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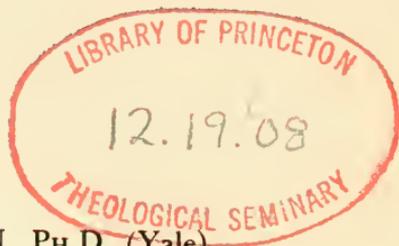


# THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

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## To

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHES WHICH I HAVE HAD THE HONOR TO SERVE AS PASTOR (ALL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE LAST TWO, IN CONNECTION WITH COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY WORK), WHO HAVE TAUGHT ME MANY LESSONS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND TRUTH, THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

The Oak Baptist Church, River John, Nova Scotia

The Baptist Church, New Annan, Nova Scotia  
June 1, 1894 - October 1, 1894

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## PREFACE

THE attempt to approach religion from the standpoint of psychology is a matter of comparatively recent endeavor. The serious consideration of this subject has been confined to the last twenty-five years, and America has taken a leading part in the investigations; England, France, and Germany have all made contributions. The titles of some of the earlier volumes published have been far too comprehensive, but it is only natural that a part should be conceived as the whole in the days when a science is young and undeveloped.

Minute investigations concerning some phases of the subject have been made and much of real value has been contributed in this way, but it seemed that some one should essay a summation of the conclusions of these detailed studies, with other material, so that there might be laid before the public an outline of the psychological phenomena of Christianity, covering as nearly as possible the whole field. This is the object of the present volume.

With the exception of a few examples used for comparison or illustration, only the phenomena of Christianity are presented, not because other religions could not furnish instructive and interesting material, but because every religion could provide so much that a mere outline, as this is, would necessitate a volume of equal size, and so it would become too extensive and diversified for our present purpose.

It will be noticed that the whole range of phenomena of Christianity has been included, abnormal and normal, pathological and healthful. In general, the first half is taken up with the abnormal and the latter half with the normal.

I have tried to keep in mind, in my writing, the general reader as well as the psychological and theological student, and hope that I have so far succeeded that both classes may find some profit in the reading. It has been my purpose to eschew philosophy and theology, and also to a great extent psychological theory, but two or three theories which seem to me fundamental have been made more or less prominent.

It is my hope to make this the basis of another study in which the theory shall have the more prominent part.

GEORGE BARTON CUTTEN.

COLUMBUS, OHIO,

*July 1, 1908.*

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA  
OF CHRISTIANITY



# THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA OF CHRISTIANITY

## CHAPTER I

### THROUGH THE HUMAN MOULD

“What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a God!”—SHAKESPEARE.

HAVE you ever watched the iron moulder or the worker in bronze? The hour for casting has arrived; the glowing, molten mass is carried in large vessels by clanging, creaking cranes to the huge moulds which seem to cover the floor; or strong-armed men bear hand-ladles, filled to the brim with liquid metal from the same furnace, and pour it into lesser moulds which stand ready to receive it. Presently the bands are loosened, the boxes are removed, and behold the product! The same moulder, the same charge, but how dissimilar the results! It is the mould which is responsible for the difference.

For thousands of years men have tried to fathom the profound mysteries of religion by speculating concerning the Moulder and the metal, but not until the eighteenth century did they think of examining the mould. This seems the more incomprehensible when we consider that the mould—the human mind—was the factor which was the most easily accessible for definite study and exact knowledge. It appears to be the natural starting-place instead of the final subject in the examination. But it is ever thus—distance lends en-

chantment, and the comparatively unattainable is always attractive. The Holyoke resident rushes across sea and land to obtain the view from the Swiss Alps, but has never ascended Mt. Tom; we go farther to fare worse.

When we consider the mould, several things become apparent. We think of God, the Moulder, as the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness; we consider His revelation and His grace as constant toward all men; why, then, the difference in religious experience? Why the primitive nature worship and the exalted Christianity in the same world? Why the childish credulity, the adolescent doubt, and the mature, reasonable faith in the same person? Why the different forms of Christianity as exhibited by the several denominations? It depends on the mould. We cannot understand how the mystic and the ecstatic can be embracing the same religion as the rationalist, if we consider only the Moulder and the metal, but the explanation is plain when we examine the capacity and form of the mould. With an exact knowledge of the minds of men we can prognosticate what form of expression the religious life will take in a particular case, for this is the one variable quantity. It is this that is meant when it is said that man is the maker of his religion. It might be still more definitely said that each man is the maker of his own religion, *i. e.*, that his religion is moulded according to the characteristics of his soul.

We must not think, however, because moulds are different that they do not conform to any laws. There are laws of moulds as there are laws of metals. It is because of the science of psychology and the well known laws of mental action that we can study religion from the human standpoint. True, religion has been tangled with all forms of abnormal, and even insane, mental vagaries, yet we recognize laws of abnormality as we do of normal processes, and we may separate the dross from the metal.

Among the first to direct attention to the psychological study of religion was Schleiermacher. He was interested in the emotional nature of religion and made some shrewd observations concerning this phase of the subject. But this was rather the result of the *Zeitgeist* than an original and novel innovation on his part, for with the genesis of scientific development it was inevitable that a scientific study of religion should occur. There is no other domain of human experience so universal and profound as religion, and the all-pervading scientific spirit must reach it. Although about a century has elapsed since that time, comparatively little has been accomplished, for our ways change slowly and our prejudices die hard. Some religious leaders have always feared science—feared that the development of science would result in the disintegration of religion. This cannot be. They are both manifestations of the same God, and instead of being antagonistic they are friendly and helpful. True, science may destroy theory and dogma, but such of these as it annihilates are best eliminated from our systems. Facts are solid rock on which we can build, or the same solid rock will prove an impregnable barrier against which we shall hurl our opposition in vain.

The study of religion is always essentially psychological. Whatever else can be predicated of religion, we must admit that it consists of a great variety of mental experiences, and of mental experiences only. We must take for granted that these mental states may be examined, analyzed, and described as other mental states may be, and this without reference to dogmatic theology. Theology has, in the past, endeavored to prove what mental states the religious person must have; psychology now assumes the task of observing what these states actually are.

The facts in the religious life—the psychological data—form a foundation on which theology must build, for it is only

as we examine the products of the moulds, as variable as they may be, that we can hope to understand the nature of the material or the design of the Moulder. The modern psychological and pedagogical method is from the known to the unknown, *i. e.*, in this case from man to God. The ancient theological method was from the unknown to the known. By resting our theories upon the facts we obtain exactness, and thereby rid theology of the superstition with which it has abounded. Chance, which formerly seemed to play an important rôle in religion, is now only useful as a mathematical fiction.

In applying the methods of science to religion there may be needed a word of warning. The phenomena of material science are comparatively simple and its laws proportionately easy to discover. When, however, these same methods are applied to mental phenomena, which are vastly more complex and the laws of which are more obscure and elusive, there is great need of severely testing every hypothesis and theory by the facts and sacrificing any which do not stand the test. If we find this necessary in dealing with psychology, ethics, sociology, and history, it is still more important when we are dealing with religion, which involves questions, not only of man's whole complex nature, but of his still more complex and mysterious dealings with God.

The psychological standpoint is not only important but indispensable for the religious worker, whether preacher or teacher. No amount of goodness or devotion can take its place. To the medical man, not therapeutics, but diagnosis, is the chief matter of concern to-day. If he knows definitely what is the trouble with the patient there is some hope of cure. The same thing is even more true with those who are concerned in "the cure of souls." The difference between the physician and the minister is this: the medical schools are doing all they can to instruct their pupils in this important

branch of knowledge, the theological seminaries comparatively nothing. Years ago the witch doctor and the medicine man had one prescription for every disease, and to-day the nostrum vender and the proprietary medicine men are getting wealthy by the same means. But we recognize this as neither scientific nor conforming to ordinary common sense. Does the seminary course lead to similar training?

Suppose a school of medicine to start with a curriculum containing adequate courses in chemistry and the compounding of drugs in the most elaborate way, the best methods of sugar-coating pills and administering doses, the history of medicine from Æsculapius to the present time, a description of superficial pathology, analytical study of the lectures of famous and successful physicians, gynæcology, and similar courses, but absolutely nothing on gross anatomy, histology, or physiology, and consequently little or no surgery, how would such an abbreviated and deformed course be received by competent medical men or even by the average public? To ask the question is to answer it. The query would be, "Of what use is the part which you do get if you leave out the other? How will you use your drugs if you know nothing of the different organs of the body and their functions?" These would be sensible and cogent questions. I do not criticise what is taught—far from it; these things ought ye to teach, but ye should not leave untaught the other things.

What does the ordinary seminary graduate know of the histology, anatomy, physiology, or surgery of the soul? Absolutely nothing. He must stumble along through years of trying experience and look back over countless mistakes before he understands these things even in a general way. What does the ordinary graduate understand about doubt? It is all classed together, whether in adolescents or in hardened sinners, and one dose is applied. What does the graduate know about sexuality, so closely allied with certain forms

of religious manifestations? What about ecstasy in its various forms, the numerous methods of faith cure thrust upon an illiterate but credulous people, or the significance or insignificance of visions and dreams?

The seminary student is taught ancient languages, which are excellent, but I am afraid a great many Hebrew Bibles need dusting. He is now taught sociology—the history and idiosyncrasies of races and crowds—but he goes out and meets but one race, and never sees a crowd except at a fire. What he does see and with what he has to deal are individual men with their different spiritual diseases, yet how many are prepared for this? The same question may be asked of the Sunday-school teacher, who has similar work and problems, and we must suggest the same answer. The psychological view-point, the study of men and their religious experiences, is the only solution.

I recognize that spiritual dissection and vivisection must meet the same objections as, or even more strenuous objections than, their physical analogues, but one is as necessary as the other, and both are imperative, if an adequate knowledge of the subject is to be obtained. Some persons consider their own religious experience as a sacred domain where only they themselves can tread and that with unshod feet, and they demand the same privilege for others. With these people there is no argument which can be used to change their opinion—they must be allowed their ideas, but most fair-minded persons can see the value of such an enquiry for the sake of obtaining facts, and the necessity of the discussion of these facts for the purpose of setting forth the spiritual diseases and their concomitant cures.

A further objection is raised to the investigation of religious phenomena. Some are afraid that the analysis and description of religious experiences will eliminate the divine elements or destroy their peculiarly devotional factors. These fears are

groundless. The religion which can only be supported by ignorance or superstition cannot hope to minister to the twentieth century, and Jesus does not speak in complimentary terms of those who love darkness rather than light. The duty of a spiritual physician must be twofold, that of teaching spiritual hygiene to the healthy and the cure of the diseased; for it is as important that the healthy be kept well as that the sick be healed.

