it may prove possible to deal with it in a more ample manner at some future time. Surely there is need of a more fundamental consideration of our topic, for Humanism is here to stay. Man's importance in the midst of the world to which he belongs is one of the persistent problems, both of philosophy and theology.

It remains to forecast the future of Humanism. Predicting is a risky undertaking and has proved dangerous to the reputation of most men who have attempted it. A wrong guess is always detected, and always resented. Men forgive a wrong interpretation of the past, but not of the future. Jerusalem dealt gently with its historians, but it stoned its prophets.

Yet, in spite of the risk involved, there is need of discussing the probable future development of Humanism. Nor is this as difficult an undertaking as one might suppose, for we have a fairly large number of data upon which we may rest our prediction. Even as a young child gives some indication of what it will be when it

has grown up, Humanism at the present stage of its development shows certain definite characteristics which make a forecast of its future development possible. The question which we shall endeavor to answer is, what will Humanism have done with itself before we are twenty years older?

The first general prediction is that it will have lost some of its present temporary imperfections, which are mere diseases of childhood, whereas certain permanent traits will have become accentuated. There is also no doubt that it will take on some of the imperfections which come with greater age. In the first place, Humanism will become less critical of other systems of thought. It will learn to realize the truth that reality is many-sided, and that all sides are important. The classical Humanist, Goethe, in dealing with the question of truth, used to deplore that the number of differing opinions was so small. The greater the diversity of opinions, he argued, the larger the number of aspects of reality which are drawn to man's attention. Humanism will learn to recognize this fact, and in time, although retaining its own views, will become more friendly to other modes of thought.

At present this is not the case. Humanism is in a fighting mood, and therefore one-sided. This is entirely as it should be, because the work which it performs just now is of a critical nature. Its enemies deny that Humanism has a right to exist, this system therefore counters by showing the untenability of the hostile

position. For a while, the negative element in Humanism will have to prevail. This does not mean that Humanism in itself is a negative system of thought. To deny what appears to be error is to negate, but not to be negative. A man who desires to plant wheat must first remove the weeds or the wheat will not grow.

Let us remember that all new movements have had to go through a period in their existence in which the negations outnumbered the affirmations. Christianity denied Paganism; Protestanism, Roman Catholicism; sixteenth century Humanism, Scholasticism; Political Democracy, Political Aristocracy. Religious liberalism has not yet outlived its reputation of being negative. Channing's Baltimore Sermon was called negative in its day because it denied the Trinity and the Calvinistic views of sin and redemption. The Trinitarians of Channing's day forgot the obvious truth that any denial implies an affirmation of another possibility and that the awareness of this possibility precedes the denial. Negation is always preceded by affirmation. It is impossible to declare a conclusion illogical unless we already have some idea of the nature of a logical conclusion, or to declare a picture ugly unless we possess a positive norm of beauty. It must be remembered, therefore, that the negative mood in which Humanism finds itself at the present moment is induced by a very positive conviction which urges it to register its protest whenever this opinion is in any way attacked or misunderstood. Humanism will cease to be hypercritical of the opinions

of others when its own right to exist as an independent and valuable system of thought is less grudgingly admitted.

When Humanism has passed its critical stage it will give clearer evidence of its emotional content. For it is undeniable that it possesses such a content, even though it may be admitted that in the present period of its development it does not give clear proof of it. But why should it give such proof? Consider that, due to circumstances over which it has no control, Humanism is forced to defend its right to the logical position which it is holding. It does so by a counter-attack upon the logical position of its opponents. An intellectual duel calls for the use of the rational part of our mental equipment rather than for the use of its emotional part. It is true that Cardinal Newman has been credited with having defeated, on a given occasion, the arguments of his adversaries by playing his violin, but one notices that since they have resumed speech. Humanism is using logical arguments in an intellectual contest in which emotional arguments would be inadequate.

