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Personal Christianity,  
instruments and ends in the





## Personal Christianity

# THE COLE LECTURES

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*The Cole Lectures for 1914*  
delivered before Vanderbilt University



# Personal Christianity

Instruments and Ends in  
the Kingdom of God

By

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL,  
*One of the Bishops of the Methodist  
Episcopal Church*



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To  
*Dean Wilbur F. Tillett*  
*a Statesman of the Church*



## THE COLE LECTURES

**T**HE late Colonel E. W. Cole of Nashville, Tennessee, donated to Vanderbilt University the sum of five thousand dollars, afterwards increased by Mrs. E. W. Cole to ten thousand, the design and conditions of which gift are stated as follows :

“The object of this fund is to establish a foundation for a perpetual Lectureship in connection with the Biblical Department of the University, to be restricted in its scope to a defense and advocacy of the Christian religion. The lectures shall be delivered at such intervals, from time to time, as shall be deemed best by the Board of Trust; and the particular theme and lecturer shall be determined by nomination of the Theological Faculty and confirmation of the College of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Said lecture shall always be reduced to writing in full, and the manuscript of the same shall be the property of the University, to be published or disposed of by the Board of Trust at its discretion, the net proceeds arising therefrom to be added to the foundation fund, or otherwise used for the benefit of the Biblical Department.”



## Prefatory Note

**T**HE word "personal" as used in these lectures does not mean "individual." Two views of the human beings whom we actually know are about equally mistaken. Extreme individualism spins theories about human life with each life taken by itself in a separateness and independence never realized or realizable on earth. On the other hand the extreme doctrine of society as an organism is likewise faulty. Society is not literally an organism. The concrete fact is persons living in such dependence upon one another that we can call them members of one another more fittingly than we can speak of them as members of a social organism,—an organism, by the way, which lacks so essential a feature of organic life as a head. The social consciousness is not a consciousness grasped by one all-inclusive mind. The social consciousness is personal consciousnesses knit together in sympathetic community. It is the purpose of these lectures to show that persons, existing on earth in intimate interdependence, are

ends-in-themselves in the kingdom of God on earth, and that all things else,—books, creeds, rituals, organizations,—are instrumental, with only such sacredness as can attach to instruments. Persons alone are sacred in their own inherent right. It might have been better to use the word “human” instead of “personal,” except that “personal” seems more fundamental ; and it may appear early in the course of the discussion that the value set on the personal in human life comes largely from conceiving in personal terms the God who is set before us as the Father in Heaven by the personal revelation in Jesus.

F. J. McCONNELL.

*Denver, Colo.*

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LECTURE I

THE PERSONAL IN CHRISTIANITY



## LECTURE I

### THE PERSONAL IN CHRISTIANITY

**I**N a familiar Gospel passage Jesus is represented as stooping and writing upon the ground. Thoughtful Bible readers stop for the moment as they come to the passage. The direct question as to what Jesus wrote has interest of course only for the curious: the real reason why the mind of the reader hesitates and ponders is that this is the only passage which mentions Jesus as in the act of writing. The scene is suggestive, not merely because it reveals Jesus' tact in a very delicate situation, but because by its very solitariness it prompts us to reflect upon the absence of the artificial in all His work as a teacher. The impression made by the New Testament portraiture is of a teacher who relied not at all upon the conventional scholastic methods,—the use of books, the citation of authorities, the dictation of instructions to be written down for study and preservation. In this absence of the artificial the school of Christ was different

from schools with which we are familiar and from schools with which Christ was familiar. The method of Jesus seems to have been that of direct contact of the teacher with his pupils. We are not to miss the force of this consideration by supposing that the method of direct contact, with everything artificial reduced to the very least possible, was the inevitable procedure of a time which had little opportunity for the use of books and writings. As a matter of history the investigations of men like Sir William Ramsay have shown that reliance upon writing in the days of Jesus was much more common than we have realized. The period during which Christ lived was a period of very prolific writing both in school and out. It will be remembered that Professor Ramsay finds letter correspondence to have been then so easy to all sorts of people that he is confident that some parts of the Gospel must have been set to parchment by the followers of Jesus within a very few weeks after the crucifixion. The existence of a rather elaborate mail system seems to point to a very prevalent habit of writing throughout the Roman Empire in the time of Christ.

Jesus, we repeat, does not seem to have relied upon the artificial helps of the schools

of His time. Passing to matters of larger consequence than the suggestive incident of the writing on the ground we know that His mind was evidently steeped in Scriptural expression, but He does not seem to have appealed to authority as did the scribes. He does not even seem to have been concerned about casting His thought into systematic form. System of some sort He no doubt had, but there is nothing to suggest the system of the schools of His time or of later time. The thought of Jesus unfolded largely as does the thought of other leaders, pushed along by an inner logic and by the pressure of outer events. The thought of Jesus moreover was of that compelling kind which produced crises in the minds of those who heard Him speak; it seems possible to trace the order of some of these crises in the narratives which have come down to us,—but there is little to suggest formal arrangement. If it be urged that in the Gospels we are dealing not with the form in which Jesus actually uttered His truth, but with the reports which have come from those who were His disciples, the ready reply is that we must think it strange that One who could so impress His hearers that they caught the depth and might and beauty of His thought was powerless to stamp their

minds with the system in which the thought was cast,—if there had been a system. To see what the rabbinic system could do with Christian thought we have only to turn to the words of Paul. Paul had seized the essentials of Christianity, but at least at times he ran these to forms which he had inherited from the schools. And the enkindling warmth and life of the Christian spirit are not able to free the Pauline system from the suggestion of artificiality which here and there clings to it. When the modern compiler of Biblical hand-books attempts to arrange in schematic form the teaching of Jesus, the outlines and the diagrams, helpful as they no doubt may be, contain but meagerly the spirit and vividness of the Gospel narrative itself. To put the case rather extremely it would almost seem that the teaching of Jesus was incidental to His life with the disciples. Jesus lived with the disciples, and as He lived with them spoke to them of God and of men and of the duties of life. The main fact in their thought, after it was all over, seems not to have been the teaching as teaching. They remembered, or rather felt still the impact of a life which was more than teaching.

Moreover Jesus does not seem to have

spoken voluminously. He does not seem to have been in the customary sense of the word a "talker." A shrewd observer once remarked that in a realm of perfect mutual understanding, such as we may conceive heaven to be, speech would be needless. There might be silence in heaven for much more than the space of half an hour, for each mind would enter into such complete understanding of companion minds that an artificial instrument like speech would be superfluous. There is enough in this fancy to remind us that the less of living sympathy there is between two minds the more there must be of reliance upon a mechanism like language. Some lives themselves *mean* truths which we discern as soon as we come into touch with the lives. Some faces mean and teach purity the instant we look upon them. Words would be superfluous and impertinent. The actual utterances of Jesus as recorded do not of themselves seem adequate in amount to the impression which they produced upon the minds of the early followers. Or rather there is even to-day so much more in the words than the words themselves, there is such power of suggestiveness and such quickness of life, that the words seem more than words. They seem to carry with them a life which lifts

them at once out of the realm of the artificial and instrumental. Just from this quality in the words we are prepared to believe the accounts which have come down to us of manifestations of a sheer personal force which at the opening of the career of Jesus caused a hostile crowd to make way before Him that He might pass, and at the close of His career caused some of His captors to stumble backward to the ground.

The method of Jesus seems to have been to gather around Him a few lives whom He felt to be receptive and responsive. With these men He lived. Though He occasionally stepped outside to minister to larger groups, He seems for the most part to have given Himself to the smaller group and to have started the new stream of life by living constantly with a few men who did not master His teaching in a formal fashion, but who breathed the very spirit of His life. His plan was not that of the preacher or the lecturer. He moved through the ordinary rounds with His disciples, and by His attitude towards the ordinary lifted their thought to the higher. If He gave any hints at all as to how the lessons of the kingdom were to be learned the instruction was that men were to "do" the words which they had heard, work-



ing them into their inmost lives. Or they were to take up the cross daily and by sympathy with cross-bearers come into understanding of the cross of the Son of God. More significant still is a sentence in the Fourth Gospel to the effect that if men would bear much fruit they would indeed become His disciples. We are not troubling ourselves here with the critical question as to how far the Fourth Gospel actually records the words of Jesus. The conception set forth in this passage is essentially in harmony with the total picture of Jesus which has come down to us,—it forms a consistent part of that picture. The meaning appears to be that Jesus looked upon the Christian lessons that men learn as coming out of such a life process as the fruit-bearing of a tree. Let a man bring forth the fruit of righteousness and service and this experience itself will be full of interpreting wisdom for him. In our day we say that only the ideas which grow are worth while. The ideas which are in any sense artificially imparted from the outside are not as significant as those which are ripened from within by a life process as fruit is ripened. The ideas which mean most to us are the ideas we grow.

In fine the emphasis of the Master upon

life terms which we find both in the Synoptics and in the Fourth Gospel is an indication of His complete freedom from the artificial. We can make but little of His thought of religion on the basis of the system of the scribes. The outstanding facts in this present world seemed to Jesus to be persons and their needs. When He taught of the heavenly world He spoke in personal terms. Or rather He seemed to live with the fact of personal contact with the Father in heaven always before Him. It will not do to speak of Jesus' use of the word "Father" as applied to God as if it were merely the best word which He could find, and as if back of and beyond this word He conceived of a form of existence which cannot be expressed in human terms. The word "Father" on the lips of Jesus does not carry the suggestion that it is merely a figure of speech. Criticism cannot thwart this conclusion by maintaining that we have only second hand reports of the words of Jesus and not the words themselves. We are not concerned with the critical scruples, for we are not raising the question as to *ipsissimo verba* of Jesus. We are concerned with the impression which He left on the minds of His followers. If He used the word "Father" merely as the best word He

could find, or just as an accommodation to the simple intelligence of His followers, or as a figure of speech to symbolize a reality out beyond, He succeeded chiefly in getting Himself misunderstood. For He sunk that word "Father" as applied to God so deeply into the consciousness of His followers that it is one of the unescapable words of the Gospel. The Gospel makes the word exhaustive. It is impossible for us to believe that the depth of the impression made upon the minds of the disciples by the word can be accounted for by any merely verbal teaching on the part of Jesus, or that Jesus Himself reached the conception of God's fatherhood by formal process. Something lay back there in the realm of the personal experience of Jesus which accounts for the meaning of the word to Him, and for the force with which He sunk the word into the life of the disciples. "God the Father" was a conception which He not only thought and spoke but which He acted forth and which awoke definite responses in His feeling. "God the Father" was life experience with Jesus, and this experience became a telling force with the disciples.

The facts lying at the base of Christianity are personal facts. Suppose we consider for

a moment that problem of Christology which has been the lure and the despair of Christian thinking from the beginning. The moment we use any term ending with "ology" we are near the artificial. Now the purpose of this series of lectures is to show that the artificial has its place and a great place, but at present we insist that these formal terms have very little in kind with the speech of the Master or with the speech which He inspired men to utter. It is a clear gain all around that we see so clearly to-day that all discussion of the *problem* of the person of Christ must take its start from the *fact* of the person of Christ: and no fact seems to be more stable in its foundation than that Jesus thought of Himself as the Son of the Father. Of course it is possible for the exegete to empty everything distinctive from this word "Son," and to make the title little more than a conventional phrase, which Jesus used because He could not find a better. But here again causes must be adequate to their effects. We can hardly see how a merely conventional phrase could have meant so much for the followers of Jesus both in earlier and later times if it did not have back of it something potently real. A suggestion more in line with what we should expect among

groups of followers as we know them would be not that Jesus used the word "Son" as a conventional term but that He used the word because any man would know something of what it meant from living human experience. But judging again from the depth to which Jesus drove the word in Christian consciousness we have to hold that back of the use of the word was a fact of experience, or rather more likely a state of experience which gave the word vitality. We listen with all patience and respect to those who tell us that when Jesus spoke of Himself as the "Son of Man" He had in mind merely an apocalyptic scripture and that when He called Himself the "Son of God" He meant just a close feeling of connection and dependence possible to any other man,—but the effects seem greater than such speech would produce. The truth seems to be that Jesus' strength lay in a consciousness of personal oneness with the Father in heaven which is unique with all the uniqueness of distinct personal experience and with the enormous historical effects that flowed from it, and that Jesus found His life mission in a consciousness of oneness with men which is also unique. We are not to conceive of the person of Christ as a thread on which to string abstract "divinity" and abstract "hu-

manity." Many theories of the divinity of Christ suffer grievously from impersonalism. Jesus was a person with unique personal relationship to God and man. About all that we can say of that relationship in its inner aspect is that the experience of Jesus was as divine as possible without ceasing to be human and as human as possible without ceasing to be divine.

The point we insist upon is that all our debates about the problem of Christ must start from a living personal experience. A touch of philosophy—noble philosophy too—marks the opening of the Fourth Gospel but the philosophic word "logos" is not as near life as the word "Son" of which that Gospel itself makes so much. The consideration we would repeatedly urge is that we must keep uppermost in all the discussion of the Church regarding the two natures and the two wills and the interpenetration of the divine and the human a personal fact, not so much the person *of* Christ as the person Christ. The abstract terms have their value as instruments to help us seize the meaning of the fact but the fact is itself personal. All valuable Christological discussion must be begun, continued, and ended with Jesus the Person in mind.

Similarly with the cross of Christ. We have so long debated theories of atonement that we have occasionally come dangerously near missing sight of the truth that the New Testament accounts are personal. We may use terms like substitutional, and governmental, and moral influence wisely if we keep in mind their instrumental nature. But Gethsemane and Calvary were personal. The impression made upon the followers of Jesus by Gethsemane and Calvary was that Jesus was passing through a supreme moment in His experience and that at that moment His thought moved in definitely personal channels. The mind of the Redeemer did not seem to be among abstractions. There is no suggestion that impersonal necessities of any sort were driving the Master on, or that He was meeting His death for the sake of general considerations. There is no blind fate at work,—if the impression we get from the Gospels can be trusted. The Master is submissive to a personal will,—that of the Father. If it be possible He would have the cup pass from Him, but there is no sort of hint of blind necessity at work. The realm is that of personal relations. And part of the marvel of the Cross to this day is that so many feel that the suf-

fering of Jesus makes a personal appeal to them as persons. Whatever the prime significance of Calvary, it is not a struggle with impersonal necessities or even with abstract sin. It is, so far as Christ is concerned, an inner personal experience so profound as to reveal the heart of the Father Himself; and so far as men are concerned, it is a manifestation of holy love so compelling as to touch right-minded men with a sense of personal appeal. And the love is not in the abstract. It is not for humanity or for mankind but for men. The personal aspect of the Cross is the compelling aspect.

So with the other elements of the Christianity of Christ,—if we can use such an expression, for even “Christianity” is impersonal enough to leave us a little detached from the Christ. Take the resurrection appearances. It is no part of our present purpose to attempt to explain the nature of these appearances. All we wish to say is that they are consistent with the rest of the Gospel narrative in that they are definitely personal. If their function were primarily evidential they should have been more general,—and for such purpose they ought to have been made before some persons besides the disciples. Perhaps they have more evidential value



looked at as manifestations of a love for the disciples which not even passage through death could vanquish, but that is not evidence as we ordinarily think of it in discussing the appearances. In any case the narrative tells of an appearance to Peter evidently with a revelation intended primarily for Peter,—to Mary and the disciples with personal greeting. Here again we wave off the impatient critic who would have us stop to examine the evidence to determine whether there were any such appearances or not. With the matter-of-factness of the narrative we are not now concerned. We are asking simply the question as to how those who stood closest to Christ thought of Him and His work. If the appearance-narratives are only attempts on the part of the disciples to explain the effect of the life of the Lord on themselves they nevertheless have their value for our immediate point, as suggesting that the thought of those closest to Christ went instinctively and spontaneously to intimately personal terms.

This brings us at last to the thought of the Spirit of Christ as at work in the heart of His followers. From the time of the experience in the upper room at Jerusalem till to-day it has been maintained by the followers

of Christ that the contact with God is a personal contact, that the chief effect of prayer is its personal effect, that the result of acceptance of Christianity is to make persons in a sense more personal than before, that the chief duties of the Christian are to persons, that the believers are a body not merely figuratively but vitally, since they are bound together by experiences which are pulsing with an inner and personal energy. In other words Christianity, while it depends, as we shall see in subsequent lectures, upon the instrumental for much of its power, is at its centre a distinctly personal religion. It is not even to be called Life unless the life is the life of persons.

An experience like that of Pentecost is remarkable among other reasons for the completely personal terms in which those present conceived of the experience. The worshippers in the upper room believed they had come into actual touch with the living Master. We are not now concerned with the correctness of the interpretation of the experience; we simply point out the fact that the early believers did believe in this personal fashion. Their idea of the spiritual presence of Christ was so definitely personal as to make a beginning for that doctrine of

the Trinity which has been such a sore puzzle to the theologians ever since. The early Christians were not theologians,—they stood at the very fountainhead of direct experience out of which the subsequent theorizing rose. They interpreted their experiences in the readiest, simplest terms which came to them. Their explanations no doubt needed the corrections of later thought, but the chief element in their life was the experience itself, an experience so quick and vivid that they could think of it only in personal forms. They would not call the Spirit "it." The Spirit must be spoken of in personal terms. The Jesus who had been their earthly Master was the Christ of God still living and touching their lives with direct power.

Now what was the result of all this? Much every way, but for our present purpose it is necessary to lay stress on the personal effects on the believers. A characteristic to be noted in the history of Christianity is that nothing in the experience of the early Christians tended to overslaugh their personal life or independence. In later days oriental influences did seem to overcome such of the believers as resorted to trances and ecstasies but the clear insight of the Fathers always marked these experiences as heresies. We

sometimes speak of heresy as if it were altogether an aberration of doctrine, but, historically, many heresies have been abnormalities of experience. The Eastern conceptions which would have the worshipper reduce himself to such passivity that he seemed swooning into nothingness have never been Christian. In our day we hear much about the power of the Hindu to give himself up to days of absorbed meditation, as if this were a power which the Christian believer has not yet attained. Those who have most acutely observed these Hindu experiences, however, doubt whether they are reflective or meditative at all. Conversation with the Hindu devotee would indicate that neither before nor after his experience does the Hindu seem to have much intellectual content on which to meditate. The experience is a sort of sinking into quiescence with an approach just as near the obliteration of the personality as may be. At times this sort of dreaminess has tinged mysticism in Christian circles, but it is not Christian. The thought which precedes experience conditions the experience just as the experience in turn conditions the thought. The idea of the Hindu concerning God is that of a vague almost impersonal allness and the Hindu's

experience moves correspondingly towards attempt to drop off the personal. After years of such experiences the Hindu is, at least in any ordinary understanding of terms, less of a man than before. The experience of the early Christian believer moved in a different direction. It started with the thought of a Personal Being and searched for living contact with that Person.

A devout theologian, attempting to explain the facts of Christian experience, once suggested that something of a clue might be found to the explanation of the mystery in the study of hypnotism. In the hypnotic state one life, without ceasing to be itself, comes so thoroughly under the influence of another life as practically for the time being to parallel that other life. So the Divine Life works through a human life. But the flaw in this argument is that in a true sense the personal life of a man in the hypnotic state is not his own. The power of self-direction is gone, and while the psychological mechanism seems to be running in full force the element of substantial self-direction is reduced to a minimum. The man is not himself. He is the mechanism for another. If we were to attempt to hold him responsible for any deed done in the hypnotic state we

would be at once met with the plea that a man in the hypnotic state is not himself.

This brings us to the broad contrast between all such experiences and the experience of the early Christians,—and the later ones too for that matter. The early Christians lived in a day when extraordinary experiences were not extraordinary in the sense of rare or uncommon. Enough of Eastern influence was to be found in the lands in which Christianity first wrought to make the spectacle of persons in emotional abnormality very frequent. The Christian experience was one which made the most of the man,—not the least of him. It left the man larger after the crisis than before. It added to his power of self-direction rather than subtracted from it. The heart of the difference appears also in the Christian practice of prayer. The prayers of the followers of Jesus were articulate expressions of need. Prayer was not an aimless dreaming. The life was indeed to be filled with the spirit of prayer; and the disciples, according to Paul, were to pray without ceasing, but the core of prayer was articulate speech expressing a need. The formulas of the scribes and the incantations of the Gentiles were alike odious, for the reason that true prayer was supposed to

be addressed to a living person. Assuming the person to whom prayer was addressed to be a person at all, mechanical formularies and magic passwords would mean nothing. But the attempt on the part of the Christian to pray implied something on the part of the petitioner. It implied quickened thought and sincere feeling and purposeful willingness to work in the spirit of the uttered prayer. All this meant the aroused expansion of the soul.

There is nothing, we repeat, in Christian experience as put before us in the New Testament to indicate that the personal life of the believer is in any way repressed. On the contrary the personal distinctions remain marked. It requires only the most casual reading of the New Testament to discern this. It is as patent to the ordinary reader of the Scriptures as to the careful, critical student. All questions of exact authorship apart,—it will be admitted that the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel were written by Christian believers. We do not recall that any one has been hardy enough to attempt to establish the contrary. Yet the difference in content and style between the Fourth Gospel and the others furnishes food for debate to this hour. Even in the Synop-

tics, while it is clear that all authors worked on material more or less common, very important differences in point of view appear. Then there is a broad difference between the admittedly Pauline epistles and the other parts of the New Testament. In the sphere of more intimate personal views we have the record of serious divergence of opinion between Paul and Peter. The astonishing variety of the New Testament literature we should not expect if Christianity were not intensely personal in aim, working to preserve what is separate and individual in the life of each believer. Even in the day of that hard-and-fast theory of Biblical inspiration which made each writer virtually a mechanical amanuensis of the Divine, all that the holders of the theory meant was that each man wrote down what came to him from the divine spirit without attempt to add to or take from. Few upholders of the most rigid type of that doctrine would have been willing to declare that the separate writers did not write each after his own fashion. According to Paul contact with the same Spirit through prayer led to greatly diversified results. Each man wrought according to his own nature and in his own fashion. Some were evangelists and some prophets and some organizers. But



there is very little to show that Paul meant that the man whose nature fitted him to be an evangelist became a prophet, or that the prophet left off prophecy for church management.

What then do the Scripture writers mean when they speak of conversion, and a change of heart, or a change of nature? What is a man's nature? It is certainly not some mysterious stuff in him. It can only be the law or the laws according to which he acts. Or if law suggests a regularity which is lacking in much life we say that a man's nature is the way he acts or lives. The only agent is the man himself living and acting in a certain fashion. To convert the man, or to change his heart or his nature, is so to act upon him that he freely lives in a different way or according to a different law. This is what the Master seems to have meant when He said that men must turn if they are to come into the kingdom of God. Men are off the track and must get back upon the track. Some must turn squarely around, and others must make, maybe a less radical change in direction, but a change nevertheless. This problem of direction is all-important. The lost life is the life going in the wrong direction, or acting according

to the wrong law, or in the wrong way. That the change in becoming a Christian is so great that the man acts and thinks and feels differently from before is witnessed to by innumerable experiences. In the face of the testimony it would be impossible to deny this, even if there were the slightest desire to do so, but there is nothing in the New Testament to indicate that even in the most marked conversion we are not dealing with the same man after the experience as before. His very face may change, but it is the same face. His mind thinks different thoughts but it is the same mind,—thinking with the same peculiarities of mental procedure. The heart desires a new life, but the quality of feeling is the same. The will does differently but works after the same fashion. The clearest exposition of conversion is from Jesus Himself and that is in distinctly vital terms. The most spiritually minded of the Gospel writers evidently caught the Master's thought that the process of coming into the kingdom of God is to be described as a birth, and a birth is not a mechanical process. It is the introduction of that which is already to a degree alive to a larger world of life. So with the soul. With the proper surrender of the will,—and surrender here means the free assump-

tion by the will of a law of higher life,—the soul comes into a new world. But just as the organic peculiarities which make the body distinctive are present before its coming into the world so the peculiarities which make the soul distinctive before its coming into the kingdom of God are present after entrance into that kingdom. The most remarkable instance of conversion recorded in the New Testament is that of Saul of Tarsus. Here if anywhere a personal life would seem to have been overwhelmed in such completeness as to make the man utterly different from what he was before. But great as was this Damascus road experience it seems to have been definitely sanctioned and accepted by the will of Saul himself, and then to have turned the activities of the convert into different channels. Saul was still Saul. Furthermore he could not if he had tried have cleared himself of thinking of Christianity in terms of the system in which he had been brought up. He was the most advanced of the early apostles and flung himself farthest from the Judaism in which he had been trained, but he made even his anti-Judaistic arguments in Judaistic terms.

The hearer however would have a right to feel that in this discussion of the personal in

Christianity we had left something unsaid if we were to stop at this point. For after all Christianity does believe in profound inner change. The only consideration we are urging is that this change does not wreck personal distinctiveness but that it makes the personal more significant. Jesus said that He came that men might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. He said also that the tree is to be known by its fruits. The implication is that once a man has become a Christian he yields more fruit and better. It is matter for congratulation that we live in a day when Christianity is being judged by the standard by which it asks to be judged, and the standard in accord with which it claims to produce its results. The question asked to-day of all sorts of teaching is as to the kind of man produced by the teachings. By this test Christianity seeks to be judged, and that for the reason that it aims at making men in the divine sense more and more human. Is a man larger or smaller after his practice of Christianity? What is the effect of prayer on the man who prays? These are the questions by which Christianity is willing to stand or fall. The effect on the man most intimately practicing the belief is the effect by which we judge the

belief. The Christian should be perfectly willing not only to meet the question as to what there is in Christianity to harm any one, but also the further question as to what there is in the system to help any one. Christianity must not harm men and it must help them. The insistence first of all upon moral rightness and after that upon the development of the life to the largest and finest possible,—this is the essential mark of belief in Christ. The presence of aberrations here and there does not detract from the truth of this central claim for Christianity. Some of the persons who compose the Christian Church run off into extremes but the claim of the Church is that the contact with God in prayer makes men stronger and better. The test of prayer is the effect on the man who prays. The summary logic of Christianity is that beliefs which make men true and great must be themselves essentially true and great.