The data for the science of psychology are rather difficult to obtain. True, we have all had some experience, and material may seem to be present wherever we look. The difficulty is that there is much self-deception in introspection; very few persons are able to interpret their own psychical experiences. This is especially true of religious experience. The first thing which genuine introspection discloses to us is that self-knowledge is exceedingly hard to obtain. After a time has elapsed, we are liable to cite our experience as we unconsciously think it should be according to the testimony of others, or according to orthodox standards, rather than as it really occurred, and still be perfectly honest about it. Not only are certain standards of experience suggested so that persons have it according to this or that form, but even if the experience does not exactly correspond to this at the time the powerful influence of suggestion helps to harmonize the two.

There is a further difficulty. It is hard to get the facts without at the same time receiving the theory of the person experiencing the facts, and the theory very frequently colors the facts. If a person is asked to observe his religious manifestations, he usually does it with his theoretical postulates in mind, so that it is difficult to make the facts serve for any other purpose than for that which the one experiencing them intends. This is another disadvantage of the mould, but as we recognize the difficulties we are in a better position to

overcome them. In fact, we shall see that the variety of moulds may be quite confusing, but as this is our only avenue for receiving, we are left no other alternative than to examine the product as it comes through the mould and endeavor to interpret the design of the Great Moulder. This is for no selfish end or petty gain, but in order that the human mould itself may be so corrected, so formed and smoothed and softened that the real beauty and grandeur of the Moulder's design may be apparent to all men.

To force all moulds to conform to a uniform pattern would defeat, not accomplish, this purpose. Education is insisting that individuality must be preserved, and this is also vital to religion. The aim must be to furnish guidance so that the individual characteristics may be developed; variety in unity, not homogeneity, is the ideal of the kingdom of God. The affirmation of God in the life, and the realization of the true man—the child of God—in the individual, rather than self-effacement, fulfil the teachings of the Man of Galilee.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RELIGIOUS FACULTY

“This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THIS chapter is named in accordance with the law of compensation. I speak of the “Religious Faculty” because there is no such thing. Years ago, before psychology had attained the dignity of a science, or at least before the science had advanced to its present stage, the mind was divided into “faculties.” These faculties were separate and distinct, and each one was devoted to some particular business. Thus we had the “Religious Faculty,” which was used exclusively for religious purposes; it could not be used for anything else and no other faculty could be used for religious exercises. We have grown away from this idea of mentality as we have become better informed concerning psychic phenomena.

A great step in advance was made when psychologists began to view the mind according to its activity rather than according to its content. The present accepted divisions are those of Intellect, Feeling, and Will, and these are present to some degree in all mental acts. We designate a particular act of mind as intellectual when the intellectual factor predominates, but that does not mean that there is no emotional nor volitional factor involved. The mind functions in a similar manner regardless of the subject before it. The same intellectual activity is present in religious thinking as in

financial, the same powers of mind are at work in biblical study as in mathematical. Not a different "faculty," but a different aim, distinguishes the different forms of mental action.

Perhaps, however, there is no subject which completely calls into activity the whole mind so much as religion. No phase of mental life escapes, for it is all-embracing. For a well-developed religious experience, the activity of the whole man is necessary. Some persons receive the consciousness of God through one activity, some through another, while others are not able to designate any special channel through which this has come, but find that the working of the whole mind in general ways has conveyed it to them. The sense of the divine presence penetrates all forms of human mentality, and is not limited to special occasions, or extraordinary or abnormal experience. If we believe in the immanence of God, we should expect Him to appeal to us through all of our mental states. It is hard for most persons to realize this.

A study of the various definitions of religion will reveal a thorough one-sidedness. Each person emphasizes that factor which is prominent in his own religious life. He forgets that the bond between the various mental factors is so close that we cannot stimulate any one without exciting the others. This being true, we cannot sympathize with those who endeavor to eliminate one or another part of mental activity from the religious life. The rationalist who recognizes the emotional abuses in some religious gatherings would reduce emotion in religion to a minimum. He errs at one extreme. The emotionalist who recognizes the coldness and motivelessness of the rationalistic standpoint would cultivate zeal at the expense of knowledge. He also errs. To be rational is not to be devoid of feeling, any more than to recognize the value of feeling is to indulge in unreasonable action. The strong volitional character is not the religious ideal any more than the feeble saint. The divine in man can

mean no single quality; it must mean the well-developed combination of all human qualities. Therefore the ideal is seen in no one person around us, but each man who is trying to live his life worthily spells one syllable or word; the combined expression of the religious community, "the kingdom of God," furnishes the completed sentence which defines the divine.

"Strong affections need a strong will; strong active powers need a strong intellect; strong intellect needs strong sympathies, to keep life steady. If the balance exist, no one faculty can possibly be too strong—we only get the stronger all-round character. In the life of saints, technically so called, the spiritual faculties are strong, but what gives the impression of extravagance proves usually on examination to be a relative deficiency of intellect. Spiritual excitement takes pathological forms whenever other interests are too few and the intellect too narrow. We find this exemplified by all the saintly attributes in turn—devout love of God, purity, charity, asceticism, all may lead astray."<sup>1</sup>

Christian experience is far richer and more varied than is generally supposed and taught, and no single type or group of types can exhaust it. Many who seek for certain experiences, which a one-sided teacher may proclaim as their privilege, are sorely disappointed; for these experiences may not be possible with the peculiar temperament of certain individuals. The best religion, real religion, ought to call into operation all the faculties of the individual mind, and no temperamental nor sentimental tests must be applied; each one must discover for himself the type of religion which corresponds best with what he believes to be his mental make-up and with what he thinks to be his true work here; and in the way which most properly expresses his own soul he should seek to establish personal relations with God.

<sup>1</sup>W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 340.

What is needed is the symmetrical working of the individual mind, in order that emotion, intellect, and will may each perform its proper function according to the idiosyncrasies of the individual, and that the various functions may work together like the delicate yet well-adjusted parts of an intricate machine. It is well to notice that the requisites of the Christian religion are expressed by the terms, belief, love, and activity, which, as we shall readily recognize, correspond to our tripartite mental division, intellect, feeling, and will. There is room in religion for the exercise of all our powers, and it requires the normal working of each one to keep the others in place. In fact, if we seek the mental sources of religion we shall discover that they are to be found in all psychic action.

There is one form of mental activity which has been much emphasized during the last few years. Only recently has its existence in its present form been recognized, and, as is usual in such cases, I fear too much has been attributed to it. It has been known by many names, chief among which are "The Subconscious Self" and "The Subliminal Self." There is a valid objection to any name in which the word "self" is used, for it insinuates the presence of a duality or multiplicity of personalities connected with one brain or body. In invading the integrity of the personality much confusion and misapprehension arise. The term "subconsciousness" seems to me to be descriptive, but at the same time free from the objections which may be charged against the other terms. The name implies a theory, and although the same phenomena are discussed which were formerly credited to "unconscious cerebration," a different explanation of them is given. While much—good, bad, and indifferent—has been written on the subject, it is necessary for us to deal with it here somewhat fully. This necessity arises for two reasons: it is not generally so well known as the more

common forms of mental activity, and in the following pages it will be used in the explanation of some religious experiences which were formerly credited to other agents.

If we will stop for a moment and consider, we shall realize that there is much mental activity of which we are not conscious. Some of this which at one time caused much conscious effort is now carried on unconsciously through the mechanism of habit; some other portions we have never consciously directed. All that part of the mind which ministers to somatic activity is an example of the latter. The respiration, heart action, secretions of the various organs, peristaltic action of the stomach and intestines, regulation of the blood supply, and other vital functions, are all controlled by the subconsciousness, and any direct, conscious effort to control these organs tends rather to disarrange and disturb function than to assist it. So long as the organs are in health and perform their regular functions in their proper manner, the consciousness is entirely ignorant of their existence. When you begin to know that you have organs, then something is wrong, for the subconsciousness sends out a warning in the form of pain and demands that consciousness shall supply a remedy. Because the subconsciousness controls these bodily functions, it is only by reaching it, directly or indirectly, that these organs can be affected through mental means.

While this is an important office of the subconsciousness, it is not, by any means, its principal work. It is the constant ally of consciousness. Subconscious influence is woven into every mental product. There is no doubt that subconscious impressions govern many actions every day. We do not realize whence they come, but they may even force us in opposition to our reason. Thus we may have intuitions, impulses, unreasonable likes and dislikes, love at first sight, convictions without any reason to uphold them, or spontaneous ideas

apparently well worked out. Delusive, fixed, insane, or hysterical ideas also find their source in the subconsciousness. It is not a separate entity, nor is it antagonistic to consciousness; they work together. The two fields of mental activity are divided by what has been designated "the threshold of consciousness." All above is consciousness, all below is subconsciousness, but they interact on each other. The impressions which we consciously receive are not all that we get; the subconsciousness receives much which escapes consciousness, and may dispatch certain impressions to consciousness at an opportune time, or if not definite impressions, it may furnish a mood which cannot be consciously accounted for. Consciousness is selective and critical, the subconsciousness is not. It takes anything and everything without question, but it is not always allowed by consciousness to incorporate these things into the life. It is exceedingly imitative; what is often charged to heredity may be but the activity of the imitative subconsciousness.

Perhaps no better example of the work of the subconsciousness can be mentioned than that of genius. What distinguishes the genius from the ordinary man? It is not the exaggeration of reasoning or volitional power, but rather the remarkable and numerous impressions or ideas which "pop" into his consciousness ready-made. He is not conscious of thinking these things out, but at times sits by as an interested spectator and wonders what will come next. How do we explain this psychologically? It is the activity of the subconsciousness which sends into consciousness these manifold helps. Perhaps we might say that the threshold of consciousness is lowered, *i. e.*, that the every-day working ability of the mind is extended to take in and more readily use additional subconscious areas, so that the latter more fully co-operate with and supplement consciousness while the regular work goes on. An extreme example of this may be found in

prodigies who make their appearance occasionally, *e. g.*, the mathematical prodigy who "knows the answer" without consciously working out the arithmetical exercise. Some further cases may be mentioned akin to this, of persons unable to solve problems at night and waking up in the morning with the solution, or dreaming the solution. This leads us a step further.