This does not prove that this system is without emotional life. The fact that I use a hammer to drive in nails, when it is needful that nails should be driven in, does not prove that a hammer is the only tool which I possess. I may have many others which I shall employ whenever their use is required by the task in hand. An engineer figuring the strains and stresses to which steel, needed for the building of a bridge, is subjected will

show no emotion as long as he is occupied with this mechanical task; but the dream of the bridge itself, as an instance of a great technical victory over tremendous difficulties, will fill his whole being with emotion.

Moreover why should we place the rational and the emotional life in opposition? Such a mistake, excusable in Aristotle's system, can scarcely be excused at the present time. In the evolutionary process, the purely rational functions follow our emotional expressions because these hereditary feelings, which accompany the instinctive activities, are insufficient to direct life at a higher level. It does not follow that the rational life and the emotional life are essentially different. The opposite is true, the two are causally related; the emotional life finds the culmination of its development in the process which we know as reasoning. Reasoning is no totally new form of psychical activity. It was present from the beginning, and involved in all the processes of conscious life; in a like manner, the other processes of conscious life are continued in it. It is as impossible to conceive of thought without emotion, as of emotion without thought.

To say that Humanism is fundamentally lacking in emotional possibilities, because it expresses itself at present on the level of conceptual thought, is to betray ignorance of what is involved in conceptual thinking. Angell defines reasoning as purposive thinking. If this definition is correct, the distinction between emotional life and rational life is not a question of difference in

quality, but of difference in direction. I may shoot a bullet in the general direction of a wood without caring whether I touch anything or not, or I may narrow down my aim to the sole intent of hitting a particular tree. In the one case my action lacks design, in the other case it does not. The first act is indifferent from the point of view of reason, but the second act is reasonable because it has purpose. Thus, emotional energy becomes reasonable when it is controlled for the purpose of directing it toward a specific aim. To say that the Humanists are void of emotions is to maintain that they are lacking in the ordinary feelings which accompany instinctive activities. This would make them psychically abnormal, which plainly is not the case. It is quite another matter when we say that for the time being the Humanists have brought their emotional energy under control for the purpose of accomplishing a given task. But when we say this we no longer accuse, we merely explain.

When the period of attack and defense will have passed, Humanism will enter upon the more positive task of building upon the foundations which it has laid down. Building requires vision and imagination quite as much as critical judgment. The emotional life gets a chance to express itself on a level different from the one of conceptual thought. Imagination becomes active in the discovery of new ways in which old factors may be combined. Analytical judgments, in part, give way to synthetical judgments. Synthesis is creation, creation

is expression of emotional life. If Humanism proves to be more than a passing phase of thought, the power of its emotional life will become abundantly clear as soon as tasks are presented to it which will call out those emotional qualities.

A more fully developed emotional life, a greater stir of its imaginative powers, will soon give to the humanistic system the over-beliefs which it is said not to possess a present. There is nothing inherent in Humanism which militates against the possession of such beliefs. Why should a Humanist be less daring in matters of faith than a Theist? I can see no reason. Unfortunately Theism measures the daring of faith solely by whether or not one agrees with its specific findings. To this theological system the great adventure of religious faith means that one accepts as true the existence of a personal God and professes a belief in everlasting life. There is nothing in Humanism which prevents one from accepting those two statements of belief as representing the truth, but on the other hand there is nothing in Humanism which compels one to accept those two creedal statements as representing the truth. It follows that Humanists differ regarding those matters. Theists would grant the existence of over-beliefs in the case of those Humanists who do believe in a God or everlasting life, but not in the case of others who deny the existence of both.

This, Humanism calls unwarranted discrimination. Why may not over-beliefs have reference to man as well

as to God, to this life as well as to another? There is no reason why this should not be the case. Theism lays claim to the distinction that it alone dares to venture beyond the immediate into the realms of faith. This is scarcely true; Humanism has its adventures of faith as well, adventures far more daring, thus Humanism insists, than Theism ever had. Indeed it behooves Theism to be somewhat humble when the question of over-beliefs comes up for consideration. Theistic daring is rather well confined to ultimate reality, to far-off divine events; generally speaking, to facts and times about which we have no certain knowledge. That does not seem very venturesome. Regarding such matters, one may make all manner of assertions without fear of being contradicted.