And now it may be supposed that this lecture is teaching that Jesus wrought for extreme individualism. We do not intend to leave any such impression. The teaching of Jesus stands between that radical doctrine of the individual which can see nothing but separate individuals and that radical doctrine of society which would overlook and ignore

the individuals. The teaching of Jesus would take account both of the separateness of the individual and of the partly organic nature of society. In this lecture we are trying to keep close to the prime facts with which society has to do. When we use the word personal we do not mean personal as over against social, for we mean that the social is personal. The actual situation in human life is not individuals existing separately but individuals existing together. The idea that Christianity would do anything to put individuals off in a vacuum is utterly mistaken. No rational being ever lived an altogether separate life. Individuals are made for one another, and while the consciousness of the individual is very distinct and separate, while there is in a sense a wall built around the individual, the further fact is that the individuals are so fitted together that in the full measure they cannot live apart. The social activities are merely personal activities in which two or more, instead of one, take part.

Jesus saw individuals just as they are. While an individual is from one angle an entity and a unity, from another angle he is only a fraction. Taken by himself he is only the centre on which numberless hooks hang,—hooks which reach out to hold fast other indi-

viduals. Theoretically speaking, the existence of the individual self,—the personal centre,—is about the most important fact we have. Practically, the individual self amounts to very little if we have not other selves with whom the individual can come into touch. The fact of the personal centre answers some questions which the abstract thinkers have been debating from the days of the Greeks. Here we have the substance which both changes and abides, and thus answers the puzzle as to how in one being there can be fixity and change. Practically, the personal centre is a centre of just nothing at all if there is no possibility of reaching out to others. It is in contact with those others that the self comes to itself. So for example Jesus took the family for granted as a spiritual fact. When He spoke of marriage as an institution He was thinking only of the man-made laws with which men express certain ideas concerning the married state. When He said that in heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage we would have to make Him mean something contrary to His whole system if we made Him mean that the spiritual relationships which grow up in the family are not essential and permanent. It must not be forgotten that in the present

lecture we are trying to keep close to the spiritual and personal bases of the Christian life. The artificial and instrumental elements we shall appraise later. We cannot call anything instrumental in our present use of the word which goes so deeply towards the very centre of the personal life as does the relationship in the family. The child could not come to full personal existence if the older person did not stand to him in the place of a parent. It is said that in India for the purposes of experiment a number of newly-born children were once put together and kept together under the charge of nurses through years of childhood,—the nurses under pain of death not being allowed to utter a spoken word. The children came to nothing. It is hardly to be supposed that they were naturally idiots, but after a few years their condition was practically that of idiocy. Now this does not point merely to the importance of language as an instrumental institution. It points to the dwarfing of the soul when it cannot hook itself to some life other than itself. The parents and the children need the merging of souls for the sake of reciprocal personal development. So with the husbands and wives and the brothers and sisters. Jesus saw this so closely that He utilized these



inner spiritual relationships, not the artificial and institutional phases of the family life, to set forth man's relation to God. The man does not come to full spiritual stature without the communion with the Father above and best reaches this communion in discharge of duties to the persons in the world.

It is from this point of view that we must approach the study of the Church. With the instrumental aspect of the Church we shall deal in the next lecture. Here we point out that the life of Jesus and the experiences which came to His followers in the early days were calculated to deepen the foundation on which the institutional side of the Church was built up,—the dependence of men upon one another in spiritual relationships. Paul stood closest to the Master's thought when he spoke of the Church as the body of Christ. It is hard to think that he intended by the phrase just to capture the attention of his readers by a happy figure of speech. Granting the validity of that conception of the divine nearness which is so much a part of our thinking to-day, Paul's speech suggests the closeness of the spirit of Christ to a body of believers in sympathy with the divine purpose,—a closeness as immediate as the closeness of a man to the

responsive nerves and muscles of his own body. But there is another aspect,—that which Paul so strongly emphasized, the significance of the activity of each part of the body for every other part. We cannot indeed speak of a society as an organism with the same exactness with which we speak of a human body as an organism, but the expression is at least on the path to the truth. The simplest psychological experiment shows that as minds work together in a common purpose the powers of each are increased in defiance of the ordinary laws of arithmetic. One hundred plus one hundred no longer make two hundred, but the addition makes five hundred or a thousand. There is a social reënforcement which defies the familiar methods of estimate. And there is more,—there is often the loosing of a force in the individual which the individual himself did not suspect that he had. We observe this on the bad side when we see a mob spirit so strong that men who would not as individuals have thought of evil deeds, under the influence of the mob spirit run headlong to courses which in quieter moments they condemn. They wonder afterwards if they could have been themselves in the mob. In a sense they were not them-

selves,—a different phase of the activity of the self was started into action by the presence of the crowd. Now these laws which work so clearly in crises of evil point to possibilities for crises of good. We do not surrender anything of what we said about Christianity as not overwhelming the individual when we do say that in righteous community-action there are possibilities of which the individual might not ever be conscious if left to himself. The memory of moments of exalted uplift which have occurred as a righteous enthusiasm has taken hold of men in masses remains in the individual mind to help that mind towards larger personal strength, just as truly as the memory of deeds done under the influence of evil social forces tends to degrade and dwarf the mind as it looks back upon them. The early Christians seem to have partaken of this spirit of community. The fact that they had all things in common does not have as much economic significance for our times as some radical reformers would have us believe, but it certainly has profound spiritual significance. It is the translation into material terms of a feeling of community so close that at least for a time material communism was possible.

This then is what we mean by the personal in Christianity,—not the individual alone but persons set in relations to one another, which relations are as much a fact as is the separate existence of the individuals. We do not subscribe to a doctrine of individualism which would attempt to pull the individual out of his living relations and look at him apart. This is not possible,—any more than it would be possible to cut off a living arm and expect to study it as still living. Nor do we subscribe to a doctrine of society as a thing-in-itself which would blur over the individuals. We look upon persons as realizing themselves in a Christian community. This is the fundamental. In a sense even these persons are instrumental to one another, but that is a forcing of the word out of the meaning which we now have in mind. The persons could more properly be called parts of one another, or organs of one another. The great aim of Christianity is to minister to the needs of these persons thus set together. Through all the ages the believers have taught that those who live in this substantial community of like spiritual aims are the Church of Christ,—part of it visible and part invisible. Through the spiritual union the society life becomes richer

and through the enrichment of the community fuller life comes to the individuals of the community.

It is the aim of the Church to bring all men into this substantial fellowship, not merely into the instrumental organizations which we call the separate churches. This fellowship is the kingdom of God on earth which all right-minded men are supposed to try to advance. Now it is the purpose of this series of lectures to try to show that this personal community is entitled to use whatever instruments can be employed to further its fundamental human purpose. That purpose of bringing life to persons being kept in mind, the Christian community has a right to deal with the merely instrumental in any such fashion as will increase the life. The great heresy then becomes the heresy of treating lives as if they were in the mechanical sense instruments and of treating instruments as if they were ends in themselves. The human outcome must be kept uppermost.

We know that human societies are allowed to take considerable liberties if they do so in the name of human welfare. If the aim is simply to build up a state as a state some actions are forthwith condemned which are entirely legitimate when undertaken in the

name of the largest human life. To take an extreme example, a state may no longer legitimately go to war if its aim is merely to extend its own boundaries as a state. We recognize that wars are no longer morally justifiable if undertaken just for national aggrandizement without reference to human rights. But he would be hardy extremist who would deny the right of nations of the earth, preferably acting together, to move in upon a nation which in its internecine struggles had lost all sense of the value of human life. In a sense the kingdom of God on earth has the right to hold to some beliefs and to cast others aside and to make practical adjustments and readjustments if it does so in the name and for the sake of the largest and best religious life.

Coming back to the expression of Paul, the body of Christ,—we may say that the body has a right to use some instruments which are clearly mechanical. It has a right to fashion for itself weapons of offense and defense, to make building tools, or to make a house, so to speak, in which it may live. It has the right to change these instruments to make them better ; or, if they have served their purpose, to cast them aside for something better. Instruments are to be judged

only by what they can do,—but they must not be taken as ends in themselves. In some cases we can see this clearly. There is no more sin in changing an item of church organization, for example, for something better than in throwing aside a poorly tempered knife for one better tempered. Thus stated the principle seems obvious enough, but it may lead us rather far. But it cannot lead us away from the truth. Truth after all is life at its fullest and best. We use whatever instruments serve the purpose of such life.

But the word instrument is too mechanical to express some elements which after all are instrumental, though in a finer sense. Food for example is instrumental, and men live upon intellectual and spiritual foods as well as upon bread. Man does not live by bread alone. But the spiritual foods are to be judged by the kind of spiritual vitality they furnish. Any man must have a care in recommending that masses of men change their food, but after all no suggestion is too radical if it provides for larger and fuller satisfaction of the life needs. When a physiologist who advocated the change for the oriental world from a rice to a wheat diet was met by the rejoinder that it is wild to suggest a change in a food on which a race has

lived for ages, his retort was that it is not wild if that diet is the reason why the race has amounted to so little. Apart from the dietetic merits of the case the physiologist had the correct principle. The needs of the race have the right of way.

There are some other elements which are like the atmosphere in which the body moves. These elements seem to be fine in themselves and to stand in their own right. In reality they have a right to existence only so long as they minister to a need. Works of art seem to stand in their own right. But they have no right except as they satisfy some artistic instinct. We have seen standards of art change. The art ministers to a finer need than a merely utilitarian tool to be sure, but it ministers nevertheless and stands or falls by its ministry.

We repeat that it is the purpose of these lectures to insist upon this distinction between the persons, who are ends in themselves, and the instruments which minister to the persons. We object to treating the personal as instrumental, or the instrumental as if it had personal rights. We do not pretend to say just what use in a particular case the Christian community is to make of a given instrument but we do insist that the highest and



best life of persons is to be the aim of all handling of instruments. The insistence upon this fullness of personal life will help us find our way about in some fields not technically religious but which can be utilized for a religious purpose. Much of our confusion comes from our taking ecclesiastical factors and philosophic and moral and social doctrines as if they were ends in themselves. The Christian persons are the ends in themselves. The sacredness inheres in them. The Christians are so to use everything instrumental as to make the personal more sacred.



## LECTURE II

### THE INSTRUMENTAL IN CHRISTIANITY



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**W**E have laid stress on the personal as the object in Christianity's endeavour. What our religion aims at is the unfolding and enrichment of the life of human beings. The needs of persons are uppermost in value and have the right of way. All else is instrumental. This does not in the least minimize the importance of the instrumental: indeed it makes the instrumental indispensable as furnishing the means by which persons attain to larger life. But discrimination between the personal and the instrumental gives us a guide and a standard. If our intent is to treat certain devices of the Christian system as ends in themselves our attitude and conduct will be different from what it will be if these factors have instrumental place. Some instrumental elements are indeed means of grace. But the means of grace are not the ends of grace. An end

of grace cannot be an instrument but must be a person.

Foremost among these means of grace we place the Christian Scriptures. We all admit theoretically to-day that our Scriptures belong in the instrumental relationship, but very often we treat the Book as an end in itself. Now of course there has been sensibleness and wisdom in some defense of the Scriptures which has pronounced them ends in themselves. In times past this position helped in the preservation of the Scriptures. If some believers had not looked upon the Book as possessing a peculiar sacredness in itself it might never have travelled down to us. But even such valiant defenders if closely cross-examined would have placed the sacredness of the Book in what it can do for men. Strictly speaking the Book is instrumental. If a community's last available food supply in time of famine could be preserved only by some one's giving his life, many men would offer to die. But this would not be because the heroes would think of the food. They would think of the lives that the food would be instrumental in saving.

At the outset we protest again that we do not mean by instrumental anything mechanical. The Book is indeed a sword of

offense and defense, but it is instrumental also in those finer shades of meaning at which we hinted in the last chapter. It is the food upon which men sustain themselves in the search for God. It is the clear atmosphere which men breathe as they strive after the kingdom of righteousness. It abounds with ideas which seem to stand in their own right as good and true and beautiful but which after all have their deepest claim in that they minister to human wants. Take for example that idea of God with which we find ourselves as the result of Biblical study. This, we say, is fine in itself. Apart from any utilitarian query as to the effect on us of accepting this idea the idea stands by itself as a final conception,—one which we contemplate for itself, as we would contemplate a masterpiece in painting or in sculpture. But even such masterpieces are instrumental as we use the term. They minister to a human demand even if the demand is satisfied not so much by practical utilization as by adoring contemplation. We must keep steadily before us that we are viewing the life of man in its highest ranges and are asking what will best suit the highest needs. The purpose of the readers of the Scriptures has been from the beginning

loftily practical,—they have used the Book as a means of grace. This being true it seems a legitimate inquiry on the part of Christians as to how to make the Scriptures more completely and specifically means of grace. We are not doing honour to a sacred idol before which we must bow down, but rather awarding proper place to a weapon, a food, an atmosphere. On the plea for increase of usefulness we may so deal with weapons and foods and atmospheres as to make the most out of them. It is not unfair to affirm that down to the present not enough has been made of the Scriptures. They have not been used with the wisest economy. If we regard them as a field we must admit that they have not been intensively cultivated. For proof of this we have only to inquire as to how many devout Bible followers habitually read widely throughout the Book. Almost every mature Bible reader to-day has been brought up on the doctrine of the sacredness of the entire Book, but not all readers carry that doctrine into practice. The reading actually moves through some of the loftier eloquence of the prophets, tarries delightedly around the favourite psalms, pores long over the Gospels, and catches the glow of some of the epistles.



But long stretches of Scripture territory have been neglected. There are abandoned farms in the Scripture. It ought to be worth while to see if some use cannot be found for these Scriptural acres. If we believe that the Book as a whole contains a revelation from God why confine ourselves to a few passages, important as these may be? If the Scripture is indeed the daily bread upon which the believer lives why forget that the preparation of bread so as to win from it the most nutriment is one of the chief functions of the housewife? The Bible was made for man and not man for the Bible. The Bible then should be so used as to make it mean the most for man.

It is a mistake to suppose that modern Biblical study has on the whole or in the main pared down the useful portions of the Scriptures or thrown away parts of the Scriptures. A few years ago it was a favourite procedure with some opponents of the more recent methods of approaching the Bible to refer to modern students as the mutilators of the Scriptures. But this misses the point. Dismissing the extremists here and there whose assumptions and conclusions are clearly fanciful or forced, the intent of present-day study is to get the most out of

the Scriptures. We do not get the most from the Scriptures by using them without discrimination, any more than we get the most from any other instrument by treating it thus. Employing the old figure of the kernel and the husk,—economy in the handling of grain does not show itself in a willingness to eat husk and all. There is a more excellent way. To begin with we must remember in our radical impatience with husks that there could not have been grain if there had not been husks, and next that even after the grain is threshed from the husk there is a market value for husks in the economy of the prudent farmer. We can use the Scriptures wisely only by estimating the present usefulness of their contents in the light of the demands of the highest Christian life of our time. To do this we must find what a particular Biblical passage meant for the people to whom it was written, and then discover what message it has for to-day. The present-day Biblical schools are not throwing away anything. They are distinguishing between orders of utility. Some parts of the Scripture contain the very sum of practical wisdom for our guidance to-day. They set before us the principles which must be practiced into life if we would know that doctrine

of Jesus which is centrally Christian. There are other parts, which so far as daily guidance is concerned, may have little bearing on the immediate duties before us. But these parts are mightily instructive for the understanding of the ways of God with men. More than all this there is a fresh air of life itself blowing across even what we might think of as the desert passages of the Bible. The discerning student sees that various passages of the Scripture do not cease to have all use when they lose an immediate matter-of-fact use. The value for reflection and for contemplation still abides.

Modern understanding, then, finds more value in the Scriptures to-day than before,—only the worth of some parts is of a different order than formerly. Jesus Himself told us that He would set aside some requirements of the Mosaic law. But is the Mosaic law then of no value? It is of eternal value as showing how God dealt with men. We often declare that the Old Testament Scriptures were written in a time so different from ours that they have but little concern for us. We holders of this view might get some light from the fact that many Old Testament specialists to-day are among the most devout of men, and that these scholars urge the study

of the Old Testament for devotional purposes. The divine method is apparent enough in the Old Testament. As to the local and temporary and even heathen coverings which form the husk in which much Scriptural truth is clothed, is it important to know which is kernel and which is husk so that we may throw the husk away? Not at all. Rather so that we may use both kernel and husk aright.

We emphasize and reëmphasize the difference in orders of usefulness. There is the usefulness for which the man seeks who wishes immediate light or consolation. This man may not get much from the Old Testament historical narratives or even from some of the epistles. But another man is not thus under the pressure of crisis. He has opportunity to brood over the Book. He is concerned not merely with immediate guidance but also with the larger and longer views of God's dealings with men. He searches the pages of all commentators. He asks as to the times when such and such a conception emerged, who was the prophet to whom it was first revealed, what was the motive which brought it forth, what in the conception is common to the conceptions of the peoples round about the chosen people.

This student may reach conclusions which to his ecclesiastical neighbours seem very astounding but which nevertheless vitally minister to his religious cravings. For this man too is on the search for God, and one road to God is by study of God's methods. If a man's ways are significant as revealing the nature of the man, why should God's ways be any less significant as revealing the nature of God? A single passage may not itself be illuminating as to the nature of God, but the entire history of the passage, as the modern student sees it, may be more illuminating than any direct statement of divine purpose could be. And this is the more important because there comes with such study not only intellectual enlightenment but that development of the religious instinct which marks the devout Christian student. Finding God has one meaning to a man distressed by sin or burdened by sorrow, but a different and possibly a higher significance to the man who is seeking knowledge of God for the sake of understanding Him in the subtler, finer manifestations and for the sake of bringing those revelations to men. A sneer used to go the rounds to the effect that the scholarly Biblical student is likely to be a woodenly intellectual creature with no

conspicuous development of religious intuition. The observation of the present speaker does not profess to be extensive, but those who know best the foremost Scripture students of our time report that the impression left from contact with such men has been not more of intellectual than of spiritual acumen. From acquaintance with such men there may easily come a confidence in the efficacy of close study of even the supposedly driest parts of the Old Testament as a means of grace. If the Bible is the sword of the Spirit we should know how to take hold of it: much depends on handling a sword aright. If the Bible is food the more we know about it the better. If it is atmosphere the more pressing the duty of learning to breathe deeply.

The current investigations of the Scripture result in giving the Scripture larger utility. Even in the parts where we follow the motto of knowledge for its own sake we are seeking for that high utility which ministers to and satisfies the mind in the search for God. So that the Church has a right to look upon the Bible from the point of view of each succeeding day, for the sake of the welfare of the persons of each succeeding day. It was not a sin to translate the Scriptures into common

tongues. It was not a sin to allow the printing press to aid in the spread of the Gospel. It is not a sin to take the intellectual instruments of our time and with them to make the Bible count for more. There can be little doubt that the scientifically forged tools for Biblical study will prove in the end to be among the most powerful propagating agencies in the spread of Scriptural knowledge. Some parts of the Book are read intelligently to-day that were hardly read at all twenty-five years ago. Some classes of persons to-day devotedly study the Scriptures who could hardly have been brought to look at them on the assumptions of twenty-five years ago. The wider the use of the Scriptures the more useful they are, of course. Nothing will be thrown out of the Scriptures by modern study. The emphasis will be changed. If we have in the Bible the best spiritual instrument the obligation is upon us to learn how best to use the instrument.

This was the plan of Jesus. He dared set aside some of the teaching of the Scripture because it could not be brought into living contact with the moral situation in which He found Himself. But He set aside only in that He changed the emphasis. He did not

cast anything out of the Book. All through the Scriptures He saw the turning of prophecy towards Himself. He recognized the moral and spiritual purpose in the parts which He placed in a different order of importance. Just so a physician to-day might look through the sanitary requirements of the Mosaic law and pronounce them insufficient. He might say that our modern knowledge of disease has outdated these requirements. But he might rejoice to claim the Hebrew leaders as worthy of all imitation in their intention to make it a religious duty to care for the welfare of men by the prevention of disease. The nations round about the Hebrews did not care so much for the welfare of men. The trend of the Hebrew religion in the direction of correct principles of physical living is immensely significant. So also a social student might to-day read the land laws of the ancient Hebrews. He might find that we cannot carry out just such land laws to-day, but he would be sure to declare that these advance in the direction of economic justice, and that they are in principle of far loftier conception than are many laws in so-called civilized nations to-day. The attempts to guard against the waste of the land, and the attempts also to prevent



extreme monopoly of land in private hands were very noteworthy. In these as in so many other instances the movement of the Scripture is interesting because of its direction. Ideal humanity was the goal of the lawmakers and the prophets. It should be the goal in our modern reading of the supreme instrument of the Church. We are entitled to use the Scriptures so as to make them mean the most to us. If we distort them they will not in the end mean most to us. If we do not take account of the historic truth about them they cannot mean the most to us. If we allow ourselves to follow after extreme radical or conservative views which get away from actual basis in history they cannot mean the most to us. We are to seek to know all we can about them and to apply their revelation in the wisest manner,—seeking always for the best good of the persons for whose benefit the Scriptures are before us.

If we could all come to this position it would hasten the passing of that conflict which happily is dying out,—the conflict between radicals and conservatives over the Scriptures. The difficulty here as with so many wrangles of the sort is in the failure to clear up the assumptions. One help in clear-

ing up would be to ask what is the direction of the Scriptural movement. What are the ends in the kingdom of God? These are the members of the kingdom. The further question then becomes as to how we can best serve the persons in the kingdom. We take literally the doctrine that the Bible is a means of grace. It will be best defended and preserved by devoting it to the most and the best use. With this simple understanding we are better able to say how to make the best use of it. Some of the greatest discoveries in the world have come as men have discovered that the things around us are intended for use. There was a time when men fancied that mighty streams of water were such sacred parts of God's universe that any attempt to harness them could only be blasphemy. Then there came men who saw that the highest reverence towards God's streams was to utilize them,—mills and cities were the result. So with the Scriptures. They are not sacred objects in themselves. They prove their divineness only as they are used to the utmost. The great betrayal of trust would be,—in a day which is making the most of every other manner of instrument,—not to make the most of the Scriptural instrument. We cannot bend this

sword enough to break it. Sharpening its edge does not grind it away.

The recollection that these modern Biblical methods are wholly instrumental may help the preacher in the work of preaching. The sermon is an utterance of results, not an explanation of the details of the instruments by which the results are obtained. There is place for the discussion of the instruments, but not in the pulpit. The spectacle of instruments is apt to be disquieting in any case but results speak for themselves. The worst sort of talking shop is talking of instruments. The surgeon anæsthetizes his patient before he lets him see the instrument with which the operation is performed. After it is all over the instrument can be exhibited and explained. The modern Biblical instruments are enormously beneficial to the believer but it is not the part of homiletic wisdom to make too free an exhibition of them until the believer is familiar with the results which they produce.

When we come to creed and dogma we find that these too are instruments of the kingdom of God. But some one will say that these are truth, and that they stand in their own right. What is truth? Truth in the Christian sense is not mere intellectual

formula. It is the truth of life. It is life. When Jesus spoke of Himself as the Truth we are not to think that He had in mind the primarily intellectual. But of course the objector means that the statements of the creed are true as statements. Even if they are they have as their justification the feeding and strengthening of the mind of the believer and are to be judged by their success in doing so. In religion we are not always in the realm of objective proof. The only way we can judge of the validity of belief is by noting what happens to the man who believes.

The instrumental character of the creeds is very apparent as we look at the causes of their origin. Even if they are final statements incapable of improvement they were framed for a purpose. The Church was in danger of splitting into fragments because of lack of authoritative pronouncement on this or that, or there was required a compact shaping of the truth for fighting purposes, or for purposes of exposition. Or, we may believe, the Christian community had attained through historic processes to a fresh insight which must be set forth systematically to mark an advance.

We can sometimes discern a tendency

most clearly when it is working on a minimum of material. Suppose we look at one or two dogmas where the tendency is very clear from the fact that there is little to work upon. For example consider the Roman Catholic doctrine of the immaculate conception. To provide for the sinlessness of Jesus the Roman Church teaches a sinlessness of Mary so complete that any ancestral tendency towards evil was cut off from Mary. What is the explanation of this doubtful dogma? Just the necessity of providing for the sinlessness of Jesus. The doctrine is entitled to larger respect for its recognition of a difficulty and for its courage in facing it than for any positive contribution towards the solution. Or take the doctrine of purgatory. Very worthy motives are back of the doctrine. One motive is to deal with the problem of the spiritual condition of souls at the best manifestly unfit without further preparation for a perfect environment. Another motive is to keep close the connection between the ones who have passed on and those who remain here. Of course in a field devoid of data the bare tendencies back of the doctrine are about all that is apparent, but the motives are entitled to respect.

But other creed-making tendencies have

more to work upon. Take the historic data as to Christ's manifestation of Himself to His disciples in the resurrection appearances. The items of the record are scanty, to be sure, but they are flooded with the light which comes out of our familiarity with the Christ-character and out of nineteen centuries of the history of the Church. If the items were not recorded of Christ they might possibly be dismissed as of no great consequence, but when they are recorded as of the career of Christ the aspect changes. For the problem of Christian thinking is at least measurably to express the fullness of life in Christ. We are perfectly willing to admit that it is from the point of view of those convinced of the eternal life in Christ that we read the story of the resurrection appearances. The Church's appreciation of Christ, dealing with the recorded data, results in the dogma that Christ passed through death and revealed Himself to His disciples in such fashion as to convince them that He liveth forevermore. In a word the pressure of the life of Christ is the driving force in creed-making. In this or that detail the items of creed as to Christ may need improvement, but the creeds are not as likely to err from overstatement as from understatement. We have not a Christ

who shrinks within the creedal phrases which we make for Him, but one who outgrows the phrases. The life of the Person is the end which we are trying to set forth. All our instruments are inadequate,—inadequate not so much through maladjustment as through lack of size. The great fact is Christ Himself. He has been the dynamic shaping the creeds. The separate items of the creeds have been so many attempts by successive ages to put into formal terms a measure of the impact of Christ. The creeds are both results of the Personal Force which stands at the centre of the Christian system, and also instruments to help us to know Christ. The Life does not shrink, we repeat, but grows in size when set in the larger frame of the advancing statements of the ages. This or that creed could be spoken of as an attempt to construct a lens with which to read the Christ-thought the better, if it were not that the figure is so inadequate. The meaning of Christ is so vast that it is always outstanding,—needing no lens for its discernment. The creeds have been attempts of the Church to utter for herself in compendious phrases the imprint which Christ has left on a particular time. They were partly instruments of self-expression,—the Church feeling

that she must burst forth into exclamation and declaration. After that they possessed expository and argumentative value.