During sleep, when consciousness no longer rules and controls life, the subconsciousness has charge. At this time the bodily functions are carried on as usual, as well as much other mental activity. Some persons are able to suggest a time of waking, and the subconsciousness acts as the alarm clock. The mother's subconsciousness disturbs and awakens her if the baby breathes hard, but allows her to sleep through the slamming of doors and the crashing of thunder. These and other purposeful and useful actions are performed without the aid of consciousness. We must, however, be careful not to confuse actions of this kind with others which we consciously performed but forgot on awaking. In dreams we have the subconsciousness working freely, but in its uncritical way, so that most dreams are valueless. The somnambulist, who, during sleep, walks around and performs work, shows the subconsciousness taking full charge and accomplishing difficult or nominally impossible feats, or doing work which the consciousness needs, *e. g.*, writing sermons, solving problems, drawing diagrams, or finding lost articles.

Sleep furnishes us with an example of another subconscious principle, *viz.*, the subconsciousness may be communicated with and may control the body quite fully when by some means the normal, controlling action of the mind is excluded. The time when the subconsciousness can be most surely reached with profit is during the hypnotic state. Then the consciousness is in abeyance and the subconsciousness has control. It may also be approached directly during the mo-

ments preceding sleep, during delirium and other mental disorders, in automatic writing, and in conditions some of which we shall study in the following pages.

The chief characteristic of the subconsciousness, and one that we shall do well to remember for our use in these pages, is its suggestibility. I have already mentioned its uncritical and unselective character; on account of this it is suggestible. Anything suggested is received, and, so far as possible, it is carried out. I have not tried to give a plenary description of it, but only such as seemed necessary to assist us in the explanation of religious phenomena to be given later.

I do not wish to be understood, either here or in any other place, as giving too much credit to the work of the subconsciousness. To do that would be to misrepresent the facts. It is important, but so are the conscious factors of mind. They will be taken up later, and due credit given them where it belongs. Undue emphasis on the subconscious action tends to create mysteries. True, there are mysteries in religion, but it is not well to postulate nor suggest unnecessary ones. While I trust that each mental factor will be dealt with in the proper manner, it remains for me to say this before leaving the description of the subconsciousness: I believe if God works directly in man He must work through the subconsciousness. We know of His indirect dealings through the reason, imagination, emotions, and will, but directly in the cure of bodily ills, revelation, inspiration, and in other ways, the subconsciousness has the major part to perform.

We do not exalt religion by claiming that it deals largely with one portion of the mind, neither do we degrade it by showing its connection with any other portion. There is no partial operation of the mind which may claim such intrinsic dignity that we may strive to relate it to our religious experiences for the sake of the prestige which it may lend. It

requires all forms of mentality to constitute the real and true man. The same may be predicated of the connection of certain religious experiences with the physical. The relation is real and must be recognized. The physical condition of the individual does influence our mental states, but very seldom, if ever, can we say that it controls them. The mind is master. But our psychological study simply determines the *modus operandi* of the mind in religion, and does not attempt to express an opinion concerning the value of the product. Ethics, not psychology, must take up the latter task.

The question might naturally be asked, If there is no religious faculty set apart for religious work, if religion simply uses the ordinary powers of mind, how does it happen that man is religious at all? We can give only one answer, and that may seem to be lacking in illumination. Man is religious because he belongs to the human race, a characteristic of which is to be religious. Of course we are able to analyze further than this. We may say that there are subconscious influences which impel him to be religious, that there are emotional experiences which draw him in this same direction; we may call attention to the fact that man is naturally a philosopher and will speculate and try to explain his existence, its source and destiny; we may consider his social instincts as aids to the religious life, and we may recognize that through imitation he may wish to be like the God whom his speculations and intuitions picture, but, after all, what is this but saying that he is so constituted mentally that he cannot help it? He is, as Sabatier says, "incurably religious."

The "Religious Faculty" proves to be not one mental area fenced off from the rest, but man in his entirety. Not a psychic factor is left out, for religion requires and uses the whole man.

## CHAPTER III

### MYSTICISM

“We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN taking up Mysticism as the first form of religious expression to be discussed, I do so for two reasons. In the first place, it is an experience common to all people; and in the second place, it leads naturally to a number of religious phenomena which are usually connected with it, while not an integral or necessary part of it.

While it is true that mysticism, especially in its extreme forms, is a matter of temperament and unattainable by some people, yet we find in it the kernel of all religions, and of Christianity not less than of others. It is found among all races, and all religions must look to it in seeking for origins, and for the method and cause of revival after religious declension. In times when a barren orthodoxy has usurped the place of a vital faith, mystics have arisen to show by practical means that religion is something more than a dry dogma, which furnishes an exercise for the understanding. It is a protest of the individual, living, inner experience against the formal systems of men long since dead and buried.

Religion—real religion—always contains a unique factor for every individual, and nothing short of mystical experiences of the more pronounced type will satisfy some people. Every one is justified in having his own religious

needs satisfactorily met, for "it is only in the reality of the living experience of the Individual Self that the Universal and Absolute becomes known and believed in or dimly apprehended as felt."<sup>1</sup> The religious strivings which we may not be able to share with others are strictly our own, and these are the experiences which make religion. We may say that religion stands or falls with the personal inner experiences.

Perhaps the most common mystical experience, not only in all religions, but in all individuals of all religions, is that of prayer. Here, if it is truly prayer, we come into conscious realization of a union with God, and this is the heart of mysticism. The church has never been without its mystics, nor could it well exist without its mystical phases of piety. In the dark ages mysticism was the saving power, the Reformation owes not a little of its strength to this same cause, and even to-day the virility of Protestantism is sustained by personal religious experiences, notwithstanding the many vagaries and even pathological factors in the expression of these inner experiences.

The religious phenomena which are usually associated with mysticism centre around the experiences of ecstasy. Mysticism, pure and simple, is a normal religious experience, but ecstatic states are liable to be based upon pathological conditions, and hence those psychologists who are searching for traces of disease in everything outside of every-day experiences are liable to attribute a morbid character to mysticism as such.<sup>2</sup> Starting from this normal and common experience we may take up these less common religious phenomena in a natural order and sequence.

While mysticism lends itself to a primary place in our discussion on account of its known factors, there are some

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 595.

<sup>2</sup> E. Murisier, *Les maladies du sentiment religieux*, includes mysticism among these diseases.

reasons why it might be transferred to a late place on our programme, chief among which is the great difficulty and diversity of definition.<sup>1</sup> The definition is usually given according to the personal experience of the one defining, or else according to the particular form with which one is most familiar. This means, of course, that there are many different forms of mysticism: for example, there is religious, philosophic, and artistic mysticism, and of the first kind, the type with which we are now dealing, emphasis may be laid on the epistemological or on the emotional factor; it may be spontaneous or induced; it may be normal or pathological. It is evident that any one describing one form of mysticism would not be likely to form a definition which would apply to all or perhaps any of the other forms, and hence the confusion.

What is true of the definition is also true concerning the value placed upon the experience by different observers. Some consider it pathological or a symptom of densest ignorance, others think of it as the highest mental product, or divine inspiration. Some think of the revelation received through mysticism as the exact words, direct from the lips of the Almighty, others affirm that it is but the insane promptings of a diseased brain.<sup>2</sup> We must account for this difference in valuation in the same way as we account for the variety of definitions, viz., those expressing these opinions have come in contact with the different forms of mysticism, and all, in fact, may be right without contradicting one another. As in the investigation of any phenomenon, we must not use the extreme or abnormal cases as typical ones, but only as illustrating some factors of the normal type much magnified.

The philosophical type of mysticism is best exemplified by

<sup>1</sup> See a number of definitions, W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, pp. 69 and 72.

the mystics of India, who are heirs of centuries of profound thinking which has, however, been productive of a limited amount of bodily movement. We may say, also, that Christian mysticism is hardly a native product, but has been derived chiefly from heathen sources. The Greek and other Neo-Platonists made the primary contribution, and later the influence of Eastern mysticism was felt. By this I do not mean that the New Testament shows no traces of mysticism: the contrary is the case. Jesus' words are filled with mystical significance at times, and Paul and John were both mystics, the former telling us that he was caught up into the third heaven and heard things which he could not express in language. But we must also remember that Paul quotes mystical utterances from the Greeks, and his evident knowledge of Greek literature proved a source of mysticism in him. Paul and John, especially the latter, represent a more philosophical type of mysticism than Jesus, whose attitude was more plain and business-like. "It is conceded that Mark's non-mystical picture of the Master is nearer the facts in point of time and contains less subjective coloring than that of John. The latter was a mystic theologian, who confessedly wrote his version of the gospel history in order to establish a doctrinal point of view."<sup>1</sup>

The endeavor of the human mind to grasp the divine source or the ultimate reality of things is the philosophical basis of mysticism. "Speculative mysticism has occupied itself largely with these two great subjects—the immanence of God in nature, and the relation of human personality to Divine. . . . The Unity of all existence is a fundamental doctrine of mysticism. God is in all and all is in God."<sup>2</sup> The point of departure for the philosophical mystic is the notion of being or unity, and so the immanence of God is the logical

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 28.

conclusion. By means of the "oversoul" this immanence is discovered and utilized.<sup>1</sup>

We can well see how many mystics claimed to be and thought themselves to be pantheists, when all they really meant was that they believed in the immanence of God. With this, however, they also believed in the transcendence of God, and never lost the idea of personality. "We have to distinguish also between mysticism and pantheism. In pantheism God is lost in the world, and is no longer related to it; he has no reality except in nature, and ceases to be self-related and to have consciousness. Now, religion implies some term of self. Therefore, no religion is possible in real pantheism. When men say they are pantheists, they usually mean that they are mystics like Paul. For this mysticism there is perhaps no better formula than Schleiermacher's sense of absolute dependence." "We do not always distinguish as we ought between mysticism and pantheism. In the words themselves there is no reason why they should not carry the same meaning. . . . In mysticism is implied both the immanence and the transcendence of the divine being in the universe; in pantheism only the immanence. . . . If the leaves could be conscious of their relation to the tree, they would be to that extent mystics."<sup>2</sup>

The pantheistic tendency is due to the sense of communion, presence, or unity with God. "Mysticism is subjective religion. It is religion seeking to emancipate itself from the tyranny of external media. It is religion bringing the soul into the immediate presence of God, and insisting on its right to live in immediate fellowship with Him. . . . It is

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Emerson, *The Oversoul* (Essays); F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, pp. 59 ff., 192 ff.; W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 321 ff.

<sup>2</sup> C. C. Everett, *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, pp. 74 and 169.

the very heart of religion.”<sup>1</sup> By this union the soul is supposed to be freed from the body, and the aim of the mystic is to overcome all barriers between the individual and his God so as to become one with the Absolute and to be aware of this unity. In this state alone, thinks the mystic, the real nature of things may be known and supernatural objects may be contemplated. This sense of unity is obtained by a complete self-surrender on the part of the individual.