It bespeaks greater daring when we exercise faith regarding matters which are clearly within the realm of the concrete and the observable. In such a case, the results will prove whether our faith was justified or not. He who dares to trust man, and the world in which he now lives, is taking a true risk. Yet this risk Humanism dares to take. The words I believe are forever on its lips. What greater proof of faith than its conviction that good within man will, in the end, be victorious over evil within him? Yet, Humanists are not blind to reality, they know the evil conditions existent within man and society as well as anyone; it is a matter of record that they are ever engaged in at-

tempts at social betterment. In spite of this fact they never give up hope whereas others often despair.

Their faith is all the more remarkable because Humanists, even those who believe in the existence of a personal God, cling to the opinion that man must rely upon his own strength for the improvement of evil conditions. God does not do his work for him. Man has been equipped with all that is needful in order to deal with most of the problems of life, he therefore must expect no further aid so far as those problems are concerned. If he fails, he has only himself to blame. The entire responsibility for the management of his life is thrown upon him. The Humanists admit that the chances of temporary failure are many, but they believe that success, not failure, will come in the end. Not ultimate success, of course, success beyond which there is nothing left for which to strive, but success in the sense that while the eternal process is going on, the positive elements will ever prove stronger than the negative ones. Can one think of an over-belief more significant than this one?

Humanism thinks it curious that Theists, in spite of their reliance upon the power of almighty God, should be so pessimistic. They believe that God will provide all that is lacking if human power should prove insufficient in the struggle of life. The song of victory ought to be on their lips always. But the reverse is true. Theists are forever talking about the problem of evil, they

do not even seem to be aware of the fact that there is such a thing as the problem of good. They condemn optimism as shallowness, surely the Theists in western continental Europe take this attitude. The man who is continually talking about his shortcomings, about the danger to which man's spiritual life is exposed, the one who states the alarming problem of life in all of its intricacy and then states it again in other words, he is the one whose claim to wisdom is admitted. If, even with the grace of God supporting him, man's chance of success is so small, what benefit to him his unshakable belief in God and God's co-operation in human affairs? Over-beliefs are not of the nature of spiritual luxuries, they should perform a useful function. Humanists maintain that their practical faith does perform such a function. But they doubt whether the same is true with regard to the Theists, else their general attitude toward life would be more hopeful than it is, if one may judge it from their creeds, their writings, and their words.

Humanism insists that it is not the matter-of-fact system of thought which its enemies declare it to be. It claims a faith, a religious faith, as strong, as heroic, and as well founded as can be discovered anywhere. This faith centers about man and it grows to the same degree to which man grows. When the founders of the American commonwealth crossed the ocean their expectations concerning what they would find here were limited. They hoped that, by living on the American

side of the Atlantic, they would secure for themselves at least religious freedom, but they looked for little else beyond that. As they continued to live there they began to realize the great possibilities of their country, and their expectations grew. To a hope for religious freedom was added, first, a desire for political independence and, later, for economic well-being. In like manner, as we come to know man better, our faith in him will grow. We begin to expect more and more from him because our trust increases that he will rise to the ever greater opportunities which life will offer him.

Man and human society provide us with as good an opportunity for the creation of over-beliefs as anything in this whole universe. Inasmuch as we are able to verify the correctness of our opinions regarding these two concepts we have a constant opportunity for the criticism of our over-beliefs, which is, as Dr. Hutcheon reminds us, man's perennial obligation. We may expect Humanism to develop its doctrine of man more and more as time goes on. In doing so it will perform a great service to humanity, for the doctrine of man is still under-developed.