What we said in discussing the Scriptures we say again in speaking of creed. The question as to the usefulness of a creed is not always easily answered. The immediate and original demand for this or that formula may have passed away. But because I do not believe a particular article, say of Calvinism, I have no call to sneer at the lack of usefulness of Calvinism. I may thus show myself a spiritual kinsman of the tourist who could see no usefulness in the Parthenon. The practical utility is not all. Some systems of theology are of perennial intellectual worth as religious creations, deserving looking at for the stimulus and thrill which they impart to the mind. The systems are at least wonderfully made. They gratify intense intellectual cravings on the part of thinkers,—inadequate as they may be as permanent formulations. And acquaintance with them helps us bring ourselves into a spiritual unity with the mighty men of faith, gone on before, who have left not too numerous a race of spiritual descendants. The purpose of the more important creeds, no matter when uttered, was that of Christian



thinking to-day,—to exalt Christ with the very highest intellectual tribute. So far as these greater creeds are concerned more than one devout life which has not accepted this or that formal statement has found brooding over the creeds nevertheless a source of spiritual quickening. Such creedal utterances are not dead to one capable of discerning their aim. As ends in themselves to be cherished above all else their value would be less than as instruments and centres of inspiration tending to quicken the life of the faithful.

And this brings us to our attitude towards the religious declarations of our own later time. Here once more we ask that the direction towards which a doctrine points be kept in mind. A statement serves a two-fold purpose: it utters as far as possible the thought of the speaker, and it addresses itself to the intelligence of others. The life needs of both speaker and of him spoken to are the imperative facts. The person speaking and the person addressed are the ends in themselves. The self-expression of the persons speaking and the enlightenment and quickening of those addressed,—these are the chief considerations. Not forgetting that intellects have legitimate appetites and that

statements of doctrine must give heed to scientific and logical and rational grounds, we must insist that all doctrines are instruments and succeed or fail by the extent to which they fulfill their purpose in use. What manner of appeal do they utter to the whole man? How thoroughly do they serve the largest and best life? Will a man by accepting them become more or less? Will he become better or worse,—for a man cannot sincerely marry his mind to a doctrine without becoming better or worse. Dealing admittedly with a realm where strict objective knowledge is out of the question the creed can only be looked upon as an instrument for the furtherance of right religious life, and the only test is the quality and volume of life which follows acceptance of the creed. Of course the effects of some beliefs can be foreseen by any man of common sense. The straight flying in the face of fact or logic will bring a fall sooner or later; but in the interpretation of scientific fact and logical conclusions the best creed is the one which as an instrument furthers the best kind of life. By the rights of humanity we are entitled to deal just as freely with the creedal statements which we all have to make,—and each of us has in one way or another to fashion some

sort of creed for himself,—as the calls of the largest life seem to make necessary.

An interesting study in practical creed making can be pursued by observing a process going on before our very eyes in the unfolding of socialism. You will understand that I am not taking sides one way or another as to the worth of socialism. I use this illustration simply because I can speak of socialism without taking sides. Here is a body of doctrines held by more persons in Christendom to-day than any other set of doctrines whatsoever. And the doctrines are in amazingly large part held not by absorption or inheritance but as the result of at least an attempt at deliberate reflection. Whether they think rightly or not there are probably more persons thinking in the ranks of the socialists than in any other group on earth. Now socialism in the main seeks to accomplish its results by persuasion. I am speaking of the socialist who thoroughly understands his own system. Such a socialist realizes that the only path by which socialism can draw near is the voluntary adoption of the principles of socialism by a good deal more than a majority of the voters of any nation. Socialism cannot succeed, and its leaders know it cannot succeed, with too

large a minority of irreconcilables. While the socialist would admit that the resort to force here and there might apparently hasten the day of the formal coming of socialism he knows that the real arrival can only take place as the people are persuaded of the doctrine and intentionally adopt that doctrine.

Now the socialistic doctrines have as their goal the production of tangible results. This does not mean that they are contrived solely for campaign efficacy: the works of Marx strive at giving a historically just account of industrial evolution from the beginnings of industry which the few only can take time to read. But the intent is primarily to persuade. It is interesting then to note how the orthodox tenets of socialism change as the years go by. They change because they will not continue to work in their first form. So we have modifications of the doctrine of economic determinism and of class struggle. Many of the Marxian teachers insist in all sincerity that they are not making doctrinal changes but they are doing so nevertheless;—there is nothing commoner in the history of thought than a man's making modifications in a system to which he adheres while professing that he is merely clarifying his master's utterance. The socialist is—by consent

which reaches even to his enemies—struggling for the betterment of human life ; and he is employing his conceptions as tools with which to do this. He is trying to help men. He fashions and refashions his instruments as he moves along. A very able and persuasive exponent of socialism is J. Ramsay MacDonald, Chairman of the British Labour Party. Ramsay has remarked significantly that Marxism had to begin with sharp and extreme phrasings but that in the wielding of the instrument the sharpness of the edge was inevitably worn off. If similarly the edge of a Christian creed wears off we are at liberty to believe that perhaps the instrument is better for not being too sharp, or we may sharpen the instrument if it will do better work for men when sharpened. So far as minor beliefs are concerned we may cease to use them altogether. Even the most orthodox learn how to put some details of creed out of ordinary reach. They may still have them in the locker,—but in the remote corner.

If this is true of creed it is also true of ritual. Ritual meets some requirements of the religious nature on the æsthetic side : and here we seem to be in a realm where things as well as persons have value on their own account. The æsthetic seems peculiarly

to stand as an end-in-itself. But here again the reference must be to living needs of living men. The Church has a right to appropriate and baptize anything which appeals to fine taste and true feeling. She will do this whenever she feels that by so doing she can minister to human need, just as she did when she took over from what we would technically pronounce heathenism a whole body of beautiful Christmas symbols and consecrated them to the delight of her children. When ritual is inadequate it will be transformed or supplemented. Phillips Brooks has told a pathetically amusing story of the helplessness of a body of high churchmen who met to find consolation in prayer after the Chicago fire. There were many beautiful prayers in the regular collection but none seemed just suited to the particular type of affliction then upon the nation, and the worthy brethren were sadly at a loss! In such plight any body of normal human beings will find room for expression of religious yearning in whatever form seems best suited to the purpose whether the Church sanctions extemporaneous prayer or not.

Finally we look at the Church itself in its instrumental aspect. It will be recalled that in the previous lecture we drew a distinction

between the more personal and the more artificial aspects of the Church. The Church is the actual persons bound together to do the will of God. This personal community reaches under and through the separate artificial alignments and includes many who are not technically united with any organization. About the relations of the various systems to one another we shall speak in a moment. Here we call attention to the spiritual peril of identifying the actual personal human fact with any artificial fact like this or that particular type of organization.

The Church as a body of persons actually knit together in sympathy is an end in itself. No organizational constitution of laws and rules, however, can have anything but an instrumental sacredness. We may do well to encourage devotion to an organization as an organization but in such case the emphasis must be upon the evident fitness of the organization to accomplish results which can be stated in human terms. The Church as a creature of laws and rules is not an end in itself.

Of course it is understood that distinctly denominational considerations are out of place in a lectureship like this, but those who are Methodists may recall that the

strictly instrumental nature of church organization is Methodist doctrine. John Wesley never formally broke from the Church of England, but John Wesley so modified the doctrines about the Church itself in the view of the thinking world that in spite of all its professions hardly any church can ever again claim to be an end in and unto itself with the old force. Wesley's genius, as we all know, was preëminently for management. He was not of the sort to be over-impressed with the claims of a church laying stress on some peculiar sanctity in itself. Though naturally conservative he allowed himself to be borne along by the success of this venture and that until he was willing to undertake almost any plan which seemed likely to benefit men. In sentiment he very probably at the outset revolted from any step so radical as preaching in the open air, but he put aside whatever scruples he may have had as soon as he saw how immense a hearing he obtained from worship in the fields. Dr. T. C. Hall of Union Theological Seminary has shown how thorough a modification the work begun by Wesley wrought in the churchly conception as to the bishopric. In Methodism the bishopric is not a separate order. It is purely an



administrative office. Worthy souls here and there have at times fancied that the episcopacy could be made more holy and commanding by being constituted a so-called higher order, but the instinct and good sense of Methodism have always been sound at this point. Our only question as to the episcopacy is as to its success as an instrument. The only expedient by which it can be made sacred is by success in sacred work. The only authority to which it is entitled is that of a sincere purpose striving to do the best possible under a given set of circumstances. The bishopric is an instrument and has no right to be looked upon as an end in itself. It exists for the service of the people of the kingdom and for no other purpose whatsoever. The welfare of the persons of the kingdom has the right of way over all offices whatsoever. We instance the episcopacy as an outstanding illustration of the power of a democratic church to take an office regarded in the past,—and even in the present in some quarters—as something holy on its own account, and to strip it of every right to exist except in a purely instrumental capacity. The only problem before General Conferences in discussion of church offices,—episcopacy included,—is simply as

to how best to get the work administered. The question as to whether this or that style of instrument is most like the instruments of the fathers is out of place. We ask merely as to what will most surely help on the kingdom here and now.

What is the Church on earth for? We mean of course in its institutional features. First, for the enlistment and the training of disciples. The immediate duty is to rouse men to an awareness of the divine and to get them started in the righteous course. It is the business of the Church to test every means which may open the eyes of men to the necessity of their becoming disciples. It is possible for the individual soul to get along without the organizational church just as it is possible for one to walk from San Francisco to New York, or to become educated without going to school, but we nevertheless preach the necessity of railroads and public schools. If the evangelical methods of another generation will not now succeed something else must be resorted to. There is nothing sacred in mechanisms after they have ceased to accomplish the desired result. To go through the old motions without result is not especially intelligent. Anything which will win men must be sacred as an instrument

in the eyes of the Church. Only, in all this we must remember that there are some showy maneuvers, notably those of the present-day sensationalist, which even as maneuvers may in the ultimate outcome cost more than they are worth. The look ahead to the long run has to play a part in our evangelism.

Once enlisted in the ranks, the disciples of Jesus were taught that there are various steps in training,—to some of which we have already alluded. There is the learning by the educated ear, or the skilled faculty. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. It is the task of the Church to discipline the faculties of the disciples. Then there is learning by doing. He that doeth the words is like the man that laid the foundations against the day of storm. This method is somewhat like that of the modern laboratory. The knowledge of the divine doctrine comes from the doing of the Divine Will. Again there is learning through cross-bearing, the development of sympathy with the world's cross-bearers as we do the desperately hard unselfish tasks which involve for us undeserved suffering. This is an advance beyond the knowledge won through the normal life of righteousness: as being more intimate and

human. Finally there is the knowledge attained by bearing fruit. Here the Master comes to His favourite theme of the life as a growth. In bearing fruit, in growing convictions, in developing thoughts and feelings and deeds which run their course through the life as naturally as ripening fruit,—in this fruit-bearing especially the disciple comes to know his Lord. And all these various processes of learning the Church is to encourage. She is systematically, and in our day scientifically, to train the faculties of the disciples. She is to insist upon the incessant practice of righteousness. She is to lead in cross-bearing. She is to create and keep potent the vital conditions in which wisdom and sentiment and power can arrive at harvest fruitage in the life of the believers.

There is another function besides discipleship,—that of apostleship. The Church is to send forth her adherents to capture this world for the kingdom. She is to hold fast to the doctrine of self-sacrifice especially as applied to herself. How can an organization fashioned to teach that the only salvation for the individual believer is in a willingness to lose his own life get very far if it develops a narrow organizational pride which stands stiffly on keeping the organization intact

when the task to be performed demands institutional change? *Esprit de corps* is well and good but it ought to depend on the living contact of the believer with his fellows and not on the mechanism of an organization. What will best accomplish the work of individual and social salvation? This is the question before the Church as an organization. What will put the largest human meaning into salvation and make salvation attractive?

But what about all these various denominations which we see around us? Can all these be alike true? All these are alike, we trust, working to benefit human beings:—that is their only right to existence. A good rule for them all would be to master the doctrine that on their more technical side they are purely instrumental. As instruments they may have immense value. The doctrines of different churches are not so many conflicting absolute truths. They are different paths of approach to truth. They are instruments which make towards the truth which we mean when we speak of the Christian life. A good man is a good man wherever we find him. He may have been nourished on doctrine which is very distasteful to the rest of us, but if the doctrine has made him good we have no right to object

overmuch to his spiritual food, though we may recommend our food to him. He may have wrought valiantly for the Lord with a weapon which we think crude and bungling, but he has wrought successfully. He has a right to choose his own weapon. If we think our weapon is better than his let us show its superiority in action. We should dismiss as not over-intelligent objections like that of the Hindu who asked the Christian missionary which of the scores of varieties of Christian truth taught in India he should accept. There are not scores of varieties of Christian truth being taught in India or anywhere else. The only final truth taught is the truth of the worth of a good life. Varieties of instruments may be used in the presentation of that truth. The separate denominational approach is just an approach. A Christian man is a Christian man and not primarily a Methodist or a Presbyterian. He may have attained to Christian manhood along the highway of Methodism or of Presbyterianism. Human nature being what it is we find little profit in discussing the advantage of church unity in the form of just one denomination. All men should be animated by the one spirit of Christ but the peculiarities of human beings are such that it is hardly possible to

persuade all sorts of men to wield one make of spiritual instrument or to depend upon one type of spiritual food. The desirability of straight-out oneness of organizational form is very doubtful. Variety and diversity urge legitimate claims. Even in the union of commercial bodies into one organization it has often been found best to allow the separate constituents to keep by one plan or another enough of their separateness to preserve whatever has been most worth while in that separateness. Speaking of army divisions Napoleon used to say: "Separate for the march." There was a clear economy in having the troops march even to the common objective point in different masses. They were thus more easily maneuvered, more easily fed, more easily sustained in the fighting spirit. So with the church life. Realizing that organizational activities are altogether instrumental we ask what the churches can best do separately. They can best move separately through the activities of church support and religious instruction and training.

But Napoleon also told his marshals to unite for the battle. There is need to-day for a closer coming together for battle. There must be some common plan of campaign, especially in the social warfare in

which the Church ought to be a determining factor! Federation seems to be the watchword of the hour,—all sorts of bodies federate and that with signal practical success. If there are some duties which the organizational instruments can best perform separately, it is equally true that there are many other tasks which they can best undertake together. In campaigns for civic righteousness, in some phases of the attack on heathenism, the work can best be done by the churches acting together. Both at home and abroad much can be expected from wise division of church territory and by mutual respect of that division. Much can be accomplished by joint activity in educational enterprises,—especially in mission fields. Most of the objection to agreement of this kind is purely verbal. Colleges under the control of a particular church feel perfectly free both to accept students from any and all denominations and to select faculty members wherever they can find the men best fitted to do the work. And there is nothing more effective in bringing men to a right understanding of the difference between the supreme object of Christian endeavour and the instruments by which that object is achieved than just the getting together which is so



much a feature of the religious life of our time. If a man thinks that his particular church has a monopoly on ultimate truth in itself and some day discovers that it has not such a monopoly he may experience a slackening of loyalty to his denomination if he does not discover at the same time the instrumental function of the organization. Once let him catch the force of that distinction, however, and he is likely to become more of an institutionalist than before. He is anxious to make his instrument the best instrument. Church rivalry can be a bitter and deadly thing if we believe that churches other than our own are not in possession of truth and are misleading immortal souls. It can be a very helpful thing if it leads to better and better puttings of the truth, better stimuli of religious sentiment, better forging of religious tools.

But this word instrumental seems so mechanical! It seems to spill out so much that is sacred! We repeat again and again that we are not confining ourselves to the mechanical in the use of the word instrumental. In our sense of the term even a subtle sentiment may be an instrument. Sentiment may nourish the spirit of proper pride: it may be a very powerful stimulus

to righteous effort. We are all aware that some classic passages of literature take on increased effectiveness in our memories from tender personal associations with which we have connected them, or from an appropriateness to our personal lot which lends the words a force which the author himself never could have foreseen. So with the doctrines and the practices of a church. The memories of childhood, the stir of old-time friendships, the echo of spiritual victories won in particular denominational relationships,—all these help in our grasp on a belief or on a practice. We give place and honour to all this. But after all this too is valuable just for the human effect which it produces. Moreover considerations of this kind should be urged with good sense and complete sincerity. The sentimental consideration should not be allowed to outweigh all others unless it really weighs more. A church member who opposes the tearing down of an antiquated and unsafe house of worship and the erection of a better because of the spiritual blessings he has received in the old building is hardly to be commended. This principle can be given quite a wide application.

If we look at some phases of the life of Jesus we can best understand them as at-

tempts to keep the distinction between the personal and the instrumental in His attitude towards the Church. We have seen in the first lecture that Jesus in His own work kept the instrumental aspects at a minimum and always in the secondary place. He had to do this to get Himself understood at all. Jesus treated the Church of His time with profound respect, but He maintained His right to criticize it in accordance with the demands of personal life. The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. The scribes were entitled to the respect due those who sat in the seat of Moses, but they needed to know that they did not act according to the spirit of Moses. The laws had their place. Even tithing should not be omitted but the emphasis should be put upon the more profoundly human concerns of judgment and mercy and truth. At an early crisis in the life of Jesus it seems to have been the chanting of the priests and the flaming of the altar fires which awoke Him to at least a deeper realization of His relation to the Father, but He called the Temple just the Father's house. Towards all these instruments,—the Temple and the synagogues, the readings of the law and the calls to prayer, Jesus acted with the sole purpose to make

them mean most for men. If He could have had His way He would not have brought the Church to destruction,—He would have shaped it anew and filled it with a new passion for men.

We have thus far confined ourselves to the circle of the churchly problems. The spirit of Jesus would prompt His followers to move forth and make the most of the earth and all that is therein for the good of men. The meek are to inherit the earth and the saints are to judge the world. We are to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and in the spirit of righteousness we are to insist upon the largest human use of all things capable of good use. The fields of material achievement, of scientific and philosophical and moral investigation, of social and national and international endeavour, are to be made the most of for humanity by the persons who are filled with the spirit of Him who came to bring life to men and to bring life more abundantly. But even such spirit-filled workers can be most successful in doing this by always keeping in sight the distinction between the things which are ends-in-themselves and the things which are means to those ends.

## LECTURE III

### THE CHRISTIAN USE OF THE PHILOSOPHIC TOOLS



## LECTURE III

### THE CHRISTIAN USE OF THE PHILOSOPHIC TOOLS

**T**HE first problem before Christianity as it marches out to world conquest is to determine upon the proper attitude towards the world-views which at one period and another have commanded the assent of their times. These world-views are in part results and outcomes of manifold forces at work at a particular era but they are also instruments of vision and investigation and adjustment of conduct with which men seek to dominate the world. Whether a maturely reasoned view prevails at any one era or not there are at least half-views and assumptions and presuppositions present at all times which influence the attitude of men towards the problems of life and destiny. Since no age is without some such intellectual construction by which the attitudes towards the tasks of moral and social and racial life are determined it is well to examine some of

the greater of these intellectual lenses, and to ask how best to master them.

There is nothing sacred about a world-view except the use to which it may be put. The more important conceptions which arise from time to time all claim to be final, and each may seem so when it first appears, but after a while signs of change become manifest. Take the theory of evolution which has made so deep an impression on the last half century. Probably no theory has ever laid more insistent claim to be final truth than has the doctrine of evolution, and this in spite of the fact that the last word of evolution appears to be continuous movement and restless change. But wisdom has come to the evolutionists with the passage of years and their view is now a *working* hypothesis, of prodigious value because of the prolific results of evolutionary investigation. The intelligent evolutionist nowadays does not pronounce evolutionary doctrine as in itself sacred. There was for a season a tendency towards a hard-and-fast orthodoxy among the followers of Darwin, but the evolutionist to-day feels free to make any modification which he sees fit in this once so-sacred theory. In the realm of theory nothing has final sacredness. Even if we should hit upon



a putting of the truth which could not in any detail be improved, even that would have only instrumental sanctity. The thinkers whose minds the formula might satisfy would be the only ends in themselves.

Assured then of liberty to deal with the theories of the universe as the demands of our total life may prompt us, we point out the path to mastery of world-views over which the Church may one day move. First, the Church cannot neglect the duty of searching criticism of world-views in their more technical phases. The opponents of Christian teaching have found some paths of attack yielded too easily by Christian scholars. These scholars have too often allowed themselves to be thrown on the defensive. An anti-religious theory would arise making vigorous assaults on the Church, and the Church would give itself too much to the campaign of defense. More justifiable tactics would have been more aggressive. In actual warfare a downright fighting spirit is the effective defense. The Church has often been scared into ridiculous panic by the raids of theories which could not themselves, if challenged, have given good foundation in reason for their own existence. The war should sometimes be carried into Africa.

The Church is here, and the presumption is that she has a right to be here. Before any opposing system is accepted in her place that system should be challenged throughout. When the gust of atheistic materialism which broke over Christendom in the later seventies had died down somewhat and the Christian teachers had begun in turn to put questions to the materialists, there arose an outcry from the materialistic camp as if this were presumptuous. But this turning of the tables is the correct strategy. Most systems hostile to Christianity stand on shaky foundations, and the Church needs to train men who even on the technical side are able to point out the shakiness and to do some shaking. For example take the broad issue between theism and atheism. The atheist has often shouted triumph because he has to his own satisfaction established the proposition that theism cannot account for the universe. But if theism cannot account for the universe, can atheism do any better? This alternative has too often escaped the attention of theists and atheists alike. Atheism as a positive and not a negative construction is somewhat unstable. So with mind as over against matter as an explanation of all things. It is a favourite plan of attack on Christianity

boldly to declare the inadequacy of mind as an explanation of the universe. But if mind cannot explain, how about non-mind, or matter? All of this seems obvious but it is sadly overlooked. We have many defenders of the faith ; there is room also for assailants of the unfaith.

Secondly,—the Church should not miss the apologetic force of Christian character itself. For, after all, the triumphs of the most highly trained scientific and logical reasoners are not of supreme moment. These victories are seldom over the direct opponent. They accomplish something in interesting and encouraging the bystanders, especially if the bystanders are already inclined to believe. But while most bystanders are fond of a logical battle now and then, they soon weary of such conflict. World-views are not altogether established by the arguments put forth for them, nor are they overthrown by the assaults made upon them. Not many persons reason much, even though they may think they do. So that a second way of meeting world-views which threaten the Christian system is actually to produce situations which no sensible observer can overlook,—to create a quality and volume of Christian life which cannot be put to one

side, but which will persistently come back the instant it is pronounced banished, and to which the world-view must ultimately adjust itself.

A third method is more effective still,—the utilization of whatever is good in the various views. Regarding these systems as tools at the best, or the worst, the Church seeks to redeem the instruments by making the worthiest use of them for the interests of human life. The Church shows her largest vitalities not when she breaks to pieces her captured booty or casts it into the fire, but when she makes it Christian, or when she remoulds the instruments once turned against herself for the sake of exalting the truth which these instruments were forged to overthrow. We hurriedly pass in review these different methods as applied to some world-views ; for these methods, (1) of critical understanding of world-views, (2) of life-protest by volume and quality of character against what is inadequate or unworthy in them, (3) of utilization of what is good in them, are the gist of what we mean by the Christian use of intellectual constructions.

The Christian religion has relied much on the world-view of common sense. Here are persons and here are things,—with scant

question as to what is back either of the persons or the things. Things are made of stuff undoubtedly here. Now the sensible plan in leading the common-sense individual as we meet him in the Church is not to travel too far into the domain of formal reasoning. It seems that almost anybody ought to be strong enough to listen to an argument which strips "things" of their fancied all-sufficiency, but the things seem so undeniably here that they constitute a tough problem. The immediate task is so to preach and so to foster the living activities of the Church as to prevent the things from getting the upper hand. Why do many disciples make failure of life? They are not argued out of the Christian belief, but things get into the saddle and then of course ride mankind. The preaching of Jesus was for the most part aimed just at building the spirit into strength that would refuse to be saddled.

Men who have wrought overmuch with things may slip off into materialism, and they may do so sincerely. The material world is such a factor with us that the theory that matter is all seems at moments overwhelming. We congratulate ourselves that the battle with materialism is pretty well over, but we would better not be too sure. Just at

present indeed there is less outspoken materialism than for a long time. The arguments for the omnipotence of matter have become tiresome. The contemporary materialist bores us. Our state of boredom should not conceal from us, however, the possibility that the materialistic argument may almost any day receive a fresh statement which will again make it attractive and seductive. Such a statement seems about due. Almost any one reading closely the arguments of the materialists wonders why they have not stated their case more strongly than they have. Quite likely the future will see more forceful phrasings of materialism than any that have ever yet appeared. And when they come what is the soundest attack for the Church?

One attack will be of course the insistence upon the inadequacy of materialism. It is not necessary to try to anticipate the reasonings here. Quite likely they will be in substance just an emphasis on the impotence of materialism to explain the facts of life as we see them, especially the facts of mind and knowledge. But the decisive advance is from another quarter. That is simply calling attention to the inescapableness of spiritual facts. If there is in existence a quality and

volume of Christian life, showing forth character in its highest growths, that quality and that volume are the effective protest against materialism. If there are multitudes of persons obviously above yielding to the earthward pull of matter that superiority must be heeded. For a theory which professes to be a world-view must at least attempt systematic completeness. Just as the sinner is a stubborn fact for the theist so the saint is even a more stubborn fact for the materialist. There is less hope of explaining the saint in materialistic terms than there is of explaining the sinner on a theistic basis. As to the sinner in a theistic world we can say that a man of his own free choice may refuse to sanction the plans of the universe ; as to the saint in a materialistic world we can only say that matter has for the moment reached such a steadiness of equilibrium that the effect is a singularly well-ordered character. The miracle of particles of matter balanced in this equilibrium for ten, twenty or fifty years has just to be taken as a miracle. But the miracle is quite a miracle, especially when the particles of matter may for the most part report themselves in pain and uproar. The greater the number of saints, the greater the difficulty for the materialist.