“The mystical tendency in Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and even in the earlier and more devotional writings of Augustine, leads these writers to expressions which seem to imply such a surrender, by will, of the Egohood of man that he realizes the goal of religious aspiration by being lost or absorbed in the Infinite God. In the Middle Ages Scotus Erigena and others indulged in even more extreme views. Many passages, expressive of the same opinion, might be quoted from Master Eckhart and the other Christian Mystics of later times. Eckhart not only affirms, ‘Wherever I am there is God’—a declaration which, understood in a certain way, any pious soul might make; but he also declares that man’s perfection is to enter into the Ground which is groundless; and of those who are born of the spirit, he says, that their Ego ‘dies away in the miracle of Godhood, for in the oneness with God it possesses no discrimination. The personal loses its name in oneness.’”<sup>2</sup>

“We have seen that in Schleiermacher’s view no divine attributes can be recognized except those which grow out of the relation of absolute dependence in which we stand toward God. In such a conception of religion there is little room for forms of worship. Little praise can be offered, no direct obedience is possible. We have only on the one hand mystery, as in the Unknowable of Spencer, the recognition of

<sup>1</sup> L. O. Brastow, *The Modern Pulpit*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 344.

that which cannot be formulated, and on the other hand mysticism, a recognition or sense of a community between the individual and the absolute life. This sense of community between the human and the divine varies in form. It may be of the sort which underlies all profound, positive religion, the mysticism of Paul when he says, 'In him we live and move and have our being,' the mysticism which takes form in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This is the normal form of mysticism. Another sort results, abnormal and fantastic, when the individual life, believing itself one with the absolute life, assumes that its thoughts are the thoughts of God, and mistakes the vagaries of the imagination for divine revelation."

"The highest spiritual unity manifests itself under two aspects: first, externally, as the centre of the world; and secondly, and more profoundly, when it is conceived as immanent in the world. I have already spoken of this immanent spiritual unity. We find it manifested in religious mysticism. This mysticism, when normal, consists in the recognition of a certain community between the individual and the universe, between the finite spirit and the infinite spirit. It is manifested most profoundly in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which implies the interpenetration of the individual by the absolute spirit. In its abnormal form mysticism falls easily into pantheism. God is absorbed into the universe. The universal spirit has no consciousness, and, strictly speaking, human individuality is lost. Unity becomes exclusive, and the understanding has no place. In such abnormal mysticism the individual sometimes thinks it unnecessary to follow the laws of thought; he believes that he has direct intuitions of the truth. Conceiving himself to be a manifestation of the universal life, he thinks that he can arrive at the structure of the universe, as truth in general, by consciousness. But this is lawless thought,

dreaming and not reasoning, the work of the fanciful mind.”<sup>1</sup>

There are different degrees of this sense of unity. It may come simply as a sense of the presence of some other person.<sup>2</sup> It may come in the silence of the night, during seasons of great trouble, or even in the turmoil of daily strife. It is difficult to define this experience psychologically, and some have confused it with the æsthetic and other emotions. The sense of communion is seen best in the ordinary experience of prayer, when one has an immediate sense of the presence of God who hears him pray. It is said that St. Francis, during prayer, had such a sense of God's presence that he could only repeat time after time, “My God! My God!” and no confession or request could be uttered by his lips.

The mystic not only maintains the possibility of experiencing the presence of God and having communion with Him, but God ceases to be an object of knowledge and belief and becomes a vital experience; nothing short of real union will satisfy. Mysticism is “the attempt to realize, in thought and feeling, the immanence of the temporal in the eternal, and of the eternal in the temporal.” “Complete union with God is the ideal limit of religion, the attainment of which would be at once its consummation and annihilation. It is in the continual but unending approximation to it that the life of religion consists.”<sup>3</sup> St. Teresa said, “Sometimes, when I was reading, I came suddenly on a sense of the presence of God which did not allow me to doubt that He was within me and that I was entirely engulfed in Him.” Madame Guyon had a like experience. Ruysbroek said, “In this

<sup>1</sup> C. C. Everett, *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, pp. 73 f. and 167 f.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 59-68; J. B. Pratt, *Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 244 ff.

<sup>3</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 5 and 12.

highest stage the soul is united to God without means; it sinks into the vast darkness of Godhead." Bernard of Clairvaux said that the soul knows itself to be lost in God, "as the little drop of water when poured into a quantity of wine appears to surrender its own nature and takes on both the taste and color of the wine." In these later days the mind-curers and so-called metaphysical healers have a feeling of oneness with the Absolute, and use this as the fundamental tenet in their teaching, and as the therapeutic principle in their healing.

It is on account of this certainty of union with God that the experiences of the mystic seem so valuable to him. His attitude toward his own position is that of absolute certainty, and the evidence of his own feelings and own inner experience is incontrovertible. He is sure he is right. On this account he is correspondingly intolerant of the opinions and position of others—he is equally sure they are wrong. The mystical states are always taken at their face value, and there is no evidence which can be adduced that can add to the certainty, and no data from which one can reason to lessen the immediate assurance of the experience. They are felt to be real, and that is most convincing.

On account of this immediate certainty of the phenomena, the mystic cannot learn from others, but he must be led and taught by the Spirit. This usually gives him the privilege of reproving and finding fault with others who have not been so favored. He does not seem to realize that while the mystical truths which are vouchsafed to him during his transports are absolutely authoritative for him if he wishes so to consider them, they carry with them no authority which is at all binding upon others who do not care to accept them without careful examination. Examination does not tend to increase the number of followers, for there is no unanimity among mystics; their mysticism is their only bond. This

individuality and these peculiar characteristics which are attached to mystical revelation cause it to be more closely related to sensation than to conceptual thought.

It is true that some of the mystics have had marvellous insight into spiritual things, and many of their works have been of great value in other respects. Swedenborg was not only a dreamer but a scientist,<sup>1</sup> and St. Teresa not only experienced visions but showed remarkable executive ability. Hegel thought that Jacob Böhme held an important place in both religion and philosophy. Apart from its epistemological value, mysticism has had a practical side. "Mysticism consists primarily in a mode of life, and then in a mode of reflection. . . . It is a mode of life which is governed not by the isolated promptings of instinct at first or even at second hand, but by an ideal. Hence, so far as religious life consists only in obedience to externally imposed rules of conduct and belief, it is not yet mystical. And it only becomes mystical when the objects of conduct and belief are stated in the terms of the spiritual experience, an experience which is made our own."<sup>2</sup> "Self-surrender appears in two forms. The first, the mystical, is found in Brahmanism and in the Christianity of the mystics; we see it in Paul, and in Schleiermacher's sense of absolute dependence. In the second, the ethical form, the individual gives himself up, not simply to the spirit of obedience, but to the actual doing of the will of God in whatever direction one is led."<sup>3</sup>

"In full maturity the rational and the mystical dwell together in the same spirit, but ever so that the latter is undergirded and guided by the former. There is a lofty mysticism, chastened by the critical habit, of which one may speak only with the deepest respect. It was a quality of

<sup>1</sup> W. White, *Life of Emanuel Swedenborg*.

<sup>2</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> C. C. Everett, *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, p. 115.

Beecher, of Brooks, of Martineau, and of those terrible mystics, the Puritans. The practical reason was strong in these men, but nevertheless they refused to shut themselves up to a testimony of the senses. They possessed and they cultivated an inner consciousness of things which eye had not seen nor ear heard. This perfect fusing of the two chief mental traits in the same nature is the real climax of mind. If either be bred out or atrophied, there is something lacking which the courses of mental evolution should have made permanent in a man.”<sup>1</sup>

The above quotations reveal the really useful phase of the mystic life. They show, what we have already contended, that mysticism is a varied experience. While there are many mystics whose religion amounts to nothing more than a pallid, sickly emotionalism, being of no use to themselves or others, ten thousand of whom would not be missed according to our ideas of religion to-day, there are others whose experience has served as a stimulus to valuable work and as a dynamo to indefatigable energy. With the most practical, however, there is an undercurrent of weakness. Professor James' valuable analysis of St. Teresa, the most zealous of the Spanish mystics, who excelled in energy and industry, points this out. Listen to what he says: “Take Saint Teresa, . . . one of the ablest women, in many respects, of whose life we have the record. She had a powerful intellect of the practical order. She wrote admirable descriptive psychology, possessed a will equal to any emergency, great talent for politics and business, a buoyant disposition, and a first-rate literary style. She was tenaciously aspiring, and put her whole life at the service of her religious ideals. Yet so paltry were these, according to our present way of thinking, that (although I know that others have been moved differently) I confess that my only feeling in reading her has been

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 281.

pity that so much vitality of soul should have found such poor employment.”<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, real insight, clearer intellectual vision, strengthened moral purpose, and many valuable suggestions have come as a product of the mystical consciousness. A false division has come between certain classes of mystics, however, and the rock upon which they have split is the question concerning the comparative value of two systems of acquiring knowledge. Can more be learned concerning God by a close observation of the world around us, by a study of nature and our fellow-men, or by withdrawing into our inner consciousness and seeking direct communion with God? Of course the answer obviously is, do both; one must not be emphasized at the expense of the other, but they work together, one is complementary to the other. God speaks in both ways, and we only get His complete message by listening to both utterances. One of the articles of faith in mysticism is that the soul can see and perceive if man partakes of the divine nature as far as possible, and this seems to be partially, at least, carried out in fact.

There are three rounds in the mystical ladder: first, the purgative life; second, the illuminative life; and third, unitive life, or state of perfect contemplation. The latter step is considered by some the goal rather than a part of the process. Although there are other classifications, this scheme is the basis of all. The perfection of attainment is found in the “negative way.” In this, because God is infinite, no finite qualities can be attributed to Him, and He can only be described in negatives; and, further, the only way in which God can be known is to sink the self into nothingness, close the door of the senses, insist on an absence of definite, sensible images, cease all thought, and approach God by ab-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 346 ff. The quotation might have been longer with additional profit.

straction. The self must be transcended, and all reason must be abandoned, faith being the antithesis of reason, not of sight. This condition is known by some mystics as "the state of death."<sup>1</sup>

Many artificial means were used to attain this transcendent state, and often, although not always, it was a state of ecstacy which was sought. Most mystics had a definitely formulated and systematic procedure. Some had printed rules, but these, the mystic affirmed, were only for beginners, the advanced mystic soon progressed beyond them. Some used physical aids and had rules concerning the breath and ascetic practices to weaken bodily impulses. The senses were suppressed and desires were held in abeyance. Contemplation was enjoined, by which means the ego was to be forgotten and must sink into nothingness in order to attain to the glory and pleasure of the one emotional experience. The whole secret of attainment was in absolute passivity: no active endeavor could be put forth, but patient waiting in a state of emptiness was necessary.<sup>2</sup>

Dionysius the Areopagite, the father of Christian mysticism, leaves the following instructions: "But thou, O dear Timothy, by thy persistent commerce with the mystic visions, leave behind sensible perceptions and intellectual efforts, and all objects of sense and of intelligence, and all things being and not being, and be raised aloft unknowingly to the union, as far as attainable with Him Who is above every essence and knowledge. For by the resistless and absolute ecstacy in all purity, from thyself and all thou wilt be carried on high to the superessential ray of the divine darkness, when thou hast cast away all and become free from all."