It is said that Humanism is void of a sense of sin and that it lacks, for that reason, one of the most indispensable elements of religious thought. May we expect that the future will bring about a change with respect to this matter? Much depends upon what we understand by a sense of sin. If by that term we mean a consciousness of moral imperfection so profound that we lose

our trust in ourselves and flee for refuge to a higher power, it may be doubted whether Humanism will ever develop this feeling. It is, indeed, rather certain that Humanism will always deny the religious value of such an experience. It may be admitted that a deep sense of moral imperfection has been one of the most prominent characteristics in the life of the world's greatest religious heroes, but it does not follow that this factor gave to their religious experience its true significance. We have been told so often that this is a fact, that we have come to accept it as a matter of course, without investigating the truth of this statement. If a sense of moral imperfection is an indispensable religious element then the first two Christian centuries must have been without religious life, for they lacked this sense to a conspicuous degree. It is largely lacking, too, in the Greek and Roman religions, nor do we find it in the Renaissance or the period of the Enlightenment. It is present only in a mild form in Erasmus, Grotius, Spinoza, Goethe, Emerson, and most of the liberals of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Shall we deny a true religious experience to all of those periods, and to every one of these men?

It is an easy matter to state authoritatively that a true religious experience must be of such and such a nature, and then condemn as religiously unimportant whatever does not answer to this description. This is simply begging the question. If I say that a hundred per cent American is someone who believes in the in-

fallibility of the United States constitution and in the two party system, I have only given my own description of a one hundred per cent American, which scarcely assures its absolute accuracy. It is thus with the notion that there can be no religious experience apart from a deep sense of sin. This is merely one view of the matter, and not necessarily the correct one. Paul's case is by no means conclusive for the experience of everyone else. Nor is it certain that Paul's case affords sufficient proof for the truth of this doctrine as an abstract proposition. If the religious life of Paul contained no more worth while religious factor than a sense of sin, there would be no Christian churches in the world today. An ever present consciousness of moral imperfection intensifies our normal inhibitions to such an extent that no fruitful action can possibly result. What can be expected from a man with an inferiority complex? Shall we prize as valuable in religion what elsewhere, thus psychologists tell us, is working great harm? It does not seem reasonable.

This need not prevent us from having a correct appreciation of our shortcomings. If undue pessimism works harm, undue optimism does the same. An accurate knowledge of the facts is the only safe basis on which to proceed. And the facts reveal that man refuses to use his power to do good to the full extent of his capacity. Anyone admitting this must feel that he shares the responsibility for the existence of this condition. This feeling is akin to a sense of sin and

guilt, but it is different from the consciousness of absolute sinfulness to which such men as John Calvin confessed. It merely represents a recognition of a temporary condition which may be changed by the exercise of human will power. We may be confident that Humanism will never be without a due sense of human shortcomings, but it will never allow the knowledge of man's imperfections to become disproportionately influential in its general doctrine, as is the case in many other theological systems of thought. Evil, thus Humanism teaches, is offset by other factors which will prove more powerful than evil.

Perhaps the most serious accusation leveled against Humanism is the narrowness of its interest. It limits its attention to man and his immediate concerns, but it pays little heed to man's wider relations. This is to be understood in two ways, historically and cosmically. Humanism betrays a lack of historical interest so that it cares little for the idea of continuity of thought and the persistence of past values in the present. It shows a hesitation of accepting the legacy of wisdom which the past offers it, by reason of a suspicion that with its wisdom it will have to accept its unwisdom. Humanists are like men born in a world that is new every day. They, their opponents tell us, produce the illusion of being permanently young, merely because they are permanently immature, while ever uninformed of what has been done and thought before. Hence Humanism seems to be without a proper historical setting. It makes

the impression of an isolated historical phenomenon, which, like a meteor, appears to come from the void, creates a track of brilliant light against the sky, and suddenly disappears without leaving any traces. This, of course, is not the case, as I tried to prove in the first chapter, but the appearances are against Humanism, and the reason is found in its historical indifference.

Nor is that all. In the same way in which Humanism shows indifference to historical isolation it is unconcerned about cosmic isolation. Again and again we hear the accusation that Humanism refuses to pay heed to man's relations with his cosmic environment. The consequence is that Humanism becomes provincial in its interests; it sees a part of reality, but never the whole.