A group of persons living superior to the downward pull of matter is a protest against materialism. We do not wish to speak harshly of the materialist, but it is a commonplace that materialism of behaviour makes for materialism of thought. This is true even though many materialists are as self-denying as ascetics and as self-sacrificing as martyrs. We do not say that materialism in conduct is the only force which makes for materialism in theory, but it is an effective force. Anything then which offsets subordination to the earthiness of matter makes for the reign of the spirit. The Church is to face the conditions out of which materialism arises. Extremes of prosperity and of adversity alike may conduce to materialism,—prosperity because the rich see so much of matter that they come to believe in the omnipotence of matter, and adversity because the poor see so little of matter that they are constantly craving more. Especially in handling social questions is it incumbent on the Church to keep before her eyes the danger of these extremes which breed doubt. To quote the familiar figure the swamps out of which the doubts arise to poison men must be drained.

The presence of good men in the world



living in protest against the lures of materialism is then a block in the path of materialistic theory. But it is not by protest alone that victory is to be won. Protests may thwart but they do not vanquish. Moreover the mental faculties which are in chronic protest may not remain healthy or normal. For example the spectacle of men withdrawing from a community which has gone mad in the pursuit of riches to shut themselves up in monasteries would be a bracing protest against the sordidness of that crazy world, but it would not be altogether effective after all. The world would go howling in derision past the doors of the monasteries. There is a more excellent way, even though a more difficult way. It is often easier to be extreme than to be moderate. It is easier to be a materialist giving one's self up to earthly pursuits, or to be an ascetic cutting one's self off from physical pleasures than it is to walk in the midst of the material world and use that world for a righteous purpose. The highest Christian answer to both theoretical and practical materialism is the control of matter in the name of spirit.

Matter is one of the apparently fixed elements of our present existence, even though its function is instrumental. We must adjust

ourselves to matter, and the only legitimate adjustment is that of high-minded control. The sin of materialism is in erecting a purely instrumental creation into an end in itself. The Christian followers of that Lord who while He had no earthly possessions of His own nevertheless moved untainted by covetousness among the possessions of others and told how to use houses and lands, and of that apostle who declared that the whole creation, travailing in pain, awaits the revelation at the hands of the sons of God, are to seize the earth to make it bloom like the garden of the Lord. Spiritual health is so closely linked with earthly conditions in our present sphere that it is hard to see how the world could have so long undervalued the significance of the material for the spiritual. The materialist is using in a wrong spirit an instrument that does not properly belong to him. The instruments belong in the hands of those who can do better with them. In a word an objection to materialism is that it does not get enough from matter. Matter itself is degraded in the outworking of materialism ;—it is much more fortunate under the sway of the spiritualists. In the attempt at control of matter some indeed will come to grief, for they will fall under the spell of

wealth or earthly power. Demas left the Apostle, having loved this present world. But a body of men controlling material goods as tools for the sake of the spiritual welfare of men constitute an argument which the avowed materialist will find it hard to dislodge.

At this juncture some one will object that all the above is obviously unfair. The objector will protest that some materialism does admittedly result from giving the material things the wrong stress, but that much other materialism comes from pure speculation and splendid search for truth, that many materialists are such sincerely, that they have made costly personal sacrifices for the sake of their belief. All such puttings of the argument as ours are not fair to those noble explorers, we are told. In rejoinder we repeat our disavowal of any intent to represent materialists as personally evil-minded. All that we maintain is that the system works down and not up. We cannot always tell what a system is by noting its effects on the lives of those who first formulate it. The character of such persons is very likely "set" long before they come to the formulation of their theories. They may not be thrown far off the track by their

own formulations. But when the theory has been taught to others whose minds are still plastic, the inherent logic of a false system may be expected to reveal itself. Here again there may be restraints which make the adherents of the creed better than the creed, but the ultimate trend will be in a false direction. And even if there is not such an outcome, the spectacle of Christian people employing for the further victories of Christianity the very tools which the materialist has wielded against the Christian system is illuminating.

Take the honour given to law in materialism. How trenchantly "the reign of law" was urged against Christian belief in the old days of some thirty years ago! How mighty the "reign of law" seems to some opponents of the Christian system to-day! And yet how completely this very conception has been incorporated into more recent Christian thinking! When once the Christian reasoner saw that law never could have more than an instrumental function all his fear vanished. While there are still some who imagine that there is an inherent incompatibility between the scientific idea of law and the idea of the presence of God in the world the general understanding is fast

coming to be that God works through law. The reign of law can mean nothing but the reign of whoever is back of the law. Of course the materialist will correct us by saying "whatever is back of the law." But when we see discovery of and subjection to scientific law used mightily for the advancement of the spiritual faith we may be justified in demanding more conclusive reasons for belief in materialism than any which have yet been offered us. One inescapable difficulty in materialism is just this,—that while law may be omnipotent it was mind that discovered the omnipotence, and mind in the act of discovery goes back to its old position of supremacy over the law. But the materialist says this is too fine and far fetched. We insist then that the materialist must consider the significance of the fact that the laws of nature are used to-day as never before for setting the conceptions of Christianity on high. We are willing that the Scriptures be studied in accordance with scientific principles,—every reputable theological school to-day insists upon such study; we insist upon the investigation of the phenomena of Christian experience by the experts in psychology; we declare our purpose that the teachings of the historians

shall be applied to the study of the career of the Church. And all we ask in return is that the scientific student be willing on his part to face facts when he meets them. If there is found an efficacy in prayer, if the power which was lodged in the Hebrew religion cannot be explained by the external historic causes at work, if there is manifestly more in the inner vitality of the conceptions of the Church than can be accounted for by the economic or social spirit of a particular period, if the beliefs of the Church are seen to be not merely effects but also causes, if above all there is in the life of the Christ a fountain of spiritual efficiency which exhausts the customary historical tabulations and classifications,—if all or any of these results appear all that we ask is that in the spirit of scientific inquirers we be allowed to take scientific account of the findings. It is more scientific to admit that some things cannot be explained on the basis of scientific principles as we now have them than to maintain that everything must be classifiable within our present scientific set of pigeonholes. In any event we shall use what science we have with a spiritual motive. It is very well to declare that the scientist seeks knowledge as an end in

itself without any reference to the purpose to which his discoveries are to be put and that scientific knowledge is an end in itself, but all this can mean is that there are higher and lower uses for science. When we speak of knowledge as an end in itself what we are likely to mean is that the contemplation of this knowledge renders delight to a fine type of highly cultivated mind, rather than supplies hints to some mechanical inventor. But if the knowledge is thus finely inspirational it is still instrumental,—instrumental for quickening a mind without regard to the commoner use to which the mind may direct the knowledge. All our previous discussion has been vain if we have not made it clear that we believe in knowledge of this high degree, and in the contemplation of such knowledge as likely to stimulate the Christian community as readily as it will stir the intellects of any who deny Christianity. There is no reason why a man should be a materialist to get the thrill which comes with the revelations of astronomy. There is no reason either why he should be a calculator for a nautical almanac. He may be a believer in Christianity, finding in the latest researches into the starry marches across the skies commentary upon the psalmist's word

that night unto night showeth knowledge. He may affirm with another believer that he is thinking God's thoughts after Him. But whether to matter-of-fact or to rare speculative desires the knowledge ministers. With this belief in the instrumental function of knowledge the Christian is in position to make the utmost of the idea of law. There are diversities of instruments. There are hammers and hand-saws, but there are also organs and pictures. Nothing in our conception of the Christian attitude towards the instrumental warrants the contention that we must use instruments for any purpose lower than that for which they are intended. The Christian life is the life of the whole man, and the Christian seeks for instruments which will minister to the whole man. The attitude of the Christian community then towards the doctrine of materialism will be first to ask what in materialistic theory should be cut away and then to proceed to cut. After that the query will be as to what can be offset by Christian character. Most important of all will be the question as to what can be used for human welfare. Some parts can be used for the material relief of men; some for the intellectual satisfactions without any reference to so-called utilitarian



needs ; some for the gratification of æsthetic and spiritual demands of highest rank. The utilization of whatever is worth while in materialism is Christianity's answer to and conquest of materialism. The process of conquest has gone far enough in our own day to constitute a very unusual triumph. Because the conquest has moved on under our eyes we may have missed something of its meaning. For one marvel that investigation begun by materialism has forced Christianity to surrender, Christianity has won back from materialism a thousand marvels.

And so with idealism, which stands over against materialism in protest against materialism. Idealism can be just as irreligious as materialism ; and so far as concerns outcome in the life the extreme materialist and the extreme idealist may join hands. The idealist may put on a loftier air than the materialist because he claims a nobler line of intellectual ancestry, but that may be about the only difference. The critical objections to the idealism which ranks thought above thinkers are well enough known to the professional teachers, but most others find both the doctrines and the criticisms so dry that they pay little attention to them. This is no reflection on the patient metaphysicians.

They have to travel through the dry places. But the effective protection against extreme idealism is the protest of living consciousness against the extremes of idealism and after that the seizure of rational idealism for the purposes of Christianity. One danger of idealism is a logic-chopping which reduces the whole realm of life to barrenness ; but if there are persons who refuse to be made barren they are in so far an answer to radical idealistic theory. The proof that the idealistic theory is inadequate in its extreme form is the manifestation that there is more in life than mere ideas, and that vital movement is more than strictly logical movement. This does not imply a resort to the illogical, but it does imply emphasis on the indispensable emotional and æsthetic and volitional natures. Another danger in idealism is the tendency to pantheism and monism. Men are but phases of the All. The decisive counteraction here is personal protest against being anæsthetized into any idealistic All. If life meant no more to us than to the Hindu we might welcome some Buddha who could administer spiritual chloroform, but we have been insisting from the beginning that Christianity makes the most of the individual persons. Christianity develops beings who re-

fused to be absorbed. Surrender to the "divine thought" does not mean soul-ob-  
literation. The more deeply Christian a man  
becomes, the more deeply individual he be-  
comes. The development of a community  
of individual Christians is an antidote to the  
idealism which is tainted with pantheism.  
Of course the strict idealist will respond that  
his system soars above all such trifling argu-  
ments,—which may be true,—but before  
pantheistic idealism can be convincing it  
must step down from absolutism and es-  
tablish some connection with workaday  
notions which may indeed be relative, but  
which are nevertheless real enough to those  
of us who are tangled in the present web of  
relationships. Incidentally the high absolu-  
tists might be aided by a sense of humour.

A further guard against that pantheism to  
which extreme idealism tends is the cultiva-  
tion of an intense moral sense. If there is  
no separateness in the individual man and if  
his will cannot be called into account in any  
degree for the presence of moral evil in the  
world, then this moral evil must be pro-  
nounced a necessary constituent of the mon-  
istic All. We unload our sins upon the All  
and make him, or it, responsible. Now  
Christian reflection gets on very well with

the presence of physical evil in the universe, —and that not by ignoring such physical evil but by frankly recognizing it and by struggling to reduce it and by waiting for the light of a further explanation which we may not now be qualified to receive. But with moral evil the difficulty is more serious. If we are to have a God at all we might just as well have a God worth while, and a personal or impersonal God of whose character our sins are an expression would hardly be morally worth the intellectual labour to find Him. We say “intellectual labour,” for that is about the only path to the deity possible to the strictly intellectualistic explorer. A furious opposition to moral evil in the heart of vast masses of people would at once suggest the impossibility of carrying this battle up into the Godhead of the pantheistic scheme. Chronic belligerency and self-contradiction in the inner phases of the deity would not be much of a fulfillment of that craving for unity which has given absolute systems so much of their power.

In a word this whole absolutist construction is the outcome and expression of a demand for unity on the part of the human mind. The absolutist has made his absolutism appear as if it stood off by itself in its own

right, but whatever value there may be in absolutism results from its ministry to men's needs. Absolutism is related to our needs partly as their expression and partly as their supposed fulfillment. The entire system is a commentary on confounding ends and instruments. Thought in the impersonal sense is an instrument. In any other sense thought is a thinker thinking. But this purely instrumental creation, thought, gets around in front of the thinker and becomes the finality in itself. Impersonal thought has to be brought back to the instrumental place. It has to be led to its place and must be commanded to sit there. Hardly any arrogance in the history of intellect has approached that of the absolutists, and hardly any arrogance has been less justified. The arrogance has sought to obliterate persons in the name of the product and output of personal life. Yet these persons have considerable powers of protest,—enough at least to establish for them the claim to belligerent rights.

But the idealistic program has merits and can be mastered for the Christian community. On the intellectualistic side it wins room for about the only respectable theistic argument we have,—the argument that things cannot exist apart from the divine thought, though

the realists—old and new—are right in insisting that there is in things an element not created by human thought. If we keep impersonal thought in the strictly instrumental place there is value in the teachings of idealism. In the system there is indeed that chronic tendency to confuse thought and thinker but this is readily detected, and once on our guard against it we need have no fear. The best way to conquer idealism is to use it. For example take the claim that nothing can exist apart from thought. Thought relations are woven through everything. This truth is sometimes so emphasized as to leave the impression that there is nothing in the universe except ideas, and all the warmth of feeling and doing are left out. But making allowance for this one-sidedness it is part of the duty of the Christian community to weave thought-relationships persistently into the fabric of daily life. We teach that Christian love is central in the realm of personal existence, but too often we make no attempt to rationalize Christian love, or even to make it sensible. Of course we know that in many a crisis we get light just by taking sides, and by forcing a conclusion by a decision of will. It is, however, a duty to try to bring all activities into ac-

cord with reason. Accord with reason may occasionally demand that we act without a reason which we can articulate, but Christian sentiment and Christian activity need more and more to be lifted from the lower plane of impulse and to be informed with idea. Christians are to vindicate their claim to divine sonship in the realm of severe creative thinking, in which realm their duty must be to make all their activities conform to reason. Society is harassed to-day by the preaching that men ought to act according to their instincts even if these instincts be chiefly animal. Christianity should develop a vigorous logic with which to insist that life is not human until the activities move in the direction of intelligence. We would not harden the Christian life down to rigid logic of a mechanical stiffness, but we hold that if the Christian life is not in the stern sense rational it is not entitled to be called human. This power of intellectual system building is one of the distinctively human abilities. And if the system does not run off into such absurdity as that of putting the creation ahead of the creator the idealism which takes for its motto that nothing should be attempted apart from rational principle is wholesome. Is Christian love to be just a smiling and

amiable well-wishing and good humour? Or is it to be the love which seeks light of fact and reason everywhere as to what is best for men, and acts in harmony with that light? Abounding in faults as is the teaching of the idealists, impossible as it is to "deduce" to the extent which they claim, the idealists may well be imitated by the Christian community in their firm insistence upon the rights of thought. The human mind in its daily relationships is not likely to think too much. The average believer is not prone to become enough sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought to be in peril when he listens to idealistic speculators. And moreover the tendency to materialism in one shape or another is so inevitable at all times that most of us are helped by an idealistic bath quite frequently. The pressure of the world of things is so unrelenting that the perusal of the most extreme idealism sometimes serves well as a counter pressure. And so long as we keep our eyes open and do not bewilder ourselves into fancying that we are face to face with absolute finality we shall do well to resort to the idealistic philosophers now and then as veritable means of grace.

Some storm-battered intellects, having made the rounds from common sense to



materialism and then by reaction to idealism, find themselves at the end in agnosticism. Others arrive at agnosticism by a different route. Agnosticism is with some just intellectual weakness or weariness. The mind is tired out so that it cannot believe. In confronting such agnosticism the Christian leader will attempt to tone up the whole life. A distinguished scientist used to say that he always felt a tendency to agnosticism when the currents of his life began to run low, and that he would find his way out by reading the greater poets, or by listening to the hymns of the faith, or by reaching out for closer fellowship with dear friends. Some agnosticism is the outcome of spiritual starvation, though we use the terms without reflection upon the character of the agnostics themselves. They may not be to blame for the dwarfing experiences through which they have passed. But in helping such impoverished souls the soundness of life in the Church itself should be an aid. The whole life of the Church ought to be so quick and stirring as to arouse life in others. The positive note should be ever ringing. The students of Christian thought in recent years have done much for us in demonstrating that the experiences on which Christian opin-

ion depends rise and fall with the rise and fall of the vitality of the inner man ; hence the more reason why everything about a Church should suggest vigour. This can only mean in the last analysis, of course, the vigour of the persons who compose the Church.

Much fluent criticism of the Church falls to the ground as soon as we realize the effectiveness of the Church in thus creating the conditions out of which belief arises. A writer in a very reputable magazine devoted quite a stretch of space recently to the contention that the Church must stand or fall with the answer to an inquiry put to this particular correspondent by a newspaper reporter who pulled forth his note-book to take down the answer, — the question being : “What is the Church doing that I can report to my paper ?” Every few days somebody raises the same sort of interrogation. In our hesitation before the question we may yield ourselves to a momentary feeling of distress because we forget the different meanings of “doing.” The word may mean just those actual achievements of aggressive campaigning which a newspaper would be likely to “play up” with catchy head-lines in a daily issue. The most important events cannot thus be played up. That from one hundred

to a thousand people assembled yesterday at a service which in song and prayer and sermon was forceful with unanalyzable power in creating the conditions out of which belief grows is not news in the technical sense. The present speaker happens to be acquainted with the work of a metropolitan preacher whose sermons seldom abound with direct demolitions of unbeliefs or even with exhortations to detailed duties. The minister is a man of abounding spiritual, intellectual, and physical vitality. Those who hear him for thirty minutes on Sunday are caught in the momentum of that vitality,—or rather they are for the moment drenched with the life of a man who can fill other people with his own vitality. This sort of service does not make newspaper copy except occasionally, but the good work goes on not occasionally but continually. Ask a man why he goes to such a church and he may reply vaguely that the service makes him feel better,—at which the scoffer may smile, but out of that “feeling better” comes a firmer belief and a completer freedom from doubt.

The best reply to the doubter is the presence not so much of beliefs as of believing persons. Agnosticism should be met by Christian daring. The venturesomeness of

faith, especially when it leads to expanding and improving life, is the reply to the doubts of the times. The theoretical objections to the possibility of walking are solved by walking. The objections to belief are solved by believing. The believers who attain to life by their belief are the actual facts that make doubts difficult. If Christianity ever loses this quality of magnificent daring it will cease to be the Christianity of Christ. The belief in God, the belief in men, the belief in the possibility of filling the whole world of men with the spirit of Jesus,—these are the bold ventures which show forth the daring of Christianity. Hope grows by its own exercise. The persons actually at work at the relief of world-wide heathenism or at the redemption of cities and nations from civic evils, do not seem easily discouraged. If now such persons were clearly becoming more and more erratic, if they were all cranks and visionaries, we might say that their faith draws them out of touch with the realities which centre around sanity. That word “sanity” is badly overworked, but we probably mean by it a living union with the forces which are normal and healthy and human. The mass of missionaries and social workers, those facing the most discouraging

tasks, seem to be highly sane. Common sense might seem to impel them to quit their tasks and go home, but the most sensible seem to stay longest on the tasks, and the ones who give up in despair are those likely to develop aberrations and eccentricities. The queer missionaries are those who have abandoned the field. Most of them are back at home. The aberrant social reformers are not the heroes of the battle-line struggling with vice and squalor.

But let us hasten to remind ourselves that there is a place in the Christian community for a spirit of agnosticism which is at bottom faith,—the faith of willingness to leave some problems unsolved, with confidence that the results can be left in the hands of the Father in heaven. If we get at the cause of agnosticism in some persons we may find it to be the reaction from too extensive claims to knowledge either on their own part or on the part of some believers with whom they have been associated. Take one theme very important to us all,—the belief in immortality. Many Christian believers in immortality do not say much about their belief, and that for the reason that they do not wish to seem to assume more knowledge than they possess. They feel convinced of their essential im-

mortality as sons of the Father, but just how to construe the conditions of eternal life they make no claim to know. They say frankly that they do not know. There is no data upon which to frame even an opinion. All that we have is so clearly pictorial or else so utterly drawn from a world-view which has passed away, like that of Dante's or Milton's splendid imaginings, that we say that we have no knowledge whatever in the exact sense. Now this is a sincere and reverent and Christian agnosticism. It is the agnosticism of faith and not of doubt, for the believer is entirely willing to leave the outcome in divine hands. He does not profess knowledge which he does not have. And so with scientific or formal proof of even the fundamentals of the Christian religion. We have no proof of the existence of God which will make any one believe whether or no, without a venture of faith. Kant once said that the wisdom of the Almighty had been shown us quite as much in what had been withheld from us as in what had been revealed. We shall get on best by conceding the limitations of our mental instruments. Some who think of themselves as agnostic are not really so. The Christian minister, in dealing with doubters, should proceed very

carefully. It may be that the man who is outside the organizational fellowship because he doubts is a more intelligent, or more reverent, or more believing disciple than some who are within. Some within may not question because they may not be over-supplied with the instruments for questioning. There is a sphere in Christian experience for legitimate suspension of judgment. The simple recognition of this will keep some from leaving the Church because of supposed agnosticism, and will certainly aid in correcting the misapprehensions of those who resent this or that claim of the believers to knowledge to which no one may be able to show title.

There is an intellectual current to-day towards a theory which may well seem at first glance to be just what Christianity needs for its final apologetics,—the theory of personalism. There is indeed in this doctrine much which is in common with Christian thinking. We can employ this present day conception with much effect for expositional and explanatory purposes. But current personalism stands sadly in want of correction by Christian doctrine. It is not as yet a system. Some of its most able expositors teach that individuals exist from all eternity ;

some set individuals out in such independence from a Creative Person as virtually to deprive God of power of creation and leave Him just the Bigger Person among us smaller folk ; some push the doors open for a riot of individualism,—and all leave their exposition at rather loose ends. The existence of the Christian brotherhood should point to the possibility of a community of interest and endeavour which will curb the lawlessness of the riot of individuals. Personalism is usually professed by those who have wearily tramped through materialism and idealism and have come back to themselves and others like themselves as the facts of the universe. So far so good,—but the differences between persons and the need of the improvement of persons are often overlooked. Christianity has an opportunity with this latest phase of opinion in insisting that the people of the world are the ends with whom we have to do and in making the most of the world for the persons in the world.

Somewhat similar criticism must be passed upon pragmatism. Pragmatism is more a protest than a system, and in the main it is a healthy protest. But the moment a man sits down to frame a system as a system he is dangerously near having to admit that there



is something in the world beside immediately practical interests or else he would not be sitting down to study. Of course the pragmatist will reply that he is trying to make his thought so clear that any one can see that the final test of truth is in its practical result. But we could get along with much less exposition of pragmatism to-day if its aim were as matter-of-fact as it professes to be. The truth is that the pragmatist to-day is busy at the same ideal that has drawn on all the other fashioners of systems,—he is trying to satisfy the purely intellectual cravings by self-consistent formulations as truly as is the believer in absolutism. Tell a pragmatist that his system is not logical and he gets excited. But if the aim is merely pragmatic there is no reason why the pragmatist should be particularly logical. Daily life can get along without much logic, if the strictly practical result is all. Of course if the presence of contradictions annoys us, that is a different affair,—and possibly a purely intellectual affair. We must then be strictly logical as we prove that logic does not matter, or logically industrious to prove that we have a right to be logically lazy.

The difference between pragmatism and the Christian doctrine of knowing by doing is

in the order of results sought for. The Christian demand is for the very highest order of results. The consequences by which truth is indicated in the Christian view are the consequences in the range of the highest and best. The whole man in the loftiest activities must be ministered to, but in pragmatism which does not care much for anything except pragmatism itself, the movement is apt to slip towards the lower consequences. Pragmatism must lock the brakes to keep from sliding down hill. What is agreeable to life depends upon whose life is under consideration. Without some high ideal pragmatism as a test of truth amounts to little. Savages or barbarians or Christians might alike use the scheme with differing results depending upon the differing driving ideals. Of course it will be understood that we are not professing to criticize pragmatism from the more technical point of view. We take it simply as a means for the discovery of truth. If now we make the truth mean the highest life for the believer we can use the pragmatic principle. The truths of Christianity lie peculiarly in the field of moral test; with other sorts of tests we have not now especially to do. But there is no path to the discovery of specifically Chris-

tian truth but by moral venture. The resulting consequences, in the inner as well as the outer life of the whole man are the characteristically Christian witness.

We have passed in review these schemes of speculation more for illustration than for any other reason. There are other spectacles for looking at the universe besides the ones we have mentioned. But enough has been said to show the function of Christianity in dealing with world-views. We aim to create a set of spiritual facts which any open-eyed observer must take into account. If a world-view itself is important it must not miss so important a fact as the Christian system. And the facts of the Christian system must be kept dynamic and personal. The conflict is not so much between conflicting world-views in themselves as between different manners of life. Again, the difference between the life nourished by one sort of belief as over against another may not be altogether due to the difference in the quality of the contents of the differing views. All that may be required to make a hitherto unchristian system essentially Christian may be just a better emphasis. The scientific instructor who teaches the farmers how to work their fields more profitably does not necessarily advise

them to throw away the tools which they have always used and which their fathers used before them. It may be that the slightest change in adjusting the handles to the plow will cause all the difference between a tool that works beneficially and one that works harmfully. Or, in another sphere, a lens which now does nothing but distort may with the least turn of a screw give an exact image. Or a food that now almost poisons may lack just a little of one ingredient or have too much of another. Or the atmosphere may be that of too low an altitude, or it may sweep across a disease-laden swamp. So in the utilization of the world-views. The Christian attitude is not critical until reason for criticism appears. When such reason appears it is fortunate if we are able to lay the finger precisely upon the objectionable spot. To do this is the function of the trained thinker. But with the objectionable feature away, and the whole rightly focused, and the good rightly appropriated the kingdom comes to its own. World-views may determine the believer's attitude towards even the details of daily conduct. How important then that these instruments should be seized and redeemed. Swamps can be redeemed by draining and wild lands by cutting off the

ranker growths. After this they may become the most productive soils. So with some ways of looking at the universe.