This goal and method are more characteristic of the

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, "The State of Death: An Instance of Internal Adaptation," *American Journal of Psychology*, Commemorative Number, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Pratt, *Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 103-106, 154-160.

lonely, early mystic who could only see God when the eye of sense was closed; the more modern mystic saw God in everything: he recognized "the spiritual law in the natural world." Many of the practices by which this state was artificially produced were not necessary: ascetic habits and the maltreatment of the body were not a true part of mysticism. Protestants have abandoned all artificial means of elevating the soul except by prayer, but the mind-curers have reintroduced them. The expulsion of the outer sensations which interfere with concentration upon ideal-things is the first aim, and this is accomplished by passive relaxation, concentration, meditation, and auto-hypnosis. At first holy scenes may be imagined, but in the highest raptures images are eliminated, and therefore no description can be given of this highest state.<sup>1</sup>

The keynote of all the mysteries of God is found in the word, love. Joy and intense love are common characteristics of mysticism. The description of love is made to include much not normally in it, and rapture and passion are known by this name. "Love unites the soul to God, and the more degrees of love the soul holds, so much the more deeply does it enter into God, and is concentrated into Him."<sup>2</sup> From this it can be seen that the experience, which may start with and in love, ends by going far in excess of any normal experience of love. The following canticle composed by St. Francis of Assisi shows the same characteristics:

"Into love's furnace I am cast  
Into love's furnace I am cast;  
I burn, I languish, pine, and waste.  
O love divine, how sharp thy dart!  
How deep the wound that galls my heart!  
As wax in heat, so, from above

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 406 ff.

<sup>2</sup> St. John of the Cross, *Living Flame of Love*, verse 1.

My smitten soul dissolves in love.  
 I live, yet languishing I die,  
 While in thy furnace bound I lie.

In love's sweet swoon to thee I cleave,  
 Bless'd source of love.

Love's slave, in chains of strong desire  
 I'm bound.

Grant, O my God, who diedst for me,  
 I, sinful wretch, may die for thee  
 Of love's deep wounds; love to embrace,  
 To swim in its sweet sea; thy face  
 To see; then, joined with thee above,  
 Shall I myself pass into love."<sup>1</sup>

This all-embracing love has its prototype in the consuming passion of the lover for his mistress, when all his thoughts, desires, and actions centre around her. In fact, some of the great saints have seemingly made a mistake in the character of their love, and carried on "an endless amatory flirtation" with the Deity. Others have juggled with the word love so as to make it mean everything and therefore nothing. As an example, look at a quotation from a modern Eastern writer: "The Sermon on the Mount is a series of lessons on Love culture or Soul culture, for Love is another word for Soul."<sup>2</sup> Of course, when once one begins to make mystical and symbolic interpretations of words and things, there is no dividing line, and white may be another name for black, and black for white. Contradiction is impossible under such a scheme, and each one is a law unto himself. The high emotional tension under certain experiences of love causes

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> P. Ramanathan, *The Culture of the Soul among Western Nations*, p. 220.

love to be the chief factor of the mystic's experience, and other highly emotional states receive this designation.

Every one cannot be a thorough-going mystic, although there must be some mystical elements in every form of religion. In common with other forms of religious expression it is a matter of temperament, and in the mystics the melancholic and sanguine temperaments predominate. In churches to-day we see many honest persons seeking the mystical experiences of which they have heard others speak, but on account of a lack of suggestibility and an inharmonious temperament they are unable to obtain them; some even fear to unite with a church, for they know that they will be unable to have some of the experiences which they expect will be demanded of them. This type of character which allies itself to mysticism is passive, sensuous, and essentially feminine, while the independent, masculine, and ethically vigorous persons find it difficult or impossible to experience these things if they wish, and they are not liable to desire them. In those persons who are temperamentally susceptible, there is an abnormal expansion of consciousness in which the subject is not able to distinguish between himself and the larger life into which he seems to have dissolved, and hence he has the feeling of unity with the Absolute.

Some mystics are essentially lonely and selfish, for they are busy with their personal experiences rather than with the world around them. Perhaps we might, however, like John of Ruysbroek, make a distinction between what he called true and false mystics. He said that some false mystics mistook laziness for holy abstraction, others thought that nothing was denied them, and a third class considered all impulses divine, and hence repudiated all responsibility. The mystics do not look for a development of the whole man, but, casting aside reason, and if possible consciousness, develop one part of the mind, and they, more than any others, try to dis-

entangle the "religious faculty" from the baser parts of the mind—a task, as I have tried to show, as impossible as undesirable. The influence of the subconsciousness in mysticism is very marked. This dreamy other-selfness, so characteristic of the mystic, is subconscious in character, and the various accessories of mysticism, ecstasy, visions, dreams, etc., we shall see when we come to examine them, have a large subconscious factor.

Notwithstanding the excesses and mistakes, mysticism enriches our religion and continually renews it by personal experiences, which cannot be denied or explained away, and by its optimistic attitude leads the world onward with an increasing faith. The desire to be in harmony with the divine will, which is an integral part of mysticism, inspires the true mystic to an ethical and practical religious life which shows itself in altruistic deeds.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, "Tendances fondamentales des mystiques chrétiens," *Revue Philosophique*, LIX, pp. 1-36, 441-487.

## CHAPTER IV

### ECSTASY

“This is the very ecstasy of love,  
Whose violent property foredoes itself.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE phenomena of ecstasy have had a marvellous influence upon the history of mankind. They have inspired the founding of religions, both enriched and degraded religions already founded, robbed painful death of its terrors, and changed a peasant girl into a military hero beloved and trusted by her friends and feared and hated by her enemies. Ecstasy has been especially prominent in religion, and is common to all forms. It is unique in this, for I believe there are no other phenomena of which this can be predicated, at least to the same extent. Religious ideas, however, do not always provide pabulum for ecstatic states, but any object much desired, it matters little how trivial or grotesque it may be, may become the object of ecstasy. Nor are religious ascetics and thinkers alone the subjects; artists, philosophers, and other one-ideaed persons are liable to have this experience. While usually connected with mysticism, ecstasy and kindred states are not an integral part of it.

The general characteristics of the ecstatic state are concentration of attention on one dominant idea or object, the loss of normal self-control, insensibility to external impressions, and intense emotional excitement. It is manifested in various ways and with varying degrees of intensity. In some cases overpowering joy or grief is expressed, while in others

the subject is seized by a temporary frenzy closely resembling mania. Some ecstasies are mute and motionless, the body rigid and insensible to external impressions to such a degree that general sensibility is extinct; no contact is felt, and neither pricking with pins nor burning with fire causes pain. There is also a suspension of other sensory activity: no sounds are heard, except in some cases the voice of one person, and the eyes, although open, do not see. These symptoms with the apparent unconsciousness resemble very much those of the cataleptic state. There are, however, two points of difference: contrary to appearances, consciousness is not lacking, and there is subsequent memory of events or visions experienced while in this state. / Quite as often there is violent emotional excitement which manifests itself in impassioned words or songs, some of which are intelligible, as the ecstatic describes his visions, others not; his physiognomy may be expressive, and extravagant gesticulations and movements of the body take place, although he may not move from his position.

Ecstatic visions and hallucinations are almost invariably of an agreeable nature, and the subject regrets the short duration of his happiness. The spirit is supposed to leave the body and frequently to come in contact with God or with Jesus or with the Virgin. Such have been the experiences of many of the saints. Much less frequently the ecstatic experiences temptations from the devil.

At times this disorder is highly contagious and readily spreads by suggestion and imitation. In the Middle Ages, widespread epidemics, leading to the most extravagant actions in large numbers, were experienced. Contagious ecstasy was not, however, confined to this time, but all through the centuries and even at the present time we find startling exhibitions of this phenomenon. The Dancing Mania of the last part of the fourteenth century and the Convulsionaries

of the first part of the eighteenth century are pertinent examples of contagious ecstasy.<sup>1</sup>

Resignation, almost to ecstasy, is shown by certain of the saints, and we may trace the condition from this point through various stages until we reach that of complete insensibility to all external impressions. Madame Guyon, frail as she was physically, manifested a spiritual absorption which laughed at physical danger. She writes: "We all of us came near perishing in a river which we found it necessary to pass. The carriage sank in the quicksand. Others who were with us threw themselves out in excessive fright. But I found my thoughts so much taken up with God that I had no distinct sense of danger. It is true that the thought of being drowned passed across my mind, but it caused no other sensation or reflection in me than this—that I felt quite contented and willing it were so, if it were my heavenly Father's choice." Sailing from Nice to Genoa, a storm kept her eleven days at sea, of which she writes, "As the irritated waves dashed round us I could not help experiencing a certain degree of satisfaction in my mind. I pleased myself with thinking that those mutinous billows, under the command of Him who does all things rightly, might probably furnish me with a watery grave. Perhaps I carried the point too far, in the pleasure which I took in thus seeing myself beaten and bandied by the swelling waters. Those who were with me took notice of my intrepidity."<sup>2</sup>

St. Teresa affirms a similar effect of ecstasy on both mental and physical conditions. From her autobiography we have the following: "Often, infirm and wrought upon with dreadful pains before the ecstasy, the soul emerges from it full of health and admirably disposed for action . . . as if God had willed that the body itself, already obedient to the

<sup>1</sup> For an account of these phenomena, see Chaps. XII and XIII.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 287.

soul's desires, should share in the soul's happiness. . . . The soul after such a favor is animated with a degree of courage so great that if at that moment its body should be torn to pieces for the cause of God, it would feel nothing but the liveliest comfort." <sup>1</sup>

The insensibility to external impressions has been shown by the total disregard and contempt for physical suffering. Queen Jezebel's priests mutilated themselves on Mount Carmel some centuries before the Christian era, medieval saints subjected themselves to unique and severe torture which seemed to produce joy rather than pain, and Der-vishes hurled themselves on the bayonets of British soldiers in the Soudan, seeing only paradise for those who thus sacrificed themselves. Undoubtedly many martyrs, burned at the stake or stoned to death, have been spared the suffering which was intended for them and which seemed inevitable, by some form of ecstasy.<sup>2</sup> Blanche Gamond, a Huguenot woman persecuted under Louis XIV, exhibited a splendid scorn for torture. She writes concerning her experience as follows:

"They shut all the doors and I saw six women, each with a bunch of willow rods as thick as the hand could hold, and a yard long. He gave me the order, 'Undress yourself,' which I did. He said, 'You are leaving on your shift; you must take it off.' They had so little patience that they took it off themselves, and I was naked from the waist up. They brought a cord with which they tied me to a beam in the kitchen. They drew the cord tight with all their strength and asked me, 'Does it hurt you?' and then they discharged their fury upon me, exclaiming as they struck me, 'Pray now to your God.' It was the Roulette woman who held this

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 414.