We may readily admit the gravity of this indictment, provided the facts bear out its accuracy. No part is valuable in itself, but only because it helps to form the whole. To close our eyes to the fact that we are but a part of a greater totality is willfully to mistake our function, and thus not to function properly. The judgment of a man who does not see the whole problem lacks in value and may be totally misleading. It has come to be a truism that the meaning of facts changes to the degree to which we relate them with a wider environment. A given occurrence when successively related to conditions within a village, the state, or the world changes its value. Such a change may be even of an absolute nature. It is conceivable that the election to

office of a given man may be utterly harmful to the town in which he lives, and yet beneficial to the country at large. As long as Humanists are unwilling to widen their interests to the greatest practical degree, their judgments are not deserving of our full respect. They may be accused of being uninformed, of not having weighed all possibilities; their conclusions are part conclusions. We may have to appeal from the Humanist mind less well informed to the Humanist mind better informed.

The indictment is a severe one and it contains a measure of truth. Open-minded Humanists will admit that at this point they are unable to deal successfully with the criticisms of their opponents. But they would observe that the charge of having too limited an interest may equally be preferred against Theists. For it makes little difference whether a man shows interest in the cosmos and not in human life or in human life and not in the cosmos; in either case he is open to the accusation of looking at a part of reality and not at the whole. Now Theism starts its reflections with a well developed theory of God and his cosmic plans, but it has never made a thorough investigation either of the nature of man or of human problems. This it cannot do for it is forever gazing beyond man into the distance to catch a glimpse of God.

Dickens in *Bleakhouse* has an amusing chapter entitled "Teloscopic Philanthropy." Two of the persons

with whom the English writer deals are making a call upon a certain Mrs. Jellyby who lives in London but whose nearest point of actual interest is Africa. " 'You find me, my dears,' says Mrs. Jellyby, addressing her visitors, 'very busy. The African problem at present employs all of my time. We hope by this time, next year, to have two hundred healthy families cultivating coffee on the left bank of the Niger.' At this point Peepy appears, Mrs. Jellyby's little son, who, according to the invariable habit of the young Jellybys, had pushed his head through the area railing to the great damage of the head in question. His forehead presents a strip of plaster and his knees are wounded badly. Mrs. Jellyby looks at Peepy in a vacant sort of a way and limits herself to saying, 'Go along you naughty Peepy,' and then again fixes her fine eyes on Africa."—Humanism detects the same tendency in its theistic adversaries, preference for the far off, and a strange neglect of what is close by and in need of our immediate attention.

Nevertheless, Humanism admits that it itself is at fault in not paying sufficient attention to interests which lie farther away. It would urge in its defense that in the present phase of its development it is still a young movement with the natural interest of the young for the immediate. That, moreover, it has been extremely busy doing its work and defending its views against misunderstanding. It admits that it is lacking in historical interest, but it has had little time to develop an

historical sense. Let it be remembered that such a sense is only created when movements have ceased to be young and have completed most of their work. Old age looks backward, youth forges ahead, caring little about what has happened before. At some future time, when Humanism will no longer need to carry on its propaganda in the present form, when its claims will have been admitted, the interest in the past, which it now lacks, will gradually become apparent.

With respect to its neglect of man's cosmic relations something may be said in its defense; let us not forget that this side of the problem has had its full share of attention. Men have been discussing it for hundreds of years, often on an insufficient basis of knowledge. But while devoting attention to man's cosmic relations they have forgotten man's more limited relations in this life. A picture without a frame leaves much to be desired, but a frame without a picture leaves all to be desired. Someone had to deal anew with man and his actual problems. This task Humanism undertook and it is very far from having finished it. Once a solid foundation has been laid, Humanism is most desirous to push its inquiry farther, but it will go only one step at a time, and it insists on taking the first step before it takes the second one. To build a high tower may be a good thing, but a tower without a solid foundation will not stand. Man himself is the foundation of all human inquiries, no matter how far they are extended. If it is possible to reason from man up to God, Humanism desires noth-

ing better than to do so, but it must be allowed to use its own method, or else it cannot go on.