An old time writer once found reason to marvel at the universe because it was established upon the floods and founded upon the seas. The world to him was a wonder of balance,—the dry land resting steadily upon a surface of water. The psalmist's conception of the world has passed away, but not his reason for marvelling at the universe. Only, our thought is not of a standstill steadiness but a steadiness of direction in the midst of a sea of changes. The system of Christian beliefs is like a ship which holds to her course and gets ahead in spite of some rolling. The balance of the ship is shown not in never yielding to the waves, but in never capsizing, in an inevitable swing back when she has rolled far to one side. There are discomforts in such travel, but we advance best by letting the ship roll. Better rise and fall with some ocean swells than to try to cut through them. Both the pitch and the roll may help us forward. That ship is the best instrument which best gets us ahead.



LECTURE IV  
ON MAKING MORALITY HUMAN





## LECTURE IV

### ON MAKING MORALITY HUMAN

**A** FURTHER field to be occupied by the Christian Church is that of morality. This seems like a woefully commonplace statement on its face but what we mean is that the field of moral theory and practice is not to be permitted to stand apart from the Christian religion as an independent realm. Of course we expect the Christian believer to be moral as a matter of course, but we feel also that the Christian capture of the kingdoms of this world cannot be complete until this world's morality is made Christian in root and branch.

The kingdom of moral theory and practice, operating entirely on its own principles and without reference to religion, is a dreary territory. It has from the beginning lacked freshness and verdure. Reading a course in formal ethics is like travelling across a desert with the difference that we are not likely to happen upon an oasis anywhere except per-

haps that of the charm of an occasional author who is not quite dried up. Moreover the man who starts out to be professedly and outspokenly a "moral man," apart from any bracing or reënforcement by religion, too often tends towards woodenness without much magnetism. The unreligious moral man never can understand why he is often dealt with slightly by the professedly religious people. They sometimes speak of him indeed too harshly, as if he were a sinner above all others, whereas he may not be a sinner at all. But he is dreary, especially when he falls to discoursing on morality. He insists that he has no underlying assumptions of a religious cast; he believes in right for right's own sake and hates a lie just because it is a lie. This sounds well enough when we first hear it, but it speedily becomes tiresome.

The reason for the weariness is not far to seek. The academic moralists have esteemed their systems as self-sufficient and their formulas as ends in themselves. They have put the cart before the horse,—a performance which is sometimes interesting but which usually prevents rapid travelling. The phrases which the moral theorist manipulates mean little apart from the vigour imparted to

them from full-lived human beings. The professional moralist does not immerse himself in the currents rushing through the actual world often enough to keep his theories from evaporation. Impersonalism clings to moral discussion like a pest. The progress of moral reflection has threshed out some good terms which have proved indispensable, but the tendency is to allow these to become sufficient in themselves and to stiffen into the impersonal.

Consider the more important terms. Moral theory necessarily has much to say about the "chief good." Here the tendency is especially likely to set towards impersonalism. One thinker declares that the chief good is virtue for its own sake. But what is virtue in the abstract? We would say more if we said that the virtuous person is an end in himself, or the chief good. Moreover a virtue which might not result in making life happier would not be worth while. A moralist who realizes this declares that the chief good is the sum of human happiness and that it is the object of the moral man to increase this sum. This looks promising till we try to get to close quarters with it. Sir Frederick Treves once estimated in terms of hours the sum of pain banished in a given

time by the London hospitals. He calculated from the amount of anæsthetics and sedatives consumed, and announced the hours of relief from pain that the specified quantities of these drugs would render. This is possible of course with an approximate accuracy, but nothing so exact would be attainable if we tried to get at a sum of happiness. For then all the qualities of persons have to be taken into measurement. Of course there are differences in pain, but there is more nearly a common element in pain than there is in happiness. Neuralgia is very much itself wherever found, but a happiness varies. The exhortation to add to the sum of human happiness ordinarily forgets that there is not pleasure or happiness in the world but pleased and happy persons. As soon as this is recognized of course the inclination is to the idea that the chief good is the good man, but here too we have to be on our guard lest we manufacture an abstract man amazingly unlike any one in the houses or on the streets,—a much less agreeable creature than was even the economic man who stalked with such stiff steps through the pages of the older writers on the political sciences. We cannot make anything out of the conception of the chief good until we come to the good

man but we must bring the good man close enough to actual life to keep him human.

Another term of the moralist is our old college-days' friend,—the categorical imperative. It would be difficult to push anything along in ethics or anywhere else without some kind of imperative, but impersonal imperatives soon lose their "drive." The term has to be reënforced by personal life. As soon as the categorical imperative becomes not some supreme command outside of us standing in its own authority but just a demand of whole life growing in the direction of what seems to be highest and best we begin to obey gladly, but not before. The real imperative is that of an appetite or a craving. We have heard of the saint who became perplexed over the idea of God and finally gave up the idea, being convinced that there is nothing higher in the universe than the abstract principle of right. Of a worshipful and reverent temperament he continued his prayers but directed them not towards God but towards the abstract principle of right. Soon this saint found his way back to reliance on a personal God. Incidents like this here and there recorded in biographies of worthy spiritual leaders are often misunderstood. It is easy to conceive

of such an incident as a tribute to a moral conception in itself. As a matter of fact the story proves nothing so clearly as the momentum of a good life which, though distressed by momentary doubt, swung on through a prayer addressed to an empty and dead abstraction back to a normal religious health.

Then there is the term "intuitionism." But whose intuitions are meant? The intuitions of the man long practiced in moral uprightness may be reasonably sure, but what about the intuitions of a less mature man or of a weak man, or of one whose life has been marred by immorality? Of course we can say that even these persons should live up to their moral intuitions, but suppose they are in the majority and try to impose their faulty intuitions on the rest of us? Even in their own case how far can we continue to allow them to do themselves moral harm by following the intuitions of their untutored or unhealthy consciences? Utilitarianism comes in to help us out with a behest that we regard the consequences, but whose utilities after all are most to be regarded? If we take account of inner consequences,—the consequences which accrue inwardly as well as outwardly to the man striving to live

aright, intuitionism and utilitarianism would be about equivalent to each other. But neither of them is of surpassing value until we ask as to whose intuition and whose utility. So with common-sense morals. What does this give us until we know whose common sense we are to follow? We run through these terms of moral discussion which, we repeat, are indispensable,—to show that they are not worth much until living persons give them living content. In plodding through the discussions of the moralists we are in a plight somewhat similar to that in which we find ourselves in reading the debates of the scholastics. The substance of the debates of the scholastics is not precious. There is too much beating of old straw. But the scholastics did build fairly some good threshing machines. That is to say, they developed some very serviceable instrumental terms; their terminology has value to-day. So with moral theory. The terms are good,—but they must not be taken as important in themselves. They are instruments to be handled by moral beings who are the ends in themselves.

It is not the purpose of this lecture, however, to discuss moral theory. The intent is simpler. We wish to show how the moral

life can be made much more attractive and moral theory much more vital by keeping to the front the human interests and meanings. And we begin by remarking that it is the duty of the Christian community to force uppermost the demands of the usual and ordinary rounds of life as of chief importance for the development of moral character. Morality must be kept near the earth. We know what harm has been wrought in religious experience by allowing persons, especially young persons, to acquire the notion that religious experience consists in unusual states of feeling. We err when we pick out the instant of rapt insight and the moment of exalted uplift and make these the heart of religion. These may indeed be the heart of religious experience, but only if they have come out of experience of another order,—the experience of daily practice of righteousness. So with the moral duties. These are not to be found largely in the realm of the unusual. The duties in time of shipwreck or of war or of martyrdom have little to do with the problems which we meet day after day. About as speedy a route as any out of the living contact with the world in which we live is to make such imagined situations the topic of much moral discourse.



The reply that in such unusual settings the jewel of the moral principle is displayed most advantageously is of slight worth. Much more light on the extraordinary situation is likely to come at the proper time to him who has been faithful in the daily moral practice. The Christian community must not get away from the insight of its Founder. The daily tasks are the important tasks; these have the right of way as lying closer to actual human life. The moral duty is to freshen these daily relationships by stimulating them with noble purpose. What is the profit of wrangles over that threadbare inanity as to whether a lie is ever justifiable as compared with incessant practice of integrity in the customary duties? The only extraordinary we need trouble ourselves with is not something standing apart from the ordinary, but something lifted above the ordinary by the operation of the same laws as those which control the ordinary. If the extraordinary is not this it is just a freak set of happenings without bearing on the moral career. Christianity is to make morality more personal, closer to human existence, nearer the earth on which most of us walk. We might well take for our motto in this field the sanctification of the ordinary. We may learn some-

thing here from that method of modern instruction of children in the schools which begins with the facts nearest home. In geography, for example, the child is taught why the street in front of the door is located where it is. What principles are set forth by the slope of the land towards the stream just out of the village? The principles which determine the value of real estate even on the small scale are substantially those which guide nations in their scrambles for new territories. The law of good will comes as near standing in its own right as any law in the moral kingdom; but the training of youth is not best secured by teaching the law of good will towards abstract or suppositious beings. Sound instruction begins with the obligations towards the neighbours or the playfellows. We must deliver ourselves from bondage to the abstract and unusual. The concrete and the usual comprise the sphere for moral training, and this emphasis on the usual is peculiar to Christianity.

A further way to prevent morality from becoming unhuman is to keep one's eyes off one's self. A man does not realize ideal character by seeking directly after character. We have said so much about the need of de-

veloping ideal life that some may think that we advise a man to set himself before himself as the true aim. We intend nothing of the kind. There is an indirectness about successful moral conquest,—that is to say, about that of the man who here and now attracts us as the kind of person we should like to be. Woodrow Wilson once remarked profoundly that character is a by-product. He meant that men do not attain character by marching out deliberately to attain character. The successful method is to lose one's self in a task ; and the character grows as an inevitable accompaniment. If we should ask a man why he gives himself to this or that activity and should get the answer : "To develop my character," we would put the man down as a prig. The outright cultivation of character may be more desirable from the point of view of systematic moral theory, but it is not the path by which virtue arrives. He who would save his life must lose it. Here we reach one of those odd moral paradoxes which so abound in actual experience. We have been preaching that the good man is an end in himself, but the moment a man begins to set himself up as the end he begins to dwarf himself. We shall have more to say about the social sphere of righteous en-

deavour later, but here we point out the futility of moral theory which preaches to a man to develop his character! Even in the preaching of the Gospel it is possible to make a hearer think too much about his own spiritual state. The unfailing sign of the presence of the Spirit of God in human life is absorption in the worthy task. When the mind begins to turn inward upon itself the symptoms of aberration may appear. Introspective morality is not quite human. It would seem part of the plan of the universe that a person is to contemplate himself just as little as possible. Even a mirror helps but slightly, for a man seldom catches himself as he is, and the clearest reflective surface does not give back all the truth. Moreover there seems something providential in the fact that a man after gazing into the mirror goeth away and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he is. Soiled faces and tumbled hair call for mirrors but there is small place in a healthy moral life for introspection. The less of it the better. The simplest observation reveals that a man is seldom himself while thinking of himself. The singer cannot sing, the player cannot play, with the hateful question as to whether he is doing well or ill ever before him. Nor can a man

do well towards developing the life which is the goal of Christian morals with the question as to how he is doing always uppermost. "Forget it" is often sound advice to a man of good intentions worried about his search for character.

The Christian teacher can render further service by showing that in actual experience many questions can be argued forever and that if we would keep the moral field fresh we must not debate everything to dust. There is an inherent indeterminateness about many moral problems. We get on only by moving the previous question and by taking a vote. We have to assume the responsibility for action and then act. We may not be able to tell what lies before us but we go ahead nevertheless. The frontiersman's motto that when in doubt we are to go ahead is bad advice if we have not sought out the course as far as we can. If we go ahead before we have done any scouting the advice is bad, but there is in some cases no better advice for the moral life, if the preliminary exploration has not brought back any definite report. In living moral experiences we have to break many paths. This is to be done with a consciousness of responsibility but it is to be done. There is no more unhealthy

moral state than that of constant debate. It will not do to argue some questions. Even to raise them is to open the door of the pit. And just to raise some other questions is to lose a sacred opportunity for beneficial action. We cannot have everything explained to us beforehand. Thus it happens that some great leaders, when after their success they are complimented on their reach of vision as if they had seen the end from the beginning, avow that they did not at all see the end from the beginning. They took the next step with the light they had and they came out aright. Or if they failed they had the satisfaction of knowing they were doing their best and then tried as quickly as possible to get back to the right path. The statesmen would be a hypocrite if he should pretend always or often to have foreseen just what the unfolding years actually have revealed,—for it is a peculiarity of human experience that we can see just a short distance before us. In some situations the past sheds but feeble light. We cannot tell what to do, but we do nevertheless. This enables a species of moral reasoner to rail at the mass of human conduct as immoral, or unmoral. It may be so, but this is the only way we advance. We feel it incumbent on us to get

ahead,—to get ahead, that is, towards the ideal human state which should mark those who are developing into the likeness of the divine. The explanation of the success of men who have gone ahead without formal reason for their advance is this,—that out of the doing of the right the whole life itself has begotten an intuitive sense of moral direction. Just as the woodsman develops a feeling of direction in the dense forest when he cannot see the sun, and just as many men have a sense of time which enables them to tell within a few minutes the hour of day without looking at a timepiece, so the doers of righteousness acquire a discernment that the true course is to one hand or the other without being able to tell just why they think so. They might debate forever without being able to say more than this. Now if this is intuitionism it is the intuitionism of the persons who have had the most practice in the development of the right sort of intuition. If we are to keep the realm of morality human we must see that realm as it is. There is no justification for laying claim to foresight here which we do not have elsewhere. We do not shut our eyes and go ahead,—we open them and go ahead,—but that does not mean that we always see very far. To any

one fully alive, however, this is part of the charm of the moral career,—this appeal to moral venturesomeness, not indeed the appeal to see how close to evil we can steer but the appeal to discover how far we can get towards the result which seems to us most worth while. The sphere of moral advance has the same charm and lure that other spheres of advance have when they are entered by those who carry not a set of formal principles good for all time but who carry a consciousness of the needs of persons to be satisfied by moral progress. In some courses we have attained to certainty. In other realms we are just beginning to be moral. The average man would be astounded and perhaps scared if he could now behold the morality of the future. We are beginning to catch foregleams of the future, especially in the realm of social activities, which are disquieting to some persons, but which summon others with a thrill as of the discovery of new continents. Genuinely human morality is always in the making. Conduct which was once regarded as innocent enough may be seen after a while as evil. The insight of the seer becomes through the expansion of intelligence the common property of the masses,—and wide-spread moral advance



results. It would be better if we would all keep this developmental, evolutionary aspect of morality in mind,—especially if we discern in ourselves the tendencies to loftiness of spirit as we give ourselves to abstract moral contemplations. Men whom we sometimes pronounce immoral may not be consciously so at all. They may be excellent as far as they go, but they may not go far. We are under obligations to help all such see the light, but not as if we had completely attained or were already perfect. From the point of view of the conduct which may mark the life of the years just ahead of us, we may to-day be sorry spectacles. And this same reflection ought to give us a historic moral sense in contemplating generations earlier than ours. A brilliant social student recently wrote a book showing that the framers of the constitution of the United States were interested in the capitalist class and that the constitution is in the light of its origin a capitalistic document. The main point is of economic and political value and the author himself would have been the first to admit the social wisdom of the founders of the constitution in their time. But some of the reviewers of the book speak as if we now had clear proof that the fathers of the

nation were the chief plunderers of their day and generation. As a matter of fact what is high social righteousness in one generation may be of doubtful propriety two generations later and clearly wrong two generations later still.

A still further freshening of the moral field is through taking the whole man into our plans. We have to live with men as they are and they are much more than appears in any single putting-forth of their activity. For example we hear to-day that if we can only get people to know the consequences of evil we shall turn them from evil. Nothing could be more mistaken. The assumption that the increase of knowledge will of itself increase moral power is far from the track. It is just a fractional truth,—or a truth based on a fraction. A man is appetite as well as knowledge and his knowledge has to be very compelling indeed to keep him on the right path, if his knowledge alone is to be depended upon. Perhaps this overemphasis on knowledge comes just out of the pedagogical necessities of the situation,—it being necessary to make some minds think of a truth as the only truth if they are to think of it as true at all. But if we conceive of a man as a creature to be reached solely by inform-

ing his intellect we make grievous mistake. The knowledge of the dire consequences of an evil does not necessarily make the evil itself any less seductive. We have an instance of this inadequacy in the present-day emphasis on instruction in sex hygiene as a preventive of sexual immorality. No doubt much sexual sin does come out of ignorance, but there is wide-spread temptation in this quarter which cannot be met by increase of knowledge. The men who know most of the consequences of sex transgressions are not always those who avoid the transgressions most determinedly. Such men, caught for example in the clutches of disease, are often the very first to find their way back to vice as soon as the disease is alleviated. The training of the whole life, including the will, is more significant than the training of the fraction of a man. Fractional moral training is not over successful in any event and soon leads to weariness and disgust.

Of equal inadequacy is the assumption that this or that man can be trained apart from his fellows. We are reserving the larger social questions for a later lecture, but we must here comment on the futility and barrenness of trying to upbuild lives in an unreal and strained isolation from other lives.

We have said that when we attempt this we bend the mind inward upon itself—compelling the will ultimately to spring back in rebellion. The law of good will is empty for us except in fellowship with companions and fellows. The path of the cross is still the path of life. Better for me to suffer with comrades than to enjoy myself alone. We advance not by minding each the affairs of himself but by minding the affairs of one another. And we help one another by making a social climate in which some temptations die out. Take the basic virtue of truth-telling, which seems to be a peculiarly individual virtue. There must be some one to whom the truth is to be told, and truth-telling rests on the assumption that the members of society are in the main in an attitude of good will towards one another and that men are entitled to the truth from one another. Suppose, however, that this fundamental assumption is mistaken, that the social condition is war on every man's part against his fellow, that every man is trying to cheat every other man. In such social atmosphere the moral notions become dreadfully perverted. The highest praise for the youth of fifteen is that he lies like a man of fifty. No one feels that he can afford to tell

the truth. So with chastity. If the social atmosphere breeds impurity the most virtuous in intention have to fight the downward pull. Society must furnish the conditions of morality. At least the general moral sentiment must be such that men can afford to be honest and virtuous.

And yet in this emphasis on the social we have always to remember that each man is a problem in himself. Each bears within himself at all times the mark of his own separateness, and that separateness must not be smothered under a blanket of too general moral law. Making men moral comes after while to be an intensely personal affair best left in the hands of those who know their acquaintances best. It is for parents and teachers and pastors and friends rather than for professed and professional moralists.

The intention of all that we have thus far said has been to show that morality must be freshened by being made personal. We cannot take any system as an end in itself and expect to become righteous by exalting that system. What we must exalt is the persons who desire to become better persons. From what we have said it is easy to see that the trouble with much morality is that it lacks not ideas but power; there is too often a

failure in dynamic. The function of the Christian religion is to supply the moral machinery with energy. The power can come only from the Christian persons, and the Christian persons can help mightily by preaching to the world the secret of Christian forcefulness.

We have said that energy does not spring primarily from knowledge. But when knowledge becomes operative and incarnate in men the knowledge takes on at least a degree of force. Take the force of some of the Christian ideas as an inspiration for the moral advance. We have seen that the end of moral endeavour is human life in all its higher possibilities. But what is a man? How can a moral thinker say that it makes no difference for morality how we answer? It may make no difference for morality considered as a set of abstractions, but it ought to make vast difference for morality considered as an affair of lives. We speak of moral development, but has moral development to do with the limited space of the earthly years, or has it an eternal race to run? A lie is a lie, and all good men should hate a lie, but not all men are good. The core of the difficulty is to help men to be good enough to hate a lie. We have not

much of an inducement to tell the truth if we are to believe that the universe is itself a lie. If we exist in a world which arouses our fondest hopes only forever to blight them, if it ties us to dear friends only to mock us at the last with the revelation that we shall see them no more, if it ultimately reduces everything which we regard as ideal to the dust, the universe itself is rather a huge liar. The idea of putting myself out to avoid telling a lie in such a universe may approach the ludicrous. Of course we know that this manner of remark stirs a certain type of moralist to fury, for according to him we ought to love morality for its own sake. We can admit this duty and yet maintain that the progress of persuading a majority of the people of the world to protest against a lying universe by themselves telling the truth and by standing for the truth is not hopeful on the basis of disregard of what the relation of the universe may be towards upright conduct. For when all is said the potent question with the average man concerning the moral struggle is: "What's the use?"

The Christian meets the question: "What's the use?" by the doctrine that a moral God controls a universe which is but the expression of the divine purpose. The believer

does not offer this as a proposition which can be proved. He does not affirm that we can go out and gather scientific data which will demonstrate the morality of the universe, but he does spread this belief over his head as a part of his intellectual sky. He avows that he finds light in that sky. Now the shining of light is not always capable of proof. It is not capable of proof to one who is blind or to one who will not throw open his windows or step out into the sunshine, or to one who will not open his eyes. But light is the prerequisite of almost everything else. When the Master told His disciples that they were to be the light of the world He seems to have had in mind their relation to the moral conduct of those who were to follow their leadership. They were to put a light in men's sky. When the blind lead the blind both fall into the ditch,—and that in spite of the earnest intentions of the blind leaders to keep out of the ditch, and in spite of the most intense desire of the blind followers to be kept out of the ditch. The light makes possible the moral life. The precepts of the moral law are fine instruments, but they have only a limited application if there is not light enough in the sky for us to use them. The Christian doctrine of God brings light. The universe



may not be all that men have claimed for it in relation to human needs. We may possibly some day find, for example, that the world has other purposes than merely those which have to do with human intelligences, but anyhow the world is usable by us and we can feel at home here. The revelation of the Christian religion shows us that the world belongs to our Father and that the earthly part of the world is one of the many mansions of the Father's house. God is a moral being, and our moral insights are but gleams of the light and life which are in Him.

President Eliot of Harvard once said that the first step in the moral development of children in a well-ordered home is to get the children to respect the father of the family. Respect should always underlie love. The Christian doctrine of God creates respect for God. This world is not altogether a nursery. It is a place where many of the children of God are beyond the nursery stage, and demand justice and righteousness in God's nature, as well as love. The revelation in Jesus is a pledge that the moral obligations which are binding on us are binding also on God. God is under the heaviest of bonds, —which He has had no desire to escape. There is suggestiveness in the remark of an

old saint who once declared that the revelation of the divine purpose in Christ is necessary to satisfy God's own self-respect. The remark may be a trifle overbold, but few reverent remarks of this sort are likely to be overbold. As soon as there are prophets or seers who can glimpse anything of the moral purpose of God it would seem that God is under obligation to let them know His purpose. If there were no other persons beside God Himself that would create one sort of moral problem. God would then be under obligation only to those moral laws which express His own inner nature, in other words, only to Himself. But the moment other beings of moral intelligence are brought into existence the Creator is under obligation to come into moral communion with them. He cannot stand aloof and refuse to do this and maintain His own self-respect. Why did the saint say this? Because he knew that a man could not give himself to such a refusal and maintain his self-respect, and self-respect must mean more to God than to man. The Christian revelation is of a God whom we can respect and trust. There is no hard-and-fast proof of the existence of this God, and this is what the moralist may have in mind when he says that strict morality cannot go

outside the realm of the actually known. He declares that strict uprightness cannot delude itself or bolster itself up with beliefs just because their consequences happen to be beneficial.

Abstract righteousness is never more distressingly unhuman than when it climbs into this lofty attitude; and from an unhuman position it often leaps over to an inhuman one. "We must be absolutely honest," declares the abstract moralist. And indeed we must. But we must not fancy ourselves honest when we spill all the human values out of life. There was once a very small boy who when asked the time of day never felt that he could reply that it was ten minutes past twelve, or any other exact minute, because the hands were moving, and that therefore he could not honestly say that they were at any one place. The boy would reply that the hands were passing from such figures to such other figures. Though this boy actually lived on earth he was hardly human. A normal human being is satisfied if he is understood in his intended meaning, for language is an instrument and as such has communication of thought for its purpose. The abstract moralist who believes in morality on its own account and declares against

the dishonesty of holding fast to beliefs in God which we cannot prove will never do much for the cause of any type of morality. If we made claims for Christian belief different from those we do make the case might be different. The present lecturer cannot be persuaded that the Christian is not honest when he makes the frankest distinction between what is known as objective fact and what is assumed on faith. In the Christian doctrine of God we are admittedly in the realm of belief. We avow as heartily as did Kant that there is no formal reasoning which will give the God of Christianity as the conclusion, to be known as we know that the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. We would remind the abstract and highly honest moralist that all the truths which can be known in this strictly logical procedure are about as momentous as this mathematical proposition. We refuse to be put at a disadvantage by this objection that our religious knowledge is not strict knowledge in a world where we cannot get anywhere without assumptions. After having made our assumptions we affirm that the idea of God thus assumed does satisfy our total life better than anything else we have ever

found,—it satisfies intellectual and emotional and volitional demands. We ought to be competent witnesses as to whether our demands are satisfied or not. So where does the dishonesty come in, except that we use the word “knowledge” when the moralist thinks we ought not? We use “knowledge” in the sense of faith experience; and in ordinary human speech such use is permissible if anything is. We are pointing out the only normal dynamic. We say that the light on morality comes from belief in God,—not scientifically demonstrable or logically deducible knowledge of God; and we point to the Christian community of persons as themselves proof of the justice of our belief. If we find that believing men become better men, better fathers and brothers and sons and husbands, better citizens, better members of the commonwealth, we declare that this is precisely the result at which we are aiming, and we hold fast the beliefs as aids to this rightness of conduct. We would not go so far as to attempt to explain the results of belief in detail on this or that individual, but we do maintain that on the whole and in the main this is the result which follows sincere entrance into the body of Christian believers. As instruments Christian beliefs are superior

to the formal precepts of abstract morality. If there is any risk in accepting the fundamental beliefs of Christianity we are willing to run the risk.