<sup>2</sup> S. Baring-Gould, *Virgin Saints and Martyrs*, pp. 16 ff.; G. L. Raymond, *The Psychology of Inspiration*, p. 239; I. Taylor, *Fanaticism*, p. 81 f.

language. But at this moment I received the greatest consolation that I can ever receive in my life, since I had the honor of being whipped for the name of Christ, and in addition of being crowned with his mercy and his consolations. Why can I not write down the inconceivable influences, consolations, and peace which I felt interiorly? To understand them one must have passed by the same trial; they were so great that I was ravished, for there where afflictions abound, grace is given superabundantly. In vain the women cried, 'We must double our blows; she does not feel them, for she neither speaks nor cries.' And how should I have cried, since I was swooning with happiness within?"<sup>1</sup>

Of Blandina, a maiden martyr of the second century, it is recorded: "After she had endured stripes, the tearing of beasts, and the iron chair, she was enclosed in a net, and thrown to a bull; and, having been tossed for some time by the animal, and being quite superior to her pain, through the influence of hope, and the realizing view of the objects of her faith and her fellowship with Christ, she at length breathed her soul." Stephen's face shone like that of an angel while he received the stones from the enraged multitude; Rogers, a fellow-worker with Tyndale, died bathing his hands in the flame as though it were cold water; and Lawrence, a deacon of Rome, was laid upon a gridiron; with a smile, he said, "Turn me, I am roasted on one side," and died without a cry or moan of pain, as calmly as if lying on a bed of down.

Most of the saints revelled in ecstasy, and some were quite intemperate in their indulgence. It is said that St. Francis of Assisi, who partook of the communion frequently, usually did so with ecstasies in which his soul was absorbed in the Infinite. Often, also, when praying, he fell into raptures. His contemplation of the sufferings of Christ, which was the occasion of his stigmata, brought on weeping so copious as

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 288 ff.

to ruin his eyes. But, as mentioned above, ecstasy was not always of a strictly religious character. As an example of the artistic type, it is said that Michelangelo, at sixty years, attacked marbles, knocking off more chips in two hours than younger and stronger men could in three or four, such was his impetuosity and fury in his work.<sup>1</sup>

The predisposing cause of ecstasy may be either natural or artificial; the exciting causes are manifold. There are some persons who are constitutionally liable to ecstatic states; these are usually of a nervous or hysterical nature. Add to this, absorbing contemplation upon or intense longing for some object, and conditions are ripe for ecstasy. Except in the contagious form which is liable to lay claim to any one, energy must be concentrated on one idea, and this idea must engross the whole consciousness. "The chief rule for gaining this highest stage of mystic knowledge is, therefore, not to try to gain it. You guide yourself toward it best by ceasing to guide yourself at all. Thought and will are only a hindrance. . . . Those mystics who have the most elaborate methods of inducing the ecstatic condition are the ones who most strongly insist upon its independence of human will and human effort. . . . Absolute passivity is the condition of receiving it."<sup>2</sup> St. Teresa had four degrees of prayer, the fourth of which was that of Rapture or Ecstasy.<sup>3</sup> "This state is the most privileged, because the most unnatural of all. The bodily as well as mental powers are sunk in a divine stupor. You can make no resistance, as you may possibly, to some extent, in the Prayer of the Union. On a sudden your breath and strength begin to fail; the eyes are involuntarily closed, or, if open, cannot distinguish surrounding objects; the hands are rigid; the whole body cold."

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 200 f.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> R. A. Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics*, II, p. 168 f.

Both the religious and philosophical literature of the Orient, and especially is this true of India, abound in passages, extracts from which would form a working manual for the artificial attainment of ecstasy. Some of the suggestions given are as follows: keep perfectly quiet; fix the gaze on the sky, a bright object, the end of the nose, or the navel; repeat a certain monosyllable while the Supreme Being is contemplated; retard the respiration; and refrain from thinking of either time or place.<sup>1</sup> Some strongly volitional individuals do not need these aids, but, indirectly, by a simple act of will they are able to exclude other things, and thereby throw themselves into ecstasy. Now, any one familiar with hypnosis will readily recognize that these methods are exactly what might be suggested to bring about auto-hypnosis.

Among some of the more primitive people and nations of antiquity, more crass methods were in use, such as the beating of magic drums, blowing of trumpets, continued howling, exhausting supplication to Deity, convulsive movements and contortions, dancing, flagellation, fasting, and sexual continence. I Samuel 10:5 *f.* seems to indicate that musical instruments were used for this purpose among the early Hebrews. Dervishes acquire an ecstatic state by dancing, whirling, and howling, and thereby become insensible even to severe wounds. "They run pointed iron and sharp knives into their heads, eyes, necks, and breasts, without injuring themselves."<sup>2</sup> The Greeks used dancing almost exclusively as the agent.

In addition to these psychical and physical means, narcotics are used to bring about the desired results. The inhabitants of Tunguska, western Siberia, use the fly agaric, a mushroom produced plentifully in that section; those of

<sup>1</sup> T. Ribot, *The Diseases of the Will*, p. 94 *f.*

<sup>2</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 42.

San Domingo, the herb coca. Some tribes of American Indians have recourse to tobacco, and in the East, opium and haschisch are employed. Among the ancient Egyptians, intoxicating drinks were used, and medieval times have contributed receipts for witch salves and philtres.<sup>1</sup>

The following case is a modern one; and shows some of the characteristics already described. "Dr. Brown-Séquard relates a remarkable case of ecstatic catalepsy in a girl whom he was called in to see. She lived in Paris, close to the Church of St. Sulpice, and every Sunday morning at eight o'clock, when the bell began to ring, she used at once to rise from her bed, mount the edge of the bedstead, and stand there on tip-toe until the bell sounded at eight in the evening, when she returned to her bed. The board on which she stood was curved and polished, and it would have been impossible for the most athletic man to have remained on it in such a position for more than a few minutes at a time. While standing there, she was utterly unconscious of her surroundings, and continued murmuring prayers to the Virgin all the time, her hands clasped, her eyes fixed, and head slightly bent. Some of the bystanders were sceptical, and Dr. Brown-Séquard, to put her to the test, applied a strong, interrupted current to her face. She showed no signs of pain; but the muscles reacted energetically, and her intonation was therefore slightly affected. The girl was weak and anemic, and was so thoroughly exhausted by her Sunday exertions, that the remainder of the week she could only lie helpless in her bed. The enormous increase in muscular and nervous force in one direction (dynamogenesis) was accompanied, as is invariably the case, by inhibition of other functions—in this case, those of higher cerebration."<sup>2</sup>

Similar to the allied phenomena of trance and catalepsy,

<sup>1</sup> E. Parish, *Hallucinations and Illusions*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> C. L. Tuckey, *Treatment by Hypnotism and Suggestion*, p. 14 f.

it is generally agreed that ecstasy is more frequent in women than in men, and with few exceptions the former have had the most remarkable experiences.<sup>1</sup> Why ecstasy should take a religious coloring in persons otherwise indifferent to religion is not easy to explain. One explanation has been given. Religion is deeply rooted in the child mind, even if disregarded later, and in hysterical and somnambulistic attacks it has been noticed that early ideas play a leading part. Except when the vision is related at the time, what the ecstatic experiences he alone can tell. Fortunately he retains a distinct recollection of it when he awakes, else outsiders could only surmise concerning it.

There seem to be two distinct forms of ecstasy. The one is characterized by wild excitement, loss of all self-control, and temporary madness. It is "a sort of religious intoxication indulged in largely for its delightful effects." This usually originates in dancing and other forms of physical manifestations. The other type is intense, but quiet and calm; it is usually spontaneous in origin, or else comes through mental rather than physical means. A certain amount of culture is necessary in persons experiencing this, and it shows itself in solitude rather than before a crowd, as the other form does. The former type is seen among the Dervishes and medicine men, the latter among the Hebrew Prophets and Indian mystics.<sup>2</sup> In both cases "reason dies in giving birth to ecstasy, as Rachel died in giving birth to Benjamin."

There are a number of states which are very similar to ecstasy, so similar as to be indistinguishable at times. These are hysteria, catalepsy, hypnosis, autohypnosis, spontaneous somnambulism, and trance. The distinction of memory separates it from hypnosis, but when we recall that the events

<sup>1</sup> H. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 99 and 147.

which take place during hypnosis are remembered when a suggestion is made to that effect, autosuggestion may account for memory in ecstasy. The devotees of certain religions or sects are undoubtedly hypnotized by their priests before practising their rites, and in other cases autohypnosis is apparent. The conditions surrounding the cases cannot always be classed under hypnosis, however, although they are similar. Especially when religion is the controlling thought in these cases, the distinction between them is quite marked. I recognize that the tendency of to-day is differentiation and division, yet I believe this discussion may be carried on more profitably by our widening the contents of the term "ecstasy," as it will be noticed I have already done, and including in it many of the phenomena of autohypnosis and hysteria where they are concerned with religion. Ecstasy may be clearly distinguished from most mobile states, as, *e. g.*, epilepsy, chorea, and convulsions.