There need be no doubt that the future will see Humanism farther along the road of cosmic investigation than it is today. It may even come to agree with the findings of the Theists. No one can make any certain predictions about this. But, whatever the ultimate conclusion at which it arrives, this will always be the result of carrying on its search by the use of the only method whose validity it admits: reasoning from the known to the unknown, not by using the opposite method, as do the Theists, reasoning from the unknown to the known. However high we may raise our head in the air, our feet must remain firmly on the ground.

The method which Humanism uses is direct and simple, and it is the very simplicity of its system which has led to a misunderstanding of its value. Many men in this country, and many more in Europe, consider it superficial, a short cut to conclusions which should be the outcome of mature consideration. Europeans, particularly, fail to understand it; they consider it typically American, and quite in harmony with the hasty methods of dealing with involved problems with which they credit the American nation. Humanism, they believe, could be accepted only by men unacquainted with all of the facts. It leaves room neither for the display of wisdom nor of erudition. Some day, they say, when American theology will have passed its present stage of immaturity, it will look back at Humanism and repeat the words

of St. Paul: when I was a child I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now that I am become a man I have put away childish things.

One wonders whether this will be the case. Why should a system of thought that prefers to deal with problems the validity of which no one can deny be superficial? Is it a sign of lack of wisdom or erudition when I desire to cling to essentials? It would be easier to argue the opposite. It is high time that we assign to the concepts "learning" and "wisdom" a different meaning from the one which we have given to them thus far. No wisdom or erudition can be connected with anything that is practically unimportant. It is fallacious to believe that a higher type of mental energy is required for dealing with abstract notions than for dealing with practical matters. The reverse is true, for abstract thought defies verification which thought pertaining to the concrete does not. History shows that it is quite possible to make even grave mistakes without being detected as long as we keep far enough away from positive facts. But any conclusion relative to practical problems may at once be checked regarding its accuracy.

We now assign the name Practical Theology to only a small, and to many persons relatively unimportant, part of the whole field of theology. The time will come when this name will gain in importance and when all theology, in a significant sense, will have to be practical theology. Human existence is brief, and we cannot af-

ford to waste too much energy on things that have no practical bearing upon life. Such is the teaching of Humanism and such it will remain. The only change which the future will bring will be an ever clearer recognition of the factors which do have a bearing upon human existence.

It is contended by Professor Berdjajew that Humanism tends to extreme subjectivism, and that the end of this system is Nietzsche and Marx, which, thus the Russian scholar asserts, means the destruction of personality in the significant sense of the word. I do not believe that it is possible to attach much weight to criticism of this sort. It may be admitted that Humanists are subjectivists in the sense that they consider man to be the measure of all things, but in this they differ little from others. In preaching this doctrine they have merely reduced to a general theory what is already a practical rule for every thinking being. It is mere fiction to assume that a man who holds to authority in matters of faith does not pronounce individual judgment upon the authority which he admits. In matters of faith, as in all others, each one is his own court of last resort.

To say that the teachings of Nietzsche and Marx will prove to be the logical end of Humanism does not condemn this system, although it might do so to a number of unthinking people who are scared by these names. It is easy to substitute a tag for an argument and gain, thereby, an easy, though undeserved, victory. The names Nietzsche and Marx have an evil sound in

the ears of many who have little knowledge of their ideas; hence to connect a system with those names is tantamount to condemning it so far as they are concerned. It remains a question whether such a condemnation is justified.

When we strip Nietzsche's system of thought of all its poetic exaggeration, and translate rhetorical phrases into simple words, the result is not so alarming as most people believe. Nietzsche desires that present man shall give way to a Superman who shall have none of the former's weaknesses. Precisely what is wrong with this teaching is not clear. Christianity, in a measure, wishes the same, although it would not employ Nietzsche's method to reach the result. Whether it employs Nietzsche's method, or not, it cannot be denied that Christianity desires that this present generation of men shall pass away, and that another shall come, better and holier than the first; a race of Supermen as compared with the sinful men that now are. This is essentially what Nietzsche wishes, likewise. To say that Nietzsche desires to destroy personality is clearly incorrect; rather he would make it stronger.