Much follows as implication from the Christian doctrine of God. The universe must be under a law substantially moral. Moreover if men are sons of God the confidence in immortality becomes at once potent in Christian circles. And now again the formal moralist breaks out upon us because we bring in immortality to bedim the pure moral motives of men. The moralist will have it that men cannot be moral when they are looking for pay for their virtue. In quoting thus from abstract moralists we are not quoting from straw men to whom we are attributing ready-made objections which we proceed to knock over. Men,—and famous men too,—have actually urged and are urging this type of objection. It is an interesting commentary on the moral state of some of these moralists that they can refer to life in terms of pay or reward when they find the desire for immortality so especially selfish. If the main current of life here is selfish there could be legitimate objection against continuing the opportunity for selfishness, but even the most detached of closet reasoners must surely

have seen the unselfishness of much life; they must have seen men delighting to serve and asking for a chance to serve forever. In what sense it is selfish to long for a chance to work for the highest and best forever does not appear. By the way, if the honest abstract moralist wants to be absolutely honest let him cease claiming impersonal immortality as immortality. The abstract moralist avows that he believes in immortality, but not personal immortality. The influence or the value of our lives is immortal. But impersonal immortality is not what ordinary speech means by immortality.

The desire for immortality is the desire to claim the whole universe as the moral sphere, to insist that God has righteous purposes for men which stretch beyond this present life, to offset the ironies and mockeries of earthly existence not so much by punishing some people and rewarding others in a spectacular readjustment as by vindicating and satisfying the instinct of the normal conscience for justice. The hard lot of this or that man may not count much with the sufferer himself. He may have made a stoic adjustment to it so that the hardship has ceased to trouble him, but the moral bystanders are not satisfied that any life should be unjustly

treated forever. And these bystanders have some rights. We desire to live in a world where righteous law rules throughout. We are like the spectators of a play or the readers of a novel. We wish the plot to "end right." We are not happy with a poor ending. The characters portrayed are not the only ones concerned. We onlookers are concerned. Our sense of fitness demands some consideration; and so we wish the universe to end right. We can work better with the expectation of the right ending. If some one convinces us that there is no immortality for men we shall give up the belief, but until thus convinced we shall hold fast to the belief. The belief morally agrees with us.

A foremost abstract moralist once burst out with contemptuous impatience on John Henry Newman on account of Newman's ability to persuade himself of the truth of religious beliefs because of their beneficial results. Newman's capacity for belief seemed to outrage this strict moralist, but the comment of the critic would seem to show scant insight into the process by which men attain to spiritual certainty. Moralists of a type seem to cling fast to their creeds because of the very disagreeableness of the beliefs, or unbeliefs. We find a saint now and then who



seems to imagine that the more disagreeable a call to duty the more surely it must be from God. So with some teachers of morality. The less of human value there seems to be in their systems the more the adherents seem to prize them. It is at least as rational to accept beliefs because they make us contented as to accept them because they make us miserable. The abstract moralist is of all men most impotent when asked to suggest a dynamic for the enforcement of actual morality. When the distinguished moralist to whom we have referred as criticizing Newman himself became alarmed at the spread of lawlessness in this country he made the suggestion that singing be more widely taught in the public schools, since singing has obviously a soothing and tranquillizing effect!

We come back to our avowal that in making morality vigorous we must put a sky over human life in the form of teaching about God and man. If men are sons of God the whole problem of duty towards our fellows pushes into new force at once. Since we are under obligations to be kind even to the beasts of the field no doubt we ought to be kind to men even if their career is to be as short as that of the beasts; but human

kindness is one duty if it is just an attempt to meet the commoner needs of men, and quite another if it is an effort to call forth the transcendent dignity attaching to men as at least possible sons of God. The condemnations of Jesus were for the inhuman who were inhuman just in overlooking opportunities to be human. Dives may have been a pretty good sort of fellow. He may have been an agreeable companion and a hospitable entertainer, but he overlooked responsibility to Lazarus. Dives in the second part of the Master's picture is about the same man as in the first. Very anxious that his brothers should not come into the place of torment, and very willing that Lazarus should be treated just as a convenience to carry water to him and to go and warn the brothers of their danger! The persons condemned in the Master's picture of judgment were not those we usually pronounce bad. No violent offenders are in the list, but those who have not treated men as men come under condemnation. What is God? The answer carries with it the answer to, what is man?—and what is human life? With some light on these questions we take a long stride towards a dynamic for morality.

But we remind ourselves that we ourselves have been teaching that light is not enough. Light is the indispensable prerequisite, but men can stand in the full light and not move towards the moral life. We must have an appeal which stirs the heart. Emotion which is sheer effervescence is nothing; but emotion which bursts out of ideas and impels to action is everything. Feeling which comes with the full light and which acts in the light is full of might.

The revelation in the cross of Christ has always appealed to the heart of man. An experience most apt to arouse us to repentant gratitude is to become aware of some one's patience towards us in spite of our own waywardness and wickedness. In one degree or another the cross makes us realize our cost to God and our debt to Him. The love of God for us is laid bare. The Son of God will meet the death of the cross to show us how far He will go in holy love for us. We must never cease to remember that all theories of the atonement are so many attempts on the part of successive generations to say that God has done whatever must be done to win us. God has done all that He can do. Whatever our theory, or whether we have any theory or not, this is

the aspect of the cross on which we agree,— that we have here the revelation of God's willingness to do all He can for us. Then our moral desire is aroused to do all we can for the sake of Christ. "For the sake of Christ" is on some lips a cant phrase but it has in it the secret of Christian effectiveness. We take upon ourselves His cross because it is His cross. The dynamic is especially powerful when we are face to face with the obligation to help some men as they actually are, for men are not always attractive in themselves, even though we are labouring for them because of what they are and may become. Suppose we take unqualifiedly the dictum that we are to sacrifice ourselves for men just because of what men are in themselves. Looked at apart from the Christian revelation men are not always winsome in themselves. We say of them that they have their future in the life which Christ can impart to them. For the sake of Christ, and of the vision of men which He gives us, we move forward undismayed by men as we here and now find them. The practice of self-sacrificing morality becomes rather cheerless if it does not base itself on the view which Christ took of men and on the cross which He was willing to carry for their sake.

But there is more still in the Christian dynamic, considered merely as centre and source of power. There is that belief in the Spirit of God as the Helper that sustains the members of the Christian community as they in their turn strive to help men. The Spirit is indeed the Helper. Men need to be reassured that their blunders are not fatal; that if they fall, they can get up and stumble on; that in time of stress they can feel their powers reënforced from within. Here we are in the realm of a fact as scientific as any which the laboratory affords. The members of the kingdom of God may be mistaken as to the assumptions on which they pray, but they can hardly be mistaken as to whether they get help from prayer or not. The most saintly among them say that they would soon be lost in the moral struggle if it were not for the reënforcement in prayer.

The fact that many well-meaning persons think they get on smoothly enough without prayer is not a sufficient rejoinder to the Christian's claim that he is helped in prayer. Many persons get on after a fashion without living up to hygienic or sanitary laws, because they do not know what life would be if they lived more in accordance with those laws. Many ignorant persons say that they

get on well enough without books,—simply because they do not know what is inside of books. The higher the life rises the greater the need of prayer to maintain that balance and poise which mark lofty saintliness. Some Bible readers cannot understand the temptations of Jesus, for example, simply because those temptations move in so rare an altitude. The temptation to surrender to a gross bodily appetite is intelligible enough to all, but not so the temptation to seek a short cut to win the mind of the nation. To steady Himself in the heights where He lived Jesus avowed His dependence upon prayer. Moreover the worker for the relief of men needs reënforcement against the moral wear and tear that come in the process of the moral work itself. It is possible for a man to be morally worn out in the very performance of Christian duty. There is a tendency to fall away from the ideal, to yield to the spirit of compromise, to become lost in the details and to forget the personal and spiritual aim of the work. And there are subtle considerations entering into the achievement of the highest morality which escape the eyesight of the coarser-grained. There is an element of timeliness in Christian effort which requires a keen moral discernment. Some

duties are duties just for a fleeting instant. The word is to be spoken or the deed done just now, if it is to have moral value. Or the problem of the wise placing of the life activity is before one who wishes to make the life count for the most. Or there is the problem of the true Christian manner. Some deeds must be done in just the right manner to have value. Jesus said: "Take heed *how* ye hear." "After *this manner*, pray ye." These are the fine considerations on which light breaks only for him whose intuitions are continually subject to the inflow of the life from belief in a personal Father in heaven.

And how much greater the need in the lives of those who have been bound with sin? What can abstract moral principles do with the man who has been literally reared in sin,—in that he has been surrounded by evil conditions from birth? For such a man especially, "ethical culture" without reference to change in the inner purpose by spiritual purification and reënforcement is lamentably inadequate. With those whose moral experience is conventional routine there may be no deep feeling of contrite need. Some persons are held to a measure of moral life by the conventional morality

around them. They act about as their neighbours do,—and that satisfies all their demands. But “ethical culture” goes to pieces in any heartrending spiritual crisis. Suppose the Salvation Army should throw aside the Gospel for the abstract precepts of moral culture. It is the aim of the Salvation Army to make men better morally,—especially in the commoner moralities. The Salvation Army could well afford to let its appeal for approval of the community rest on what it has done for the actual improvement of particular persons, but imagine the Salvation Army soldier talking to the dazed wretch in the gutter about moral precepts alone. There is needed the inrush of a new life.

Once more the moralist breaks out that such doctrine interferes with a man’s moral freedom, that such sentimental religion creates a fierce psychological and emotional storm which sweeps everything before it but which cannot be fundamentally moral. We may be permitted to dismiss this objection in view of the fact that the reformed man himself interprets the experience in personal terms. The new life which has rushed in upon him he believes to be the love of a Person who cares for him ; and his obligation towards that Person is a personal debt.



The Christian Church must freshen the moral field. That field, at least in its theory, is like a tract of earth which has the proper soil constituents but which lacks just one requisite,—water. The rains must fall, or the rivers must be carried to the dry acres. Christianity does not add greatly to the list of moral precepts. The ethics of Christianity are not so very different from the ethics of some other systems, but Christianity can irrigate the ethical soil. She does so in the personal methods which we have been attempting to describe. And Christianity must succeed at this. Failure here is fatal. We know how deadly becomes the criticism directed towards a church organization when it appears that the organization itself is getting away from the path of rectitude through concessions to the spirit of the world. The invisible body of true believers may always be moral but the organization of this or that sect may be tainted. Having care for her own life it is the duty of the Church to bring moral life to the world, to teach that all phases of experience must be made subordinate to the law of good will, to proclaim a moral love which is for the last man. More and more acts are to be brought within the scope of moral duty. More and more per-

sons are to be reached with good will. More and more even the instincts and desires are to be trained towards the highest expressions as second nature, and so far as possible as first nature. But always, always, always the Church is to remember that morality is to be stated in human terms. Out of human lives are to flow the streams of living waters which are to irrigate the precepts and the laws and the systems in which men record their moral insights. And the systems are never to be made ends in themselves. If they are outgrown by the uprush of the life of righteous persons they are to be amended or supplanted. In every case and at all times they are to be looked upon just as the instruments by which the growing life of the persons of the Christian community is helped towards completer humanity. The persons are to move freely among the systems and quicken them into fruitfulness and fragrance by the freshness of life itself.

LECTURE V

ENDS AND MEANS IN  
SOCIAL ENDEAVOUR



## LECTURE V

### ENDS AND MEANS IN SOCIAL ENDEAVOUR

**W**E have been careful not to speak of society as if it were literally an organism, but we must reckon with the truth in the figurative characterization of society as an organism. The actual fact is persons existing together,—and we doubt as to whether persons could be persons and exist apart from one another. We are not instruments of one another: we have studiously avoided speaking of persons as if they were instruments. We are more nearly parts of one another, though without merging into one greater self with consciousness of its own. This mutual interdependence is as much a fact as is the separateness of the individual. We say that around each self stretches the “unplumbed, salt, estranging sea,” and we all know how justly the poet sings. We think of ourselves as islands cut off from one another by deep abysses, or as

spheres thrown together touching one another only at points. But we must not so exaggerate this isolation as to forget that the sea however deep and salt is navigable, and that at the points where the spheres do touch there can be much interchange. The hermit withdraws from society to live alone, but he carries on his meditations in language taught him by society,—language which is a purely social creation and instrument. The cynic rails at society,—with society, through its faults, more before his gaze than anything else. Men never have lived apart as solitary individuals; and it is increasingly certain that they never will. We are members one of another. It has always been so, and it will always be so.

Now out of these social cohesions come diversified instrumental creations. We have seen that the basal fact in the family is the cohering group itself,—father,—mother,—child. Dealing with this group we have agreements governing marriage and child-life which express formally the ideals as to the family. These are instruments for the control of the family relation. There are other social facts, such as coalitions into religious and political and industrial and state and national units. The fundamental in every

coalition is the individuals with their mutual affinities. We are not just now to discuss the foundations of political science but we find around us commonwealths and nations whose laws govern these widest provinces of social activity themselves and in greater or less degree control all other groups within their borders. Just what is the constructive factor in nationality we do not pretend even to guess. Of course the bottom truth is the united group of individuals but how much is natural and normal in a given nationality and how much artificial and accidental? Enough now to recognize the fact of commonwealths and to proceed to discuss the relation of Christianity to the wider social activities. We are thinking of nations somewhat like our own, where there has been at least measurable progress towards democracy, where the ultimate authority is through one organ of expression or another the authority of the people themselves. Democracy can work even through monarchical framework,—as in England. Taking national groups, or groups which we call the states of a federation, we try to hint what Christianity should attempt in the shaping of the forces which make for general social advance in such groups. Especially are we inquiring as

to the possibilities of suggestion along the path most explored to-day, the path of society towards larger industrial control. We need not remark that our discussions are simply for purposes of illustration by one who cannot lay claim to special and technical information, but who draws upon knowledge common to all to set forth general principles. Industry seems especially apt for illustration because industrial problems are just now so much before the states and nations and because the earning of livelihood is so inherently important as demanding the largest division of the time and effort of the average man.

In spite of all this, however, we may encounter the impatient glances of many who declare that the religious teachers should keep out of this province, that the pure gospel is a gospel for the individual, and that the only plan for social regeneration is to labour for the regeneration of individuals. To all of which we subscribe,—but we see no prohibition here for those who declare the duties of Christianity in the social activities. The laws of society are the instruments through which society works. Though all depends on the man behind the instrument, that man cannot do much with the instrument unless he knows



something about it and the purpose of its creation. Good intentions are not enough; study of the social tools is indispensable. Instruments aside, however, for the present,—our modern understanding is that an agent *is* wherever he *acts*. The theologian tells us that the omnipresence of God means that God is acting upon all parts of the universe, and is where He acts. However it may be with God we can see that a man is where he acts, and that he is responsible for his activities at their farther ends. I shoot an arrow in the air and it falls to earth I know not where, but if it strikes any one in its fall the consequences may be prosaically unromantic for me, for I am responsible. I, so far as concerns moral merit and demerit, am where my activity reaches. I may sit in the pew and pray for the conquest of all parts of my nature by the spirit of the Lord, and I do well; but I must not forget that the large part of the answer can only be the Christianization of my acts towards those whom I meet in my daily occupation. If the earning of my living consumes the major part of my time six days in the week the chances are that the chief opportunity for my personal sanctification will lie in those six days. We seek of course the transformation of the world by a trans-

formation of the individuals in the world but we are not so foolish as to imagine that these transformations can be wrought by spiritual exercises which touch only a fraction and that a small fraction of the doings of the individual. There is something worth thinking about in the homely axiom that when you get a man's money you come near getting the man, and the observation may not be at all cynical. The most of the ordinary man's mental effort is in the making of the money; the most significant stress of his moral endeavour is there. If we are to neglect this sphere of the individual's activities it would hardly seem serious to pay attention to anything else. We repeat our bit of metaphysics that a man is where he acts and we avow our belief that Christianity must touch all his acts.

And now another objector reminds us that we cannot reform men from the outside. He would have us treat this problem thoroughly by digging deep down within men's souls. We protest that we are doing our utmost to press this entire debate into the inner realm. But when our friend tells us that we cannot change men by changes outside of them, we beg leave to amend. All depends on what is outside of them. The material environment may be the chief outside factor, in which the

chances for inner change of the man living under the domination of the environment may be good or may not be. We remark in passing that some men do not have very great chance to be good in the material circumstances in which they are placed and that if they could have change of circumstances their moral prospects would mightily improve. This aside, however. What is most potent outside of the man whom we wish to transform may be another man or other men. It may be that his employer is the irresistible feature of his environment and that his employer is unjust. It may be that those with whom he daily associates are the forces outside of him that keep him down. It may be too that some of these outside persons are within hearing of the gospel of industrial Christianity and by change of inner spirit these environmental persons may take the first step towards inwardly transforming the man whose activities they so influence. So we shall try to hold fast to the personal and inner aim.

Now as to the laws of a social group. Men living together in groups have to make instruments which we call laws. These laws are unmistakably the artificial creations through which the group works. The laws

have too sacredness,—that is to say, they are valuable for what they can do and are to be regarded by men as sacred. But they are never to be hoisted to a pedestal to be worshipped as if they were ends in themselves. And their importance, vast as it is, is not to be overestimated. All this seems so obvious as to require apology for uttering it, until we begin to cast about to discover what is the actual situation. Then we find two extremes,—an extreme of lawlessness on the one hand and of idolatry of law on the other. At one extreme are men in rebellion against all law. At the other are those who speak of law as if it were above all things else holy.

The Christian view lies between these extremes. Laws are instruments and not ends in themselves. The only ends in themselves in a society of persons are the persons. Christianity stands against that lawlessness which is riot, and does so on the broad ground that the persons of society never can prosper until order reigns. For the same reason Christianity stands against mistakenly sanctifying the law ;—for persons are sure to suffer as soon as the laws are lifted up as more sacred than men. There is altogether too much reason to suppose that in democra-

cies like ours the law is exalted harmfully by some who may profit by such exaltation. It is possible for financial or political interests to get control of laws for their own purposes, and to fortify themselves behind the ramparts of the sacredness of the law. In such event it is to be remembered that the law is a tool and that much depends upon who wields it. It is to be judged by what it does, not by what its framers thought it would do, not by what it once did, not by what it might conceivably do under some other circumstances. The entire system of laws, or the entire box of tools, is far from perfect and has no right to honour as more sacred than other instruments of social expression. There is no place in the Christian program for disorderliness but there is every place for the control of the law itself. Society has to protect itself many times by throwing a veil of sacredness over laws, by claiming for them a holy sanction and surrounding them with awe-inspiring sentiment. But their sacredness is the sacredness of what they do. No difference how extensive the claims for sacredness,—it is hard to treat as sacred an instrument which accomplishes a wrong result where we looked for a right one, or for an instrument which is hopelessly awkward and bungling.

However, injury by such a law is not to incite us to riot. It is simply to incite us to better laws. The cure for a poor law is a better law.

What now shall be the position of the Christian community towards the laws of the community? The ideal of the Church is to transform society not by instructing society in detail as to what laws to enact but by filling society with a just appreciation of the goal of all social endeavour. Law is but a social agreement to act in a specified fashion. We have found out how to get together in social activities, and either through representatives or through more direct agencies we agree to act according to particular rules, with the understanding that the recalcitrants who will not thus act must be compelled to act with us, at least to the extent of not violating the rule. Towards every law there are probably three different grades of relation in a community. There are those who are morally ahead of the law. They do not need the law, any more than multitudes of persons to-day need the enactments against murder and theft. If such persons were to fashion laws at all they would legislate in a lofty realm which might not even be intelligible to their neighbours. Next there

are the main masses for whom the law is a serviceable guide, and a wholesome agreement. After that are those who find the law above them, but who from compulsion or choice nevertheless obey the law. It is well for the Christian reformer to remember all this. Doing so he will consider laws as the expression of how far we can go or what sort of tool we can manufacture at a given date, and not as a final utterance sacred in itself. The trouble with too many reformers in their speeches about imperfect laws is that they cannot modulate their tones. They must either keep still or scream, and nothing except an alarm is ever intelligently uttered in a scream. So the reformers scream out against inadequate laws as if we who observe such laws look upon them as ultimate ends in themselves. We simply regard them as the instruments which we must use until we can create something better. Only, —we are trying to proceed in decency and in order. While the Church cannot regulate the details of legislation it is her duty to preach more and more the instrumentality of these social contrivances and the sacredness of the human life to which they minister, and to live out into life a spirit which will sooner or later find its way into the code. Some

ideas are actual instruments which society uses for offense and defense. Some ideas are the wholesome food upon which the social body thrives. Some others are the impalpable air which society breathes. It is the business of the Church to work at the social problems from the top down, or from the bottom up, helping shape the tools aright, preaching the worthiest ideas, and above all living into the social atmosphere the spirit of good will.

Here it may be well to speak of a charge sometimes brought unjustly against the members of the Christian communion in their relation to admittedly imperfect social systems. The critic declares that the Church denounces evils in the present political or industrial or social system and then accepts the advantage of these evil conditions herself,—that if the Church is sincere she should stand unsmirched from all such profit. There is occasionally some validity in this criticism. To take the most extreme case imaginable,—suppose a Church should profit by the rents of disorderly houses at the very moment she was preaching the gospel of social purity. The contradiction would be too glaring even for invective. But some evils are affairs of the whole of society and nothing can be



done until practically all act together. It is scarcely fair in such case to rail at the member of the Christian communion for not doing as an individual alone what can only be done by a large majority of the people acting in concert. For illustration let us take a political doctrine which at present is not live enough to divide us into hostile camps,—a suggestion from the free silver agitation of some twenty years ago. Here is a member of the Christian community sincerely believing that the gold standard is wrong,—mistaken not merely as to expediency but morally wrong. He sees in it a device for robbing the debtors to enrich the creditors. Now what shall this Christian do? Shall he individually refuse to respect the ratio between gold and silver established by the market at a particular date? Shall he declare that as long as his money holds out he will receive silver in exchange for gold at the ratio of sixteen to one instead of, say, fifty to one? This might be high morality from this point of view but it would be folly. He might better recognize that a ratio in currency is something about which a whole people have to act together. He would better put up with the system for the time being and spend what money he has publishing

his theory to others whom he may influence towards the desired reform. So with even larger issues. Each of us discerns faults in the social order, but we cannot directly remedy them alone. All we can do is to proclaim our gospel and wait for the ripening of the understanding of the people.

But we must come to the illustrations of the working out of the difference between persons and instruments in the industrial sphere. It will be understood of course that we are simply laying down general principles, with no attempt whatever to take sides on current debates. We begin with that social instrument which we know as private property. The ideas of private property have been hammered out through countless centuries. The result has been that many have come to regard private property as more sacred than life itself. We often hear it said that property rights are more widely regarded than human rights. Now we have no cure-all for social ills ; but we must, if we are to control the social movement, keep human rights inscribed on our banners. In spite of all misunderstandings to the contrary there are no widely-accepted social programs to-day which would do away altogether with private ownership of property,

though some would most radically limit the extent of such ownership. There is small danger that the institution of private property will be overthrown. But there is everlasting need of emphasis on the instrumental nature of private ownership. Wealth is a tool, and nothing more. As an instrument it is of value. It often is a determining factor in deciding whether a man shall have a chance to make himself moral and spiritual. The crushing materialism of masses of men is the materialism of no materials. They have not enough matter to give themselves anything more than material existence. They have so little of the things of this world that the struggle for things and the craving for things consume altogether too much of their strength,—consume all of their strength. If it is materialism for the rich man to be pondering so much on his houses and lands that he has not time for the intellectual or moral, it is materialism for the poor man to be compelled to think so much of his lack of houses and lands and even of food or clothing that he has no energy for the intellectual and moral. The cure for this materialism of poverty is more matter. Wealth as an instrument is prodigiously efficacious. The Christian community must keep this doctrine

constantly before the people. Beratings of wealth will not avail. The value as instrument must be recognized, but the value must stop with the instrumental. The community has just as much right to undertake modification in the institution of private property as it has to undertake modifications in any other social instrument whatsoever. The only sacredness of property rights is the measure of sacredness which may attach to the use of the rights. There is small danger of confiscation, but there is likelihood of change in the rule governing private property whenever the institution works towards social harm.

Take the private ownership of land. What is the basis of this ownership? Simply the good of the most men,—good of course in the highest sense. If the community should arise and forcibly dispossess the holders of the land the confiscation would not be good for anybody concerned. Centuries would be required to allay the bitterness thus engendered. But some changes for the better might be adopted without confiscation. The community might be expected to adjust relations so that society as a whole would have more enjoyment from the land. Land is an instrument, and social welfare depends on the right use of the instrument. It is to the interest of

society as a whole to say how land shall be used or perhaps, rather, not be used. The secret of the strength of the modern movement towards conservation of natural resources lies in this,—that the treatment of land is the affair of all of society. Of course the owner of the land may say that the land is his,—but that is not the final pronouncement. It may not remain his if he does not use it aright. Riding some time ago through a section of the country far distant from here, the present speaker came upon a district where mining enterprises were being carried on by turning over the top of the earth to a great depth. What had once been a fair valley was fast being transformed into heaps of gravel. The gold was washed from the gravel and the gravel thrown over the land. Now it is obvious that when land is once treated after this fashion there is no further service to which it can be put. It has not even landscape attractions. In this particular corner of the earth's surface the harm done may not be considerable as compared with the value of the gold secured. It may be of more consequence to society to have in circulation the gold washed from that under-surface gravel than to have the top preserved. But we could not consent to such mining

over large ranges of the earth's surface, no matter what the supposed rights of private owners might be. We must think of the good of the community. So with the use of rents. When an owner owns land and then moves from the land, subsisting entirely upon the rents from the land without any labour of his own, we can justify the conduct only by showing that this rent instrument is nevertheless a good instrument. If the persons benefited by the rents are in some way rendering service to the community, if they take their unusual opportunities seriously and utilize their income to make themselves socially worth while, the rent instrument will be tolerated. But such a system is always on trial, and unearned incomes have been back of just about as many revolutions as any other single cause in history. The seizure of vast estates in the French revolution was not confiscation in the ordinary sense. The receivers of the rents were not showing themselves socially productive, and they were dispossessed. Society has at crises fallen back upon its right to dispossess landlords, just as landlords have fallen back upon a right to dispossess tenants. This is not an alarmist cry. There is no danger in this country of a wholesale casting out of land-

owners, but there is need of the landowner's recognizing his enormous obligation to be serviceable to society.