"To the medical mind these ecstasies signify nothing but suggested and imitated hypnoid states, on an intellectual basis of superstition, and a corporeal one of degeneration and hysteria. . . . Their fruits have been various. Stupefaction, for one thing, seems not to have been altogether absent as a result . . . but in natively strong minds and characters we find quite opposite results. The great Spanish mystics, who carried the habit of ecstasy as far as it has often been carried, appear for the most part to have shown indomitable spirit and energy, and all the more so for the trances in which they indulged."<sup>1</sup> As a disease, ecstasy is not important, for while medical remedies may sometimes be used to advantage, moral influences judiciously exercised are more efficacious.

One writer<sup>2</sup> finds the psychology of ecstasy simple, consisting as it does of two principal factors. The first is that

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup> T. Ribot, *The Psychology of the Emotions*, p. 326.

to which we have already referred, the restriction of the area of consciousness to one intense idea serving as the centre of association, and the second, the emotional state of rapture. Rapture is defined as a form of love in its highest degree, with desire and the pleasure of possession, which, like profane love, only finds its end in complete fusion and unification. The great mystics leave us in no doubt on this latter point, even though their declarations may be veiled in metaphors; and their critics, of all classes, have frequently, with much justice, reproached them with being mistaken in the nature of their love. But we must add another factor, *viz.*, the activity of the subconsciousness. While the subject is sufficiently under the control of consciousness to remember his experiences when he awakes, it is evident from phenomena like glossolalia and visions, that the subconsciousness plays a large part in the process. The intensity of the one-absorbing state of consciousness is such as to attenuate and enfeeble the other conscious states, and while these still remain in connection with the primary state, they give the subconsciousness an opportunity to assert itself and push into consciousness.

The foregoing has been an attempt to give a general description of ecstasy. It remains now to speak of various ecstatic phenomena more in detail, and such will be done in the following chapters. It may be well at this point to call attention to one thing to prevent misinterpretation. There is nothing good or bad in ecstasy in itself. In times past it has been adjudged as the condition of sainthood, or the work of the devil, by the subject's friends and enemies, respectively. We must escape this error. In these days we do not consider everything mysterious to be of divine origin, and everything common to be separated from the hand of God; this distinction is obsolete. On the other hand, we should not esteem abnormal phenomena worthless. Simply classifying any

experience of to-day or in New Testament times under the head of ecstasy is neither condemning nor extolling it. We believe in the revelation of God through the higher faculties to-day; that does not mean that we ignore what may come to us in these abnormal states. We must judge the gift, not by the name of the horse which drew it, but by its value after we receive it. With this clear before us, let us turn our attention to certain ecstatic phenomena.

## CHAPTER V

### GLOSSOLALIA

“His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired but all disordered.”—SHAKESPEARE.

WHAT is meant by the phenomenon “speaking with tongues” is not clear to us to-day, and evidently, if we can judge by the different New Testament accounts, in the first century there was no unanimity of opinion concerning either the value or the definition of the marvel. The general understanding of this term is that taken from a superficial reading of the second chapter of The Acts of the Apostles, *viz.*, that illiterate Galileans spoke in many different foreign languages without previous training. St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine insisted that “the miracle of Pentecost is the antithesis of the confusion of tongues at Babel. There the one language had been divided into many; here the many languages were united in one man.” There is not the slightest evidence for this. The hearers were expressly designated as Jews, and the enumeration given was not of languages but of countries. The most that can possibly be taken from this account, as far as the apostles are concerned, is that the differences of dialect, of Greek or Aramaic, were eliminated, and the wonder is that this should be so when the speakers were Galileans, who would naturally be supposed to have such a pronounced dialect.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. Robertson, “Tongues, Gift of,” *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, IV, pp. 793 ff.; see also J. Denney, “Holy Spirit,” *Hastings' Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, I, p. 737; T. Nicol, “Pentecost,” *Ibid.*, II, p. 333.

A more careful reading of the passage will show that Luke seems to affirm that the miracle did not lie in the tongues of the speakers, but in the ears of the hearers. One prominent modern historian <sup>1</sup> has accepted this view. He thinks that although the apostles spoke in unintelligible ecstatic utterances, the Spirit interpreted to those present, each one of whom thought he heard in his own language. Certainly the claim that the apostles received this gift so as to enable them, unlettered as they were, to speak to the different nations to which they had been sent, does not seem to be a valid one, for we never hear of their using it in missionary work, and the prevalence of the Greek language made this entirely unnecessary. Peter does not refer to the use of a foreign language when he defends the disciples on a charge of drunkenness, although that would have been a valuable argument.

One commentator <sup>2</sup> goes so far as to say that "the sudden communication of a faculty of speaking foreign languages is neither logically possible nor psychologically and morally conceivable." Luke does not even seem to be consistent with himself, for in the two other references to glossolalia he evidently refers to the same phenomena which Paul describes. It has been suggested that perhaps the glamour surrounding the early church and the influence of the attendant wonders—the wind and the tongues of fire—account for his misunderstanding of the first appearance of this gift.

Paul's reference to tongues in the fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians is very different from Luke's description of the Pentecostal experience. It is evident that he considered the gift of tongues for use in worship by the individual, or for his own edification, and not for the instruction of the hearers, for the latter could not understand these utterances

<sup>1</sup> P. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, I, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> H. A. W. Meyer, *Commentary on Acts*, 2:4.

without an interpreter. In his enumeration of spiritual gifts in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians, he puts tongues in the last place. "Though they might speak with the tongues of men and of angels, if they were without that love which does not behave itself unseemly, they were only sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." He compares the gift of tongues to the notes of a pipe or harp, without distinction of sounds, and goes so far as to say that he would rather speak five words with his understanding that he might instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. In his experience, people were not hearing in their own languages, but just the opposite; no one could understand a word.

Paul's description of the gift has been thus epitomized: ✓  
"It was evidently frenzied or ecstatic utterances of sounds ordinarily unintelligible both to speakers and to hearers, except such as might be endowed by the Holy Spirit with a special gift of interpretation. The speaker was supposed to be completely under the control of the Spirit, to be a mere passive instrument in His hands, and to be moved and played upon by Him. His utterances were not his own, but the utterances of the Spirit, and he was commonly entirely unconscious of what he was saying."<sup>1</sup> The gift was considered most spiritual because the speaker had less control of himself, but its real value must be computed by its worth to others. Although it was the most showy of all gifts, it was of little value and must not be exercised, said the apostle, unless an interpreter were present. The words were divine and not human, and had evidently no relation to any human tongue, so that the speaker was thought to be demented. It is really a high testimony to Paul's common sense, mystic as he was, that in those days, when every one extolled the abnormal and regarded it as "spiritual," he had sufficient perspicacity to determine the insignificant value of glossolalia.

<sup>1</sup> A. C. McGiffert, *The Apostolic Age*, p. 50 f.

Had the gift of tongues changed in character within half a century, were there two different phenomena included under the same term, or was either Luke or Paul mistaken in his description?

The generally accepted modern view of this phenomenon is that it was ecstatic, and the result of the dominance of the lower brain-centres under great excitement, which caused a lack of self-control. It was especially to be seen among ignorant and highly excitable individuals, as an expression of joy and gladness. "The subjects are, usually, devout but unlearned and ignorant people who lack power of expression of the emotions which crowd upon them in seasons of great religious excitement. Under the pressure of overwrought mental condition, rational control takes its flight, and the overheated brain breaks forth in articulations more or less unconscious, including odds and ends of languages and dialects with which the mind of the individual has become somewhat familiar."<sup>1</sup> "This fervor vented itself in expressions of thanksgiving, in fragments of psalmody, or hymnody, or prayer, which to the speaker himself conveyed an irresistible sense of communion with God, and to the bystander an impression of some extraordinary manifestation of power; but not necessarily any instruction or teaching, and sometimes even having the appearance of wild excitement like that of madness or intoxication."<sup>2</sup>

Now, experiences of this kind are not confined to primitive Christianity nor to the early centuries of this era. One recent account describes a visit made to some mystics who, in their meeting, exhibited at first motor automatism, followed by semi-prophetic utterances, ending with speaking with tongues and a translation of the same. The tongues

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> A. Wright, *Some New Testament Problems*, p. 284, quoting Stanley's commentary on I Cor.

consisted of an incomprehensible jargon with no resemblance to any known language but English, the native tongue.<sup>1</sup>

The best modern examples have been among the Irvingites, or, as they are properly designated, The Catholic Apostolic Church. About 1830 the gift of tongues was reported from the West of Scotland, and later in the Scotch church of the Rev. Edward Irving in London. Mr. Irving had been giving some lectures on spiritual gifts, and the observed phenomena seemed to confirm his contentions that these gifts were not to be confined to the primitive church. The speaking with tongues bore no resemblance to any known language but was believed to be strictly an unknown tongue, the Holy Spirit "using the tongue of man in a manner which neither his own intellect could dictate, nor that of any other man comprehend."

Among the early Mormons, fanaticism showed itself in glossolalia. One witness says: "Many would have fits of speaking all the different Indian dialects, *which none could understand.*"<sup>2</sup> Another witness describes the phenomena as follows: "Those who speak in tongues are generally the most illiterate among the 'saints,' such as cannot command words as quick as they would wish, and instead of waiting for a suitable word to come to their memories they break forth in the first sound their tongues can articulate, no matter what it is. Thus some person in the meeting has told an interesting story about Zion, then an excitable brother gets up to bear his 'testimony,' the speed of speech increasing with the interest of the subject: 'Beloved brethren and sisters, I rejoice, and my heart is glad to overflowing—I hope

<sup>1</sup> A. LeBarron, "A Case of Psychic Automatism," including "Speaking with Tongues," *Proceedings Society for Psychical Research*, XII pp. 277-297.

<sup>2</sup> The italics are mine. Ezra Booth's letters to Rev. Ira Eddy from Nelson, Ohio, Sept., 1831, published in the *Ohio Star*, quoted by I. W. Riley, *The Founder of Mormonism*, p. 263.

to go to Zion, and to see you all there, and to—to—O, *me sontro von te, sontro von terre, sontro von te. O, me palassate te, etc.*”<sup>1</sup> In this early glossolalia among the Mormons some critical listeners distinguished some snatches of Indian dialects.

Evidently glossolalia is not a distinctive gift of saints. Notice the following: “There are also kwei (demons) of the quiet sort who talk and laugh like other people, only that the voice is changed. Some have a voice like a bird. Some speak Mandarin, and some the local dialect. . . . Mandarin is the spoken language of the northern provinces of China, and is quite different from the language of the province of Fukien from which this communication comes.”<sup>2</sup> Many other examples of glossolalia might be cited from the histories of the Franciscans of the thirteenth century, the early Quakers, and Methodists, but these will suffice to show the character of the phenomena according to this view. While there was undoubtedly some simulation in groups employed in this form of religious exercise, most of it must be classed as genuine ecstasy and studied from this standpoint.