Much the same argument may be used in relation to Karl Marx. From the fact that this thinker insists that purely individual interests must give way to interests which we hold in common, it does not follow that he contemplates anything to the hurt of individual personality. Rather the reverse is true. It is a biological and psychological fact that man cannot exist apart from

other men. He does not become a mere cog in a machine when he co-operates with others for the common good. He is meant to function as a part of the whole, and only in this way can he develop his personality. Whether or not we agree with Marx's general teaching we cannot help sympathizing with his final aim, the reduction of social injustice to a minimum. This, too, is none other than the aim of Christianity itself. Berdjajew's criticism, instead of persuading us of the evil effects of Humanism, would turn our minds in its favor. A system which has for its ultimate end the substitution of stronger men for weaker men, and social justice for social injustice, must have survival value.

The title which I gave to this chapter was, "The Future of Humanism." I did not have in mind prophesying concerning the precise opinions which will prevail among Humanists one hundred years from now, but I desired to point out that some of the ideas now current among the Humanists of our day have a future before them because they are based upon fundamental needs of the human race. It is those opinions which will undergo development to the degree to which the human needs upon which they are based require it.

In closing I desire to make a few observations upon the subject of Humanism in general. The criticisms leveled against Humanism have been founded mainly upon its present findings. This seems very fair but in reality it is quite unfair. No philosophic, religious, or scientific system is important by reason of the conclu-

sions which it accepts for the time being, but merely because of the method which it employs in arriving at its conclusions. As long as the method is sound the results will take care of themselves, in time, because constant examination and verification of results will eradicate mistakes. Philosophy and methodology are one and the same thing, because philosophy is not a mere passive love of truth but an active method of discovering it.

Any fair criticism of Humanism would have to be a criticism of the method which it employs. Is it possible to object to its method? I believe that its soundness will have to be admitted. Its first assumption is, as Schiller correctly remarks, that the philosophic, and I may add, religious problem, concerns human beings striving to comprehend a world of human experiences by the resources of human minds. If we may not presume on our own nature in reasoning about our experience, wherewith shall we reason? Starting from the basis of human experience, the only possible one, we shall travel as far as our human powers will allow us to go. In developing our system we shall continue to be guided by human interests and human needs. Immediately we discover a fact to make no difference in human life we reject it, not as a fact, but as a religiously unimportant fact. We do not allow it to form a part of our religious system. It follows that our system will not contain any elements which safely may be left out, because every factor will be of vital importance. In the same way in which a well-constructed engine contains

no unnecessary parts, our theological system will contain all that is needed, but no more; there will be no dead weight.

The conscious, or sub-conscious, opposition against theological reasoning on the part of many people is directed against the useless elements which this type of thinking contains, not against its useful parts. To argue against the latter would be to argue against life itself. Humanism would remedy this by taking away any factor which proves to be useless, and by leaving in all elements which have true value. Man's complete spiritual satisfaction is the ultimate aim, and in order to procure this, philosophy and religion are counseled not to cut themselves loose from the real problems of life by making initial abstractions which stand in no relation to life. Humanism believes that its method will eventually commend itself even to those who differ from it at present. It does not expect unanimity of results, but it believes that its method of approach to the truth may be used anywhere and by all people.

Humanism discovers no reason for strife between it and its present opponents. It is willing to co-operate with them. It surely does not attack the results of their thinking; those results may be correct, for ought Humanism knows. It does not even say that by using the humanistic method non-Humanists will come to agree with present humanistic findings; these may be wrong and stand in need of correction.

Merely the method which it advocates, Humanism

deems important, because it is a way of discovering truth suggested by life itself. While differing about non-essentials we may agree upon the one essential, that life itself shall suggest the method of investigation by which it is to be understood. If all concur in this, there is no reason for strife between Humanists and their present adversaries. Quite on the contrary, there is every reason why they may expect to work together harmoniously for a common aim.