When we come to the ownership of the huge tools of capital the same standard must be kept uppermost. What is the best for men as a whole? Society has made possible these tools, notably the transportation systems, which could not exist if it were not for the masses of persons living in communities. The community is largely the creator of capitalistic values. Now the question as to who shall own these tools depends altogether upon who can use them best. We can discuss this with all calmness just now because nobody is in immediate danger of robbery. If the community ever takes over the tools of capitalism it will probably take them over on fair terms. Communities in our day have not shown much disposition to be unfair in these respects. When we say "own" we ought perhaps to say control, but the control of some of these instruments is in such few hands that the control amounts to ownership. Will the concern be more productive under one type of ownership than under another? Will the rights of all parties be subserved as carefully under one system as another? Will the

realization of "the long run" have as much scope under one system as another? Will the human interests be as safe under one system as another? Under what plans do the instruments stand the best chance of getting into the worthiest hands? Society insists upon its right to lay down the rules under which instruments which may be dangerously handled shall be placed in human hands. For example, we will not allow men to carry dangerous weapons in crowded centres. We will not allow ignorant men to transport dynamite. We insist that only trained operators shall drive locomotives and automobiles and trolley cars. And we always declare that we have a right to disarm a desperado. Now some of the capitalistic tools, by which we mean what we call capital itself, are capable of being as dangerously used as any material instruments. It is society's concern as to who fingers the triggers of these instruments. Society has a right to withdraw the control of these tools from those who will not use the tools aright. If an industry is making impossible the conditions of normal human life society does not have to halt because of the outcry from stockholders whose profits may be cut by change in the direction of that in-



dustry. If an industry itself, like the liquor or the opium traffic, is debauching a community the community has a right to do with the industry as it sees fit, and that in the name of the human interests involved. The objects of social endeavour are the people of the community. If we say that we must tread very softly towards capital lest we remove the incentive to production on a large scale we reply that we must be very careful lest we give incentive to waste on a large scale. If it be urged that we cannot procure the genius which can control the capitalistic tools without holding out prospect of surpassing rewards we reply that this is one of those cant sophisms which appear reasonable till we look at them closely. One type of genius which makes modern large scale industry possible is the inventive genius. In actual history has the inventor usually or often received the major part of the reward for his invention? Does not the inventor work as much from scientific motives as from financial? The other effective factor on the capitalistic side is the organizing intelligence. We freely admit the supreme industrial value of this intelligence and we concede that the organizer's ability is always in peril of being underestimated by the critics of the existing

system, but is organizational ability always at the call of money alone? We would not glorify war, but we all agree that the successful general in modern warfare must be an organizing genius. The conduct of any one of the larger campaigns in our Civil War, or in the Russo-Japanese war, or even on the British side in the Boer war called for enormous organizing ability. But the prospect of the old-time money prizes for the victory was *nil*. If society could arrive at such spirit that the successful manager of an industrial enterprise for the welfare of the community would be honoured as military heroes have been honoured we would have solved the problem of securing men for large organizational campaigns without paying them extravagant prizes.

But how about the side of labour and its instruments? Since capital possesses the material tools of large scale industry the only tools left to labour are organizational. The labour organizations in any Christian teaching as to modern society have to come under the same moral laws as all other organizations. We may well thank God that, barring exceptions which only prove the rule, labour leaders take the ground that labour organizational tools must be manipulated with a

human purpose. The intelligent labour organization member will no more treat his organization as an end in itself than the church member will treat his organization as an end in itself. The organization is an instrument for the welfare of persons and as long as it advances in that direction we may well rejoice in its spread of power. Only, the power under intelligent and conscientious leaders will not be brute power. It would be a sad plight if after we had found our way along thus far in the path of peace, and if after labour organizations have themselves done so much to rid the world of the curse of international war, we should have these nation-wide organizations tolerating even a secret reliance upon physical force. Of course capitalism has had its brutalities and the general public, in its difference to the wrongs of labourers, has had its brutalities also, but that is all the more reason why we should all work together for the elimination of reliance upon force. The most enlightened teaching to-day is as to the futility of force for the achievement of social objects. The labour organization that takes the sword will likely perish by the sword, and that not by the sword in the hands of outside enemies, but by the weapon in the hands of those in-

side who will resort to force to impose their will quickly on their fellows.

But all this has been for the sake of illustration. We pass to suggest some implications of our principles which ought to mark the Christian preaching as society marches towards increasing control. It may be well for the Church often to recall to herself the wide extent of that advance. The movement is the most notable trend in the world to-day. Whether the growing scarcity of free lands has thrown the peoples back upon themselves in denser and denser congestion, or whether the increase of means of intercommunication makes knowledge so common that men everywhere catch inspirations which arise anywhere, the truth is that all over the world social groups are grasping more and more control for themselves. With men thrown thus closer together the teachings of Christianity must meet severer and severer strains. We have been looking chiefly at our own country, but we must say that in view of this world-wide hastening towards increasing power for society it is the responsibility of the Christian to stand for that gospel which here and everywhere will righteously guide the advance in all its phases. With this portentous centring on closer unity there is

likelihood that the social mechanism will become jammed unless there is wisdom and unselfishness in relieving some of the pressures created by the newer forces. In a situation so complex it would be folly to venture far into detail, but some suggestions seem altogether Christian. How to apply them must be left to the economic and legislative expert. But they must be applied.

First and foremost, industrial and political and social contrivances must stop short of the point where workers are in danger of becoming tools or of being treated as tools. A labourer who is living a merely tool existence is just as much unhuman as a man who is living a merely animal existence. One criticism upon capitalism is that under the system which cuts the ownership of the tool from the man who actually handles the tool,—the mechanical tool to-day is the whole factory,—the labourer himself comes dangerously near being reduced to the rank of a tool. The labourer cannot go out and build himself a factory. The economic freedom of the labourer about which we hear so much often comes just to that—the liberty to go out and build another factory! Even if he could build the factory he would find difficulty in getting a business start. We may say that

the labourer is free to move from one factory to another, but not after the factories have become linked closely together in management. We may say that he is at liberty to seek another line of employment, but that is cruel nonsense if the man is past the age when he can learn another trade, or if he has already spent much time in becoming expert in a chosen occupation. Any system which makes it possible for one man virtually to own another man is wicked. Any system which makes men just cogs in a wheel is wrong. We have come far towards victory in the battle against animalism in men,—at least we have so far won that we all unite in the condemnation of the forces which make for animalism. But it is not so with the battle against making men tools. Faithfulness to a daily task is admirable, but when that faithfulness ends in making the worker just a part of the machinery it is time for a break somewhere. If the task itself is not one which lends itself to that diversified play of faculties which keeps the mind interested, there must be provision for the leisure in which the more human powers can get their exercise. That was really a righteous protest which the newspapers reported as occurring on the ships of a certain navy some

months ago. The protest may be just newspaper gossip but it illustrates our point. The story is that a number of men had enlisted in a navy on the promise that they would have opportunity to see something of the world. That may have been a poor expedient for enlisting sailors, but such seems to have been the method. After the sailors had enlisted the vessels were stationed at a dreary port on a sub-tropical island. The recruits protested that this was not in accordance with the terms of the enlistment. The coast of the sub-tropical island is something of the world,—but not enough of the world. The story continues that the protest was heeded. Whether all this happened or not, the story suggests one fault with much more of the modern system than the navies. Battle-ship existence apart,—men in general are not given enough outlook on the world. They sink into a machine routine which is less revolting but not much more ideal than an animal existence. The social activities of all groups from the national down to the industrial should stop short of anything which would harden men into machines or tools.

Furthermore, the social agencies should be prevented from any levelling process which would leave men so much alike as to destroy

what is distinctively individual in them. For one type of individualism it will be readily seen that we have little patience. Men cannot come to any individuality alone. And they cannot come to any high distinction without some social adjustment which puts them where they can best work. The condemnation of both extremes of the modern industrial organization is that they both alike level men to sameness. Poverty may be so crushing that the poor man cannot rise to what would be distinction in character, or he is submerged,—and when men are submerged they all look alike. We sometimes say that at time of shipwreck it is a tribute to the perception of human values that all men look alike to the rescuers. Women and children first, to be sure, but after that the men without any thought of difference in rank or birth or endowment. This is noble in the application for which it is intended, but how horrible that we can say of society that it too is so filled with disaster that the sinking people all look alike to us! We sing the advantages of poverty but we have in mind something like the Cotter's Saturday Night or those surroundings in which Americans like Abraham Lincoln were reared. The hardship of such early circumstances as those of Lincoln was



indeed appalling, but hardship is not destitution. Lincoln was not poor after the poverty of the man who has no hope for the future and whose plight is absolutely dehumanizing. The levelling rollers should be lifted off the poor man. The question of getting just enough to eat is not before us ; we are speaking of the freedom to live out the life which is distinctive. The charge that the Christianization of the social system would have a flattening effect is ridiculous in view of the deadliness of the poverty of the present world as a leveller. And then at the other extreme of the scale is a similar danger to which the over-rich man is exposed. It may provoke a smile to say that society should do something for the protection of the rich man against the levelling influences of too much wealth, but such is the duty nevertheless. We are speaking more particularly of those of inherited wealth. The man who has heaped up the money ordinarily knows how to avoid the roller processes. But when we have before us the class reared in extravagance, the responsibility of society for the levelling crush of wealth appears. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus Jesus used the expression "A certain rich man." The expression may be entirely accidental,

but the suggestion seems to be that it was Lazarus who, in spite of his condition, had distinction enough to be called by a name and the rich man was just an undistinguishable rich man like the other rich men. Deaf to all call to stimulating endeavour such a Dives-soul sinks below the truly individual and exists on the plane of commonness. This rich man may be a fairly good citizen, but he does not always manifest the talent or even the genius he might have shown if he had not been smothered or rolled flat by wealth. This is not invective; it surely is not a proposal for a raid; it is a bare statement of what seems to be a fault in society as it exists under present distributions.

Continuing in this same direction the Christian spirit would sanction all those arrangements by which men are brought to do some things together so that they can be left to do other things separately. By constituting some duties everybody's business we provide more leisure for the individual to attend to his own business. Some obligations can best be discharged by the whole community together, or by those who act as agents for the community taken as a unit. As illustration think how much time is saved for the individual in a city by the common water supply.

Suppose each inhabitant of a community had to look after his own water supply. The well or the private pipe would be a perpetual annoyance. To say nothing of its getting out of order there would be continually the imminent threat of disease. That old oaken bucket was dangerous enough even when no other family lived within a mile, for it may have been too near the contamination from the house of the owner himself. But the old oaken bucket was safe enough for all purposes if the water looked reasonably clear. Such a test would not hold to-day. Only the expert can detect the typhoid germ. Now so simple a contrivance as the common water supply does away with an immense amount of worry and leaves the mind free to follow its bent. We say "follow its bent" advisedly, for that is how minds find themselves. They must have leisure for wandering around the favourite subjects if they are ever to reach any considerable intellectual or artistic or even ethical attainment. Without regard to the exact theoretical formulation of our hopes we may well trust that by some scheme or other the tasks which can best be performed for communities as units will one by one be given over to those who will look after them for communities as units, so that

more and more the individual will be left free to become distinctive if not distinguished. If we could look forward a distance of one hundred years from now we would probably behold an astonishing number of tasks given over to community control which we now think never could be so delegated. The criticism which is to be passed upon the individualistic system in its extreme development is that it is not individualistic enough: the individuals do not get the best chance. The most forceful individuals may get to the fore, but we have long since given up that doctrine of the survival of the fittest which makes the fittest to survive necessarily the most deserving of survival.

Putting this in still another phrase we may say that we should seek for the uniformities in experience which will make for varieties. To escape the odium of too frequent reference to industrial situations we employ an illustration drawn from church enterprise. In many sections of this country churches are needlessly duplicating one another's activities. In frontier districts there may be two or three churches where there should be but one. It would be a gain all around if the denominations could come to enough agreement as to tests of member-

ship and order of worship and formulation of belief and local administration to make a church of any denomination welcome to virtually all the religious people of a community. The need of duplication would then pass. The energy saved could be better economized, with the result that each denomination would have more likelihood of fulfilling whatever might be its distinctive mission, and once the organizations were seen to be instruments rivalry would be more friendly. It would lack the deadly seriousness which comes when a tool is regarded as an end-in-itself. So as to social coöperation. We might find more of common ground which, while it would make conduct and duties more uniform, would leave individuals free for the development of the true human distinctiveness. We might limit individual initiative at some outlets for the sake of giving the individual greater initiative through other channels.

The individual needs more privacy than he gets to-day. It is a grim and tragic joke to hear men dismiss modern plans for larger social coöperation on the ground that we must not intrude upon the privacy of individuals. As if the modern scramble for profits in tenement houses, for example, made for

the privacy of the occupants! We do need privacy for individuals. All modern social reformers see the futility of the communistic programs which involve living together. Such schemes go to pieces because people see too much of one another. Even foreign missionaries living in compounds have to exercise care lest they become "too thick" with one another. Present-day social plans aim at providing more privacy for the individual by taking off his single mind burdens which can better be borne collectively, thus leaving him free to live the strictly private part of his life in his own way. Larger mutual respect would result. Competition would become more and more friendly rivalry instead of a war to the death.

To say it all over again,—we might lay down a doctrine of equality for the sake of the resulting inequality. If we could more nearly equalize some burdens we would have more leisure for the free play of individuality. We plead for diversity. We must have diversity if we are to have any degree of richness and fullness of individual life. Inequality is just as characteristic of life as is equality,—only the inequality must not be such as to suggest a lurking injustice somewhere. We need a world of incommensur-

able personal inequalities. If we can have men so distinct that we cannot well compare them with one another much bitterness of envy will disappear. A man ought to have scope to develop the good traits of which he may have a personal monopoly. For sake of illustration again we make a harmless reference which all can accept. Suppose we had under any social system approximate equality of taxation. This does not mean a system by which all should pay a like sum into a treasury as a man pays a poll tax, but a system by which each man would pay what he ought to pay,—no more and no less. What an advance upon present situations that would be,—for nobody could well claim that any present system is equitable,—even if no men were tax-dodgers. Even under so commonplace a burden as the payment of taxes, if men were more nearly equal as serving under a more equitable system, the economy of human energy which now goes to nervous friction and irritation would be immeasurable.

And to say it once more,—men might well subject themselves in an improved order of society to greater subordination among the lower goods for the sake of greater freedom among the higher goods. We might agree

to a surrender of some lower liberties in a common bond of search for some higher liberties. We might enter into some arrangements which would take the load of financial stress off over-weighted shoulders and more equitably distribute the strain. The race took a long step forward when the progress of invention lifted the physical weights off the shoulders of men and placed them on muscles of iron and steel. Another improvement may be to lighten the stress for daily bread so as to secure more freedom in the search for spiritual bread. It all comes down to this,—the Christian is in society for the purpose of giving the members of society a better chance. His work is not merely remedial. The work of Jesus was not merely to open the blind eyes but to give the eyes something worth seeing after they were opened. He unlocked prison doors not merely to let out the men inside, but to show them what to do after they got out. He healed the lame not merely to help them walk erect but to help them to travel in the right direction. We will not believe that this world cannot be made a better instrument for the development of righteousness. We hear it said that the world as we have it is a good world for the purpose for which it



is intended. Far be it from us to venture any criticism on the universe, but there are some details in our latitude which need correction. Men need to give heed to the significance of the material for the spiritual. Society should seek to make the earth more of an aid to the life of righteousness. We should at least try to make the world such that men can afford to be honest here. We cannot believe that we are always to look upon this present world as a vale of tears. Tragedy there will no doubt always be, but all the more reason for seeking to mitigate the tragedy. It is conceivable that under a thoroughly Christian society even the tragedy of death would be reduced to less painful woe than at present. The fear of death might be done away in a community which had practiced righteousness into the warp and woof of all conduct. The horror of sudden death by accident or even by disease might be made less frequent through proper regard for human life. The fear of poverty through the loss of the bread-winner might be greatly reduced. There would remain of course the dire agony of separation from loved ones, but that might be lessened in a fully human community quick and warm with genuine sympathy. If over all of this

there could stretch a sky radiant with the hopefulness which comes from realizing God in experience there would hardly be an instrument comparable to this earth for the development of righteousness. The very possibility of dreaming of such outcome is a signal and summons for the attempt to realize the dream.

But we come back to our main thesis. Before the earth is much improved the people in it must learn what is supremely worth while. If they can learn the uses of instruments and can give themselves to the right use of instruments the future is bright. It is not safe to have stupendous instruments delivered into the keeping of men before the men know how to use them. We have only to look to a condition like that in semi-barbarous countries to see the trouble which results when high-powered instruments are put in the hands of people who rush readily to internecine wars with no conviction of responsibility. The only saving fact in such a crisis is that the people cannot shoot straight enough to hit the objects at which they aim, —though the destruction is terrific when non-combatants are exposed. The peoples of the earth seem to be sweeping determinedly on towards larger and larger social powers. It

is the function of the Christian portion of the community to seek to dike and levee this movement into the right channels. It will be observed that we have made little of definite suggestion as to any particular problems now before the peoples. All we have tried to show is that some simplification results when we discern the true aim of our effort,—the highest life of man,—normal life in the enjoyment of all legitimate functions. The enjoyment of this life as part of the divine plan,—this is the goal. The social instruments, the laws, the institutions, can help mightily in assisting us towards this fundamental goal. Dynamite is deadly. If men use dynamite to destroy one another it is a curse, but dynamite turned against a nature which must be transformed is a blessing. It can blow to pieces rocks which would turn the point of the strongest pick-axe. It lifts the loads in an instant that hundreds of men could not budge in weeks. All depends on who uses the instrument and what he uses it for. Law is mighty, if it is the expression of the good life, but suppose law, instead of aiming at good will for men, aims at vengeance and hate. Then the dynamic force tears down and does not build again. We end as we began. Society can

modify, or set aside, or create outright social instruments for the accomplishment of its purposes. But instruments are instruments and must be used by persons for the sake of persons.

LECTURE VI

EVERY KINDRED AND  
PEOPLE AND TONGUE



## LECTURE VI

### EVERY KINDRED AND PEOPLE AND TONGUE

**W**E have reserved to the last the study of the program of the Christian community in world-wide missionary conquest. Before looking up at the ideal which the missionary has to keep always in sight we glance at some underlying conditions which limit the Christian in his direct appeals to the peoples whom he seeks to win. The intercourse of the missionary with what we call heathenism is but one of the contacts of Christendom with heathenism. The most fundamental barrier to missionary enterprise is the difficulty of bringing these different contacts into some agreement with one another. In our own land the contradiction between the Christian ideal and the unchristianized aspects of society is wide enough, but we have some appreciation of the difficulty and struggle on towards harmony. In other lands such mental adjustment is often nearly impossible. The native sees the gap-

ing abyss between the missionary's preaching and the wickedness of the missionary's own countrymen and may have no particular interest in seeking an adjustment. George Francis Train used to say that he objected to sending to China missionaries with whom to convert the Chinaman and ammunition with which to kill the Chinaman on one and the same vessel because such mixed cargo was apt to be confusing to the Chinese mind. At the centre of the foreign missionary problem is a home missionary problem. We hear much about the cultivation of the home base in missionary campaigning, and the reference is to the cultivation of a home basis of supplies of money and men. We need also the fuller Christianization of the home base. If we cannot bring our industrial and political and social organizations to Christian standards and redeem them from paganism the direct appeal of the missionary is made more than doubly difficult because these different institutions send out their representatives into other lands to make a deadly competition with missionary forces.

The contacts of the Christian nations and of the non-Christian nations are chiefly those of the tourist, of the trader, of the diplomatist, and of the missionary. Each of the first



three named is himself a missionary of one sort or another. The conduct of each is preaching in one direction or another even though the preaching is unconscious. Take the tourist. We do not often give weight to the influence of the tourist in international intercourse, but such influence is quite potent. When the tourist returns home from a non-Christian land and begins to berate the missionary to that land we discount the tourist very heavily. We know well enough that the tourist has not taken pains to learn what he is talking about. But the tourist himself while abroad makes impressions on the foreigner which the foreigner does not know how to discount. Very frequently the tourist is travelling solely for holiday sightseeing. It is to be doubted if any man who visits foreign peoples chiefly for recreation can make much of those peoples. Of course the observations of the serious student are not just now under review. But the "globe-trotter" tourist sees all inhabitants in an alien country as about alike, and towards them all he is apt to assume an air of aloofness. This is almost inevitable unless the traveller be a man of marked attainment of character. Even when travelling in European countries the American may plume himself on the fancied

superiority of American customs and American institutions, and is now slow to express his gratification. Patriotism may account for some of this pride. Add to this that the "globe-trotters" of the holiday tourist class are apt to be persons of wealth, often newly-acquired, and that they are reënforced in their assumption of national and racial superiority by the possession of money, and we have the explosives at hand for some unhappy discharges. If this is true in European lands how much more is it true in what we call heathendom? Years ago, reputable writers have told us, the foreign sojourner in Japan occasionally thought it fine sport to strike with his stick the coolie pulling a jinrickisha. This may not have happened often, but it happened often enough, though it is only fair to say that such insults have not occurred since Japan's last war. While the stick-using may now have ceased the spirit thus revealed has not altogether passed. We would not have it understood that this is the customary state of mind among tourists, for it is not; but there is enough of such feeling to attract notice among the natives of the non-Christian countries. Moreover the tourists who simply travel through a country attending to their own business and treating the natives

with civility do not command the attention that the other tourists attract. All peoples resent the assumption of aloofness by visitors from outside. Quite likely Charles Dickens in his "Notes on America" did not overstate the crudeness of our country when he visited it, but what he said rankles in the breasts of some Americans to this day. Likewise loftiness of manner in the unofficial and unintentional and unconscious representatives of Christendom who visit non-Christian peoples is unspeakably galling to those peoples.

Now what is the trouble? Just this,—that the tourist is not of a class who take the doctrine of human brotherhood with any seriousness. It is an enigma as to how many Christian populations do take that doctrine seriously, however, so we may say that the trouble with the tourist is that he is not willing to think of the peoples whom he visits as belonging to the order of human beings to which he himself belongs. He often looks upon them as a spectacle or show in which he is to find entertainment. The tourist is the outcome and the expression of widely prevalent social notions of our time. He is a social product, just as the others of us are social products, and he represents a type of thought, or of lack of thought, and a

type of attitude. Until Christianity has so thoroughly permeated the social ideals of our own lands that much larger masses of men have become, not necessarily avowedly Christian, but substantially Christian in their bearing towards human beings wherever found, the teaching of the missionary will have to encounter grave obstacles. But is it not possible for the Christian ideal to make so complete a conquest among us? We think it is. We have so attained to ideas of elementary decency in Christian lands that there are some misdeeds which any man, whether a professing Christian or not, will condemn. There are acts and attitudes we will not tolerate because we have learned, or at least absorbed, a regard for essential humanity in ourselves, if not in other people. For example the dweller in Christendom will not peaceably tolerate physical filth. He will keep his body and his house measurably clean whether any one is to see him or not. Likewise there are moral abominations with which the normal man reared in civilized lands will not compromise, no matter what may be his moral shortcomings in other respects. We do not always stop to think of the conquests of Christianity registered in these facts. Virtually every man in every

Christian land has been forced to the adoption of some ideals, limited though they may be, by the progress of Christian sentiment. There were once vices whose very names have long since faded out, and this because of the progressive realization of the human ideal. Now we expect Christian conceptions of man so to gain ground that whether this or that single person becomes a disciple of Christ or not, no person will take some attitudes towards heathen peoples that are assumed to-day. To allude again to the incident of the stick-using on the Japanese. Apart from the fear of consequences, such outrageous behaviour would hardly be possible anywhere among tourists to-day. We expect cruelty and boorishness to die out. But the task of assisting their death is a home task; the home base needs to be so pervaded with human sympathy that wherever we go we shall look upon men as men, no matter what may be the accidents of race or poverty or ignorance or moral inadequacy.

The second class of obstacles in the path of the Christian conquest of the world is that represented by the trader. It has always been true that the trader has bothered himself very little about what he has sold to foreign natives. To the trader the natives

are not so much human beings as buyers of wares. The trader has been guided mainly by what he has found the natives likely to buy. The "five hundred barrels of rum" which the New England sea-captains used to carry as cargo to the West Coast of Africa were shipped because there was a demand for them. The effect of the rum on the native did not disturb the captain any more than it has disturbed his successors at the business since. Moreover cheating a native was partly a pleasure and partly a duty. In trading with the American Indians a Dutchman's hand in the scale of which the other pan was loaded with furs never weighed more than one pound and his foot never weighed more than two pounds. Whatever the means the aim was the same,—to exploit the native for the utmost possible.

All this was bad enough when the representatives of the so-called Christian nations were Yankee sea-captains, or their like, each doing business somewhat on his own account. Then an occasional stirring of conscience in the Yankee might arise and relieve the native. But the outcome has been, at least until quite recently, made worse by the growth and aggressiveness of corporate finance. It will be understood that the present speaker has

no intention of indulging in wholesale condemnation of wealth, but we all know that even here at home corporations thrive best morally when they enjoy the full light of publicity. Unrestricted competition and unregulated monopoly are paganism as rank as the rawest heathenism. There are inherent and inevitable tendencies to evil in the very situation which make exceedingly difficult the control of the large-scale instruments of wealth working in a foreign land away from the home office. First of all the distant representative is not judged by his treatment of employees as is the official at home. At home the feelings of the people with whom the corporation does business have to be reckoned with. The customers must be pleased and the labourers also, and general public sentiment must not be disregarded. The directors of the corporation look more exclusively at profit or loss when scrutinizing the returns from foreign, non-Christian lands. The excuse that profits have fallen because regard had to be taken of the sentiment in the foreign community as to how the labourers there were treated does not weigh as it would at home. Moreover all businesses are under the pressure for expansion. If they cannot expand at home

because of the exactions of public sentiment and the requirements of legislatures and the severity of public officials they nevertheless seek to show a gain in the total volume of business done by pushing foreign expansion. Added to this is the temptation of business agents living in lands far from home and often far from high-minded society to sink to the level of vicious surroundings. The total tendency is down-hill.

Now the picture must not be painted darker than it is. The corporation is in the foreign country for business purposes,—to get as much out of the natural resources as possible and to profit as much from the native labour as possible. But even so the natives are often better treated by foreign employers than by employers of their own race. In Mexico for example the poor peons who can do nothing but the commonest labour would often sooner hire out to Americans than to persons of their own race,—and this not only because the American pays better wages but because he is apt to treat his labourers more humanely. Apart from exceptional atrocities like those of the rubber and ivory trades the native labourers employed by foreign business leaders in non-Christian lands are not likely to be abused. The speaker knows of at least



one instance where the English manager of a cotton mill in Bombay was followed to his steamer as he left for home by a group of native employees in genuine grief at the departure of one who had in all his relations to them treated them kindly. But conceding all this and much more the situation makes for the obliteration of the distinction which have so emphasized in these lectures, the distinction between men and tools. No matter how indispensable an instrument wealth may be it is not important enough to justify the disregard of human interests.

It does not help us much to say that all this exploitation of the resources of heathen lands is accomplished by the consent of the rulers of the lands themselves. We are thinking of the welfare of the vast numbers whom the rulers may not represent at all. Take the granting of concessions to foreign capital by governments in financial distress. A nation gets into trouble and borrows money. Then in return for money aid huge concessions of resources are granted by those who have the legal authority to do so. The interests of the people of the land itself are often the last to be heeded. In a state which has passed through such concessions to subjection to foreigners so complete that there

may be scant standing room left for the natives the people may rise in revolution ; then there is cry for military intervention in behalf of the endangered foreign interests. Or foreign collectors are placed in charge of the custom houses until finances can be adjusted. The effect on the temper of the native peoples in such crises is not hard to imagine.

What is the remedy? There is but one answer and one solution,—the completer humanization and moralization and spiritualization of all our so-called civilized business procedure. We are not urging this or that or the other industrial platform. We are pleading for the approach to the problems which wealth creates from the point of view of the human interests involved. We beg for a public sentiment which shall so widen the meaning of the term “human beings” as to include the peoples of whom we are accustomed to speak as heathen. We protest against the oversight of the truth that wealth is a mere instrument. Now instruments may cost too much in the fashioning, or they may not be rightly used after they are fashioned. An old legend tells us that an oriental ruler once conceived the fancy that his sword blades could be brought to just the right temper by being thrust hot through the

thigh of a slave. Suppose such a proposal should be advanced by some despot and we should protest to him that such tempering makes the sword blade too costly. Suppose he should reply that we were mistaken, that the slave cost so much and the blade was worth so much more. If we had the power to proceed to extremities with such a despot we would not longer debate, for we would say that the despot's reply argued an utter density of ignorance as to human values. Business enterprises may develop into keen instruments but they may cost too much in terms of humanity. The public sentiment which will see this and will hold the instruments to the instrumental position will help tremendously in the Christianization of the world.

Then there is the diplomat representing as he does the sentiment of his people on the national and governmental side. The Christian nations in recent years have much to their credit in their diplomacy with the so-called less favoured nations. England, barring some terrible blunders in other days, has been on the whole humane in her policies towards the people whom she rules,—so that so sharp and cynical a critic as William Graham Sumner once declared that it would

be well if England could be put in possession of all the remaining unappropriated territories of the globe. It would be unjust to say that England does not chiefly consider the welfare of her subject peoples both in India and Egypt. This is all the more noteworthy from the pressure of the world-wide financial interests to make themselves the uppermost considerations in international policy.

In spite of the noble aim of much international bearing, however, and in spite of the success of many ministers and ambassadors in resisting the tendency towards an aristocratic caste system which infests so many diplomatic circles, it is hard for diplomacy to rise much higher than its source, and that source is the people of the Christian nations themselves. Public opinion is the determining power. And that public opinion will not always be content to allow its wiser leaders to be the mouthpieces. So that whenever a California land law is up harm is wrought not so much by the terms of the law itself as by the inability of many debaters to see that the Japanese are human beings. If such problems could always be discussed as the careful diplomatist would discuss them,—with due regard to the human decencies, to say nothing of the human courtesies,—they

could be more often adjusted without arousing ill-feeling. But these international episodes unravel overnight what the representative of the Church has been weaving through the day. Granted that any country has the right to exclude from its borders those who will become a public charge, those who may lower the standard of living in the country, and those who may prove to be an alien body in a democracy, still there are choices of methods and manners in the exercise of these undoubted rights.

The position of the diplomat is a delicate one. He is of all men most likely to be misunderstood. But he is just a spokesman, and skillfully as he may conduct himself, all depends on the public sentiment back of him. The sentiment needs being made Christian—which can only be accomplished by making the public Christian. We must work towards the time when the strong nations will honestly protect the weaker nations. The strong peoples cannot rule the weaker even for the good of the weaker by mere strength alone; neither can they leave them entirely to themselves. If the public sentiment of the civilized lands could arrive at such a stage of evident unselfishness that the weaker nations would be willing to listen

to the counsel of the stronger, something very much worth while could be accomplished, especially if the advice took the form of helping the weaker peoples on towards self-government.

And just here it may be in order to say a word about making a fetich of words in our struggle to help nations. The charmed word in our day is "democracy." In so far as democracy is a people governing themselves and aiming to reach human ideals it is an end-in-itself. Democracy in that meaning is the people themselves in the process of governing themselves for themselves in the highest sense. The cry for democracy for a weaker people may be for the ideal of a self-governing community or it may be for permission to allow the people to follow out their own devices. The devices have only such sacredness as attaches to them from their success in helping on the people. Now the interests of democracy may be aided by a nation which steps in, say to a country in which inhuman institutions prevail, and puts an end to those institutions, the proviso always being that such action is backed up by a public sentiment of the interfering nation which never loses sight of the main issue. For example England stamped out of India

the most complete institution of thuggery which the imagination could have conceived. In doing so she interfered with a native institution,—breaking up a monstrous invention of the peoples of India, but her interference was in accord with the dictates of humanity, and of course was a necessary step towards whatever measure of genuine self-government India is ever to have. When a nation in its weakness reaches the beginnings of degeneracy so that even order is impossible, the coming in of an outside nation is necessary for the humanity of the people themselves,—and for their progress towards democracy. It is not interference with the progress of a people towards democracy to prevent them from doing what may make democracy impossible.

Freedom is another word which may trip our feet as we fight to liberate men. We say that the weaker peoples are to be left alone to fight out and achieve their own salvation. It will always ward off confusion when we are confronted by such unreal simplifications if we ask as to actual, concrete social facts. The present speaker has no theory as to the proper method of detailed procedure,—say for the United States in relation to the weaker states of Latin-America. But what

do theorists mean when they declare that these peoples should be left absolutely alone to work out their own salvation as free beings? Does this mean that the public sentiment of nations like ours is not to count even in an advisory capacity? One Latin-American dictator succeeds another dictator. The success of the dictator, for the moment on top, may be due to no moral or intellectual or even human strength. His success may represent just the physical efficacy of brute might. The people are not free under him, or under the successor who is bloody enough to put him out of the way. The people have no chance under such dictators to attain freedom. The facilities for education are not sufficient, and the opportunities for experiment in self-government are nothing at all. Under such sway the people really sink farther and farther below real freedom. In the name of theoretical freedom they are allowed to fall away from actual freedom and to miss all chance for actual freedom.

It behooves us always to guard ourselves against what the old philosopher called "the fatal imposture and deceit of words." Words are instruments and nothing more. It is possible to erect an instrument into an end-in-itself and forthwith to forget the vital content



in the mere repetition of the word. In a substantive sense there is no such thing as freedom. The only reality is men living freely. In pondering over all such questions the public mind must not be deceived. It must keep in view the interests of the men and the methods of helping them to act more and more freely. Even this word "humanity" of which we have been making so much, and of which nations sometimes insincerely make so much when they are seeking for reasons for entering aggressively the territories of weaker peoples, is an instrument like the others. The facts are people,—men, women and children, and the methods of helping them most effectively. Words erected into holy idols will not prove much more effective than idols usually prove.

And now some man will wail forth that if missionary progress cannot come to the full tide until the Christian nations develop this unselfish interest in men we might just as well give up the battle. But why despair, even if the ideal is high? In spite of all that the cynics say about the selfishness of nations there are citizens who vote on international issues unselfishly and if some vote thus others may. Many of us have voted on platforms having to do with the Philippines, for ex-

ample. Now political and financial leaders may have taken advantage of us in using selfishly our unselfish feeling, but we have voted unselfishly. We know that much,—and we have enough humility not to imagine that we monopolize political righteousness. If we think and vote thus others can,—and do. The main sentiment of the United States to-day towards the Philippines and towards Cuba is unselfish. Many who have projects of an industrial or political character to promote might conceivably thwart this unselfish feeling, especially since we do not claim that the sentiment is effectively organized. But we can increase and enforce this unselfishness. We ask just for the extension of the regard for the truest human interests of all human beings into political theory and action. Our governmental policies play far more part in shaping the opinion of the peoples to whom we go with the Gospel than we can estimate. If we can work the national unselfishness out into expression our problem is well on towards solution. Or rather if we could cultivate a positive interest in the welfare of peoples beyond our lands we could move much more swiftly to success. Of course we are not to forget the enormous material and labour resources to be developed

in China, for example, and we ought to further the Christianization of such lands for the sake of the utilization of this material and personal power, but the primary motive is not the material or the labour reservoir of power. The first motive is the people.

But it is high time we arrived at the missionary himself. It would not have been altogether worth while, however, to discuss the missionary and his duties without heeding the backlying conditions which have to be taken into the reckoning in the impact of Christian nations upon the less favoured nations. As we said at the outset, the hand of the missionary is but one of many laid by the Christian nation upon the heathen nation. The note sounded by the missionary in the ears of the heathen people is but one note,—and it may be drowned out by the other notes, or it and they may be most woefully out of accord.

So far as the all-essential is concerned the missionary must come to his task interested primarily in his people because they are human beings. He is there for the sake of the men, women and children themselves. They are folks like himself, in spite of all the differences. Even what seem to him their gross immoralities are in them more nearly

unmoralities. The missionary may reply to us that he supposed he was going to the field primarily for the sake of Christ, but what does he mean by this phrase if not that he is going to help those for whom Christ died? Jesus wrought upon men to help them, and He poured fierce condemnation upon all professedly religious folk who had not the willingness thus to serve. If Jesus were to reappear on earth to-day and set Himself to labour among non-Christians it would be for the sake of the people. The whole earthly aim of Christianity is to serve those now on earth.

To be sure there is force in the missionary's question. He may infer that we advise that he should forget the more spiritual aspects of missionary effort in the passion for the immediate relief of lives in terrible distress. We hasten then to say that the duty is at all times spiritual. The missionary is to strike at once to the spiritual centres, arousing the conviction for sin, pointing the path to forgiveness, preaching the good news of the good God. Only, this evangel is to be thoroughgoing. From the moment when the missionary gets enough people converted to create anything like a social spirit he is under obligation to teach the converts to

carry the newly-found God into their social relationships. Just as in the home land we are to urge progressive salvation which will include all a man's relationships to his neighbours so in the mission field must we preach the same salvation. The fundamental motive is to get the individual into prayer and communion with the God of Jesus. After that we must push the divine conquest into those realms of the believer's life which touch other lives for the sake of making him and his fellows more human here and now. As has been so often said, it is not so much the duty of keeping the non-Christian nations out of hell hereafter which confronts us, as the duty of getting them out of hell here and now.

Everything comes back to the idea of God as revealed in Jesus. That idea carries with it positive and specific ideas of what man is and of the possibility of man's becoming more like God. Allowing all we please for the play of economic forces in the life of alien peoples, we have to admit that our very ability to detect the evil tendency of economic forces lays upon us the responsibility for the correction of those tendencies. The strategic attack is that of the missionary. If the missionary went into a non-Christian field and began to work entirely from without, on

the assumption, let us say, that healthier physical bodies would be enough of an object for him to achieve, we could at once concede the justice of the charge of superficiality. But when the missionary plants the idea of God in the inner life of his followers and works outward from thence, we have to praise him for proceeding upon workmanlike principles. Jesus did not indeed attack by name the outstanding economic and political wrongs of His day, but He did begin within men and set ideas to seething which had an inevitable expansive and even explosive tendency. It is impossible to accomplish everything in a few months, but Jesus so placed His truth in the hearts of men that He knew the development must surely encircle the outward institutions. The process of growth involves expansions. As well might a vineyard dresser protest that the vine is doing a merely superficial work when it is reaching out for more room to accommodate its increasing length and diameter as for a critic of Christian methods to say that the methods are artificial and superficial when they reach outward from the inner germ. What the vine is doing is building larger channels for the sap; and more sap means more fruit.

The present speaker heard at widely different periods two great men make two great utterances which by right belong together. I once heard Dr. William F. Warren, the greatest student of the faiths outside of Christianity that I have ever known, say that the majority of the inhabitants of the earth, when they attempt to conceive of God conceive of Him as best symbolized by some unhuman form,—multitudes of persons finding no better symbol for Him than a serpent or dragon. I once heard Bishop James M. Thoburn, the greatest missionary I have ever known, say that the majority of the inhabitants of the earth lie down to rest every night without having known through the day the satisfaction of enough to eat. The two statements, though uttered by different men, fitly belong together, for each has significance for the other. If we could get men to a nobler idea of God a nobler idea of humanity would follow; and if a nobler idea of humanity followed, a better state of human existence would appear,—while conversely a better state of human existence would lead to a healthier conception of God. The missionary has to utilize both spiritual and physical influences, but his primary function is to point men straight to God. Doing that will

ultimately transform even the outward environment and this in turn will react for good on the religious view of those won for Christianity.

Professor Borden P. Bowne used to say that Asia past and present is the sufficient condemnation of the Asiatic religions. A genuine philosopher saw the intimate bond between the view of God which the Asiatic peoples have held and the outcome in Asiatic life. There may have been a stage in the history of religions when the worship of even the fructifying and reproductive principles of nature led only to innocent results, but the final outcome of such worship is sure to be abomination like the rankness of some cults in India to-day. Religions are to be judged not only by their intellectual formulation but by their total appeal to the impulses of men as men actually are. It is a peculiarity of any religion that it cannot remain static. It moves up or down, and the Asiatic heathenisms have not moved up. "Raw" heathenism grows rawer. Nothing demonstrates more conclusively the power of the religion of the ancient Hebrews than the vigour with which it clung to its upward course in spite of the contaminating influences from the nations round about. When the ancient



prophets denounced the worship of heathen gods in terms which suggested abominable and unnatural immoralities they were not indulging in figures of rhetoric. Idolatry slides downward into baseness. Nothing can be swifter than the rush down-hill when immorality is labelled with the name of religion.

Or think of a creed which is loftier and purer than any species of nature worship,—the creed of ancestor worship. Here would appear to be a religion laying stress on the recognition of value in human life. The ancestors are worthy of supreme honour. But the essential deification of actual men has led away from the ennoblement of humanity. It may seem odd to hear Mormonism spoken of as heathenism, but there was once in Mormonism, though there may not be now, a trace of heathenism in the form of ancestor worship. A man was to be honoured in proportion to the number of his descendants. Polygamy would be the natural outcome of such belief. Professor Ross has calculated that through the demand for sons to honour the ancestors China brings forth five generations in a period which normally ought to produce only four. Through the intense stimulus of any belief which thus forces too many beings into existence the value of the

single life falls. Life literally becomes cheap. Then we have the wretched adjustment of the human vitality to a standard of living hardly human at all. There are degrees of adversity which furnish the stimulus to character-building, but such wretchedness as results from overcrowding like that of China and India is so far below what we in Western lands think of as adversity and poverty as to make the terms inapplicable. We have indeed in China and India a manifestation of what the human race can achieve against desperate odds, but that is not the revelation of which we are desirous. We desire the unfolding of men's possibilities under favourable circumstances. We are looking not for the environment in which the physically toughest alone can survive, but for the environment which gives impulse to the human energies towards something beyond hardiness. It is sometimes said to the credit of the Chinaman that he is able to live on next to nothing, and that he is immune to typhoid fever! But better not be immune to typhoid fever if the immunity carries with it an immunity of mind and feeling towards the filth which produces typhoid fever. There are much more glorious victories possible for the Chinaman than to become immune to typhoid. The

human victory for the millions of China is not likely to come until the birth-rate in China falls. The birth-rate will fall when polygamy and concubinage and general laxity of sexual relationships cease. These will decline when ancestor worship passes. Ancestor worship will pass as the worship of the true God comes. With the worship of the true God will arrive a new estimate of the value of a man,—and the new estimate of the worth of a man will work back in turn through more and more beneficial channels to enlarge the idea of God.

Even the more abstract notion of fatalism which haunts many theologies has direct human consequences. The drowsy passivity of the Indian ryot in the presence of plague, the crazy rush of the Mohammedan warrior upon the machine guns of his enemy, the utter callousness of the Mexican peon to the threat of death by bandits and revolutionists,—all these reveal the dehumanizing deadliness of a belief which makes men merely the play-things of fate. The fatalistic creeds all end in attaching less and less value to human life. The idea of God revealed by Jesus cannot be taken seriously without enhancing the value of men, and that increased worth of men and the happy consequences which flow forth from

thence are potent signs of the presence of God in the world. While we have condemned the plan of going forth into non-Christian lands with schemes merely for the physical development of the lands, it nevertheless must be said, after we have focused our view into correct perspective, that the very lands of the world,—the soil, the mines, the water-powers,—will never have their chance until the Christian idea seizes the peoples. To turn Western science in full blast upon the material resources of the Orient now, with the Western lands themselves not fully Christianized, and with Christianity barely started in the Eastern lands, might lead to industrial calamity. But with the whole world Christianized into some notion of stewardship as applied to material goods there is no reason why through the long future lands now burdened to exhaustion may not revive into garden beauty. And there is every reason why these resources should ultimately work for the deepening and enrichment of human experience.

We have said that we go forth into heathen lands because the less fortunate peoples need us. We also need them. Life is such that it does not in human beings run an even stream. It calls for seasonal refreshment and revival. We crave the inspiration

of the tingle of world-wide victory. Just as in the career of our own country the entire nation was quickened by the consciousness of an ever-expanding frontier where pioneer spirits were pushing on ahead of the nation, so we are stirred by the stories of the conquests of the Cross out upon the frontier. But more important than the need of the heathen for us and the need of ourselves for the conquests of heathenism is the demand of the whole Christian community, present and future, for whatever any portion of the community can contribute to the joy of the whole. The Church of Christ yearns for the heathen peoples because of the fine possibilities of the heathen as human beings. With the growth of a genuine Christian consciousness the reflective students discern more and more worth in men everywhere, taken just as human beings. Christianity would be poor without the diversity of view and manner which abound as persons of widely separated place of abode and habit of life merge into more intimate understanding of one another as members of one Christian body. The speaker once heard two professors from a distinguished university discussing the policy of having preachers of different denominations appear before college students. When

one expressed the opinion that the sounding of diverse notes as to religious conviction before college students would tend to confuse them, the other replied that one need of students everywhere is to realize the luxuriant variety and diversity of religious approach to central themes. The religious convictions are as diversified as the peoples themselves. When we glance at masses of heathen persons they all look alike to us, and different from persons of our own race. There is room in Christianity for whatever is racial in the habits of mind of the different peoples. There seem to be in particular races distinctive qualities,—as the artistic tendencies in the Japanese. We are not attempting any pronouncements in racial psychology,—for all that we mean is, for example, that whether innately or by acquired habit the Japanese have Japanese artistic abilities. When we broaden our idea of Christianity enough to make it include as essential everything which makes life rich and sweet we shall rejoice in the conversion of alien peoples because of their racial qualities. What can these be but gifts of God? Is not any taste for beauty an echo or a gleam from the Source of all Beauty? Is not any trait of intellectual acuteness a revelation from the Divine intellect? Is not any grace

of personal excellence a revelation of some glory of the Supreme Person? After our glance at the Oriental crowds steadies to a gaze the sameness dissolves and the differences in individual character begin to stand out. And the Christian community needs all these separate persons with all their peculiarities of character. Needs them why and how? Needs them because they are persons. Needs them just as persons need one another. Needs them in the finest and purest spiritual communion.

Does Christianity lack anything which can be supplied from the outside systems as such? Here we fall back upon our conception of instruments. The systems are nothing in themselves and have no rights of their own. The only question then is as to how much of these systems can be utilized for Christianity in an instrumental capacity. We profess ourselves unable to see much that is precious for present-day use in the heathen doctrines or codes. They do not furnish healthy inspiration, or supply wholesome spiritual food, or put into the hands of men effective spiritual weapons of offense or defense, or tools for construction in the religious life of our time. A fair judgment would probably be that the systems have had their chance. They have done all

the good of which they are capable. Some are indeed better than others, but all are inadequate in to-day's crisis. What we really desire of the so-called heathen are the persons themselves and their aptitudes. Their religious views are not suited to the days just ahead of us. Many heathen religions are indeed wonderful inventions. They are like the American Indian's birch-bark canoe—one of the most marvellous contrivances ever devised by the wit of man, but valuable chiefly for museum purposes to-day. So of the religion of the American Indian, and of other non-Christian races.

We must not be understood in this as indicating a willingness to throw away anything of the slightest value. The conceptions of the outside religions when looked at on the whole and in the main are apt to be disquieting. We can pick out gems of moral precept and of spiritual insight here and there, but to do so we have to rummage through heaps of rubbish,—to use no stronger term. If there are items of these systems worth the expense of hunting them out by all means let them be appropriated. Gold is gold, but after we have paid for the mine and the digging and the cyanide process there may not be any gold left. It is more likely



that the appropriation will be that of the spiritual capabilities of the people themselves which are powerful engines but which have never been steered to the true course. If the Hindu has developed great faculty for meditative brooding the faculty can be used wonderfully for Christian thinking,—and the Hindu will have something worth brooding over. It may be that the progress of the years will show that there are segments of Christian truth which are more adapted to some races than are others, and it may be that the final interpretation of these segments cannot come until the outside peoples take hold of the aspects of Christian truth for which they are racially fitted. This is more likely than that Christianity will discover much in heathen theologies of which to make outright seizure. There are indeed among the outside peoples customs which are quaint and beautiful, manners which are graceful and inimitable, courtesies which are charming and fascinating. It would be sad indeed if the world-wide spread of Christianity should mar any of this. But the virtue of these peoples is not chiefly in the content of their religious beliefs.

It ought to be apparent that we do not imply that the missionary should attempt to

introduce Western methods and habits of life, —say to Eastern peoples. He is to introduce the life of God into the Eastern hearts and then allow that divine life to assume whatever form seems most appropriate. If the missionary relies on the method of himself living an approximately ideal human life he will accomplish much more than by merely formal preaching. The objection that missionaries bring discredit on their cause by living in better circumstances than do the people to whom they minister misses an essential point most woefully. To begin with, the missionary cannot live as do the people around him, and in the next place he ought not to if he could. It is part of his business to give his people an object lesson in what the normal human life means. The very thoroughness with which he cleans his premises is a lesson. And out beyond that are the obvious examples in the love of husband and wife for each other, the conscientious training of children, the kindness towards the neighbour, the honesty of daily marketing, which ought to be invaluable. But it is not the duty of the missionary to try to divert Chinese or Indian Christianity into any other than Chinese or Indian channels. It may not be desirable for the Chinaman to wear European clothes, or

to eat European dishes, or to speak European language, or to be anything but a Chinaman or to act like any one except a Chinaman no matter how sincere a Christian he may be.

And now, as we draw towards the close, we avow our belief that the progress of Christianity in foreign fields is a benefit for the instruments of the Church, considered as instruments. The missionary has to hold his emphasis to the right place,—the change of the life of the convert. He is not apt to be led into over-stress upon this or that minor detail when the acceptance of faith can mean only the transformation of life. In our land a man may be performing substantially Christian duties without the Christian consciousness. He ought to dedicate his powers openly to the Christian God, but the outward conduct may then go forward as before. It may not be necessary for him to abandon any habit whatsoever. But in a foreign land the transformation has often to be complete. Habits and even associations have to be broken. A battle is to be fought. The wise missionary, to get at the heart of a situation like this with the great essentials, must keep the stress on the features of the faith that really count. He will not make much of denominational definitions. He will

not rely overmuch upon church machinery. In the severer trials that come upon him he will lean most upon the Master's example of immediate contact of life with life. He wins by being first a Christian man and after that and incidentally a minister and a teacher.

We have all heard the story of the founding of a very important Christian school in Korea. The workers preached for years without success in winning converts. They could not get close enough to the people. One year the cholera struck Seoul, carrying off the people by hundreds. The dead were so numerous that burial of all seemed out of the question,—some were cast on the garbage heaps outside the city. A missionary walking beyond the walls came upon the body of a child,—a little girl—on a heap of refuse. The girl had been cast out for dead but proved to be alive. There was no place to take her but to the missionary's home, and there she recovered. With that girl as a pupil the missionary made a start towards a school, for he saw here a way into the life of the people. From such a beginning in closer daily contact came the after success. The impulse was Christian, the method was Christian, the outcome has been Christian. Here was evidently a providential opening

of the door to more intimate life centres of the people. The Church has in most places come upon happier times than those in older Korea, but in the abundance of the new opportunity she ought not to forget the emphasis on personal values and personal methods which is the centre of any evangelism worthy the name of Christian.



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