Another explanation comes in a late work.<sup>3</sup> The writer affirms that, according to the old view of glossolalia, interpretation was not necessary, and according to the new view interpretation was impossible. His theory is intended to harmonize the accounts of Luke and Paul, and to provide a place for interpretation. The modern view, he says, does not account for the words of Luke, “Are not all these that speak Galileans! And how hear we them every one in his own language, wherein we were born?” Accordingly he opines that the utterances were spoken in ecstasy, in harmony

<sup>1</sup> S. Hawthornthwaite, *Adventures Among the Mormons*, pp. 88-91, quoted by I. W. Riley, *The Founder of Mormonism*, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> J. L. Nevius, *Demon Possession and Allied Themes*, pp. 46 ff., see also pp. 58, 115, and 145.

<sup>3</sup> A Wright, *Some New Testament Problems*, Chap. XVIII, pp. 277-303.

with the modern view, but were really other languages. The speaker did not know the language and was unconscious of what he was saying, and when the ecstasy was over he did not remember what he had said.

He accounts for this in a rational manner, by the well-known phenomena of the abnormally exalted memory in certain ecstatic cases. We are all familiar with the well-known case narrated by Coleridge, of the illiterate serving-maid, who in the delirium of fever recited long passages of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew which she had heard her former employer recite when she was attending to her household duties, but which she hardly noticed and had not thought of trying to remember.

Another thoroughly investigated case might be cited. In 1853 there were some alleged cases of demoniacal possession in a French village on the borders of Switzerland. Among other phenomena the afflicted were said to have experienced the gift of tongues, speaking in German and Latin and even in Arabic. Professor Tissot, an eminent member of the medical faculty of Dijon, visited the village and made a series of researches of which he afterward published a full account. Concerning the gift of tongues his conclusions were as follows: "As to German and Latin no great difficulty was presented; it was by no means hard to suppose that some of the girls might have learned some words of the former language in the neighboring Swiss Canton, where German was spoken, or even in Germany itself; and as to Latin, considering that they had heard it from their childhood in the church, there seemed nothing very wonderful in their uttering some words in that language also."<sup>1</sup> There was no evidence that Arabic was really spoken. This explanation would come under the

<sup>1</sup> A. D. White, "Diabolism and Hysteria," *Popular Science Monthly*, June, 1889; *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*, pp. 159 ff.

caption of exalted memory. Hypermnnesia is common to many abnormal states. An English officer in Africa was hypnotized and suddenly began to speak a strange language. This proved to be Welsh, which he had learned as a child and forgotten.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps a better illustration would be the experiences of The Little Prophets of the Cevennes,<sup>2</sup> for in them we have exalted memory of ecstasy. From 1688 to 1701, about six hundred were affected by this strange disorder, most of whom were children. They would first swoon and become insensible to all sense impressions. Then, although they did not know French, children of three years of age and older would preach sermons three-quarters of an hour long, in correct French, with proper emphasis and gestures. They could not be stopped when once started, and they continued in this abnormal state until they finished. *Inherited* memory was the explanation given of this extraordinary experience.

Inherited memory, which explanation leads us into more difficulty than the original problem causes, is presented as the solution of another case of the gift of tongues. "In certain abnormal and highly excited states of the nervous system, as is proved by abundant facts, matters impressed deep on the memory of a father present themselves to the consciousness of his posterity. I have no doubt, for instance, that the daughter of Judge Edmonds derives her capacity to speak, in the trance state, in languages unfamiliar to her in the ordinary moods of consciousness, from her father's studies in that direction, or rather, from the nervous habit engendered by those studies."<sup>3</sup> The transference of acquired characteristics presents no difficulty to a writer of this kind.

<sup>1</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 142 f.

<sup>2</sup> R. Heath, "The Little Prophets of the Cevennes," *Contemporary Review*, Jan., 1886.

<sup>3</sup> F. G. Fairfield, *Ten Years with Spiritual Mediums*.

According to Wright's theory of glossolalia, the explanation of inherited memory is not necessary, but that of greatly exalted memory is, for the apostles would have to remember the language heard incidentally in the market place or on the street, and be able to reconstruct it into a message.

So-called speaking with tongues has appeared as a contemporary religious mania. A recent revival in Sweden has been followed by another awakening accompanied, according to the claim, by a genuine gift of tongues. Ecstasy was experienced, and the ecstasies began to speak with "strange tongues." In America, however, it seems to have flourished best as a modern movement, and has come usually in the excitement of revival meetings. These manifestations have taken the form of articulate but unintelligible utterances. The reported cases of genuine languages having been spoken have not been authenticated. The "Apostolic Faith Movement," which started in Kansas in 1900, has received some apparently coveted fame on account of this kind of manifestation, but other sects have had similar experiences. The adherents to this movement claim that speaking with tongues is the only Bible evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Those who claim to have received this gift say that "the Spirit takes possession of their vocal organs and uses them as he wills, while their minds are at rest. They say they are conscious that their vocal organs are being used, but do not know how, nor do they know what they are saying. They have no power to stop speaking when once the Spirit possesses them. In the meeting I attended two women who were thus wrought upon. One remained in that condition four or five minutes; the other but a few seconds. The first indication I had of anything out of the ordinary was a low muttering sound without articulation. This muttering lasted but a few seconds, then the voice raised to a more natural tone and volume, and it would be hard to imagine how a more rapid succes-

sion of sounds could come from the mouth of a human being. For the most part, these sounds appeared to be articulate, but if she spoke a language no one knew it. She herself knew not the meaning of any sound she made."<sup>1</sup>

Something very similar to this in exaltation of memory and power of speech, although not using another nor a foreign language, is found in an account of some "sleeping" preachers. The whole power of the mind seems to have been heightened. In London, in 1815, there appeared a book entitled *Remarkable Sermons by Rachel Baker, and Pious Ejaculations, Delivered During Sleep*, by Dr. Mitchell, M.D., Professor of Physic, the late Dr. Priestly, LL.D., and Dr. Douglass. On the title-page of the book are the following words, "*Several hundreds every evening flock to hear this most wonderful Preacher, who is instrumental in converting more persons to Christianity, when asleep, than all other ministers together whilst awake.*" This book gives an account of a girl who was born at Pelham, Mass., in 1794. At the age of seventeen she became a religious melancholic, and later in the same year she fell into a trance and talked about her fear of hell. This continued for two months, at the end of which time she seemed to be converted and her mind was calmed. From this time on she began to preach and to pray in her trances, in such a manner that those who knew her well declared that her readiness and fluency far exceeded her waking state. Her trances occurred almost every evening and lasted for forty-five minutes, beginning and ending with slight epileptiform symptoms, and passing off into natural sleep for the rest of the night. When she awoke she was unable to remember anything that had taken place during her trance. There were no other morbid symptoms connected with her case. In this book two other cases

<sup>1</sup> S. A. Manwell, "Apostolic Faith Movement," *The Wesleyan Methodist*, Feb. 20, 1907.

of "sleeping preachers" are recorded, *viz.*, Job Cooper, a Pennsylvania weaver, in 1774, and Joseph Payne, a sixteen-year-old boy, at Reading, England, in 1759.

There seems to be little doubt of the ecstatic character of the utterances in glossolalia, and notwithstanding the ingenuity of Wright's theory it seems beyond the range of probability, if not possibility, that exalted memory to such an extraordinary degree could become so common. The cases of exalted memory approaching this that have been carefully and scientifically examined so as to preclude imposture have been isolated cases, and very few in number. There seems to be no better solution than to follow Paul and exclude Luke's Pentecostal narrative. In doing this we espouse the modern view of the subject.

## CHAPTER VI

### VISIONS

"This is a most majestic vision and harmonious charming."

—SHAKESPEARE.

SIMILAR to the gift of tongues, the vision is sometimes an important factor in ecstasy. The legendary lore and sacred books of all peoples teem with accounts of revelations given in visions. Among primitive people visions and dreams of persons, dead or alive, probably gave the first suggestion of a soul apart from the body; for the savage considered that he really saw a person whom he knew, if alive, to be elsewhere, and if dead, to be unable to do the things which the vision or dream portrayed.<sup>1</sup>

In the Old Testament, visions did not play so important a part in prophecy as there is a disposition to attribute to them, yet their influence was not inconsiderable. The prophet's condition was more frequently that of the mystic than the ecstatic, so that what he sometimes called a vision was purely a literary garb for the revelation, or merely verbal messages which he gave. However, the prophets always regarded their visions and dreams as something objective in the sense that they were caused by God and were a revelation from Him, because the presentation did not come through ordinary channels.<sup>2</sup> No attempt was made to analyze them, they were

<sup>1</sup> E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology*, pp. 343 ff.

<sup>2</sup> A. B. Davidson, "Prophecy and Prophets," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, IV, p. 115.

accepted at face value. The phenomena did not end with the Old Testament dispensation, nor were they later confined to primitive people, but the early church was guided to a certain extent by them and the mediæval church thrived on them. To-day, although they occur, the small consideration which they receive tends to discourage them, or if they are experienced they may never be related.

Some of the most famous names in history, especially in the history of the Roman Catholic Church, have attained prominence either through the visions which they have experienced or through the deeds which visions have inspired. They tell with rapture of the wonderful visions vouchsafed to them and of the conversations which they were privileged to hold with angelic visitors. Indeed, visions, at times, seem to have been a short cut to sanctification and divine favor. St. Teresa, who seems to have had much experience in this form of religious exercise, speaks as follows in her autobiography:

“Like imperfect sleep, which, instead of giving more strength to the head, doth but leave it the more exhausted, the result of mere operations of the imagination is but to weaken the soul. Instead of nourishment and energy she reaps only lassitude and disgust: whereas a genuine heavenly vision yields to her a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches and an admirable renewal of bodily strength. I alleged these reasons to those who so often accused my visions of being the work of the enemy of mankind and the sport of my imagination. . . . I shewed them the jewels which the divine hand had left with me:—they were my actual dispositions. All those who knew me saw that I was changed; my confessor bore witness to the fact; this improvement, palpable in all respects, far from being hidden, was brilliantly evident to all men. As for myself, it was impossible to believe that if the demon was its author, he could have

used, in order to lose me and lead me to hell, an expedient so contrary to his own interests as that of uprooting my vices, and filling me with masculine courage and other virtues instead, for I saw clearly that a single one of these visions was enough to enrich me with all that wealth." <sup>1</sup>

The form which visions may take depends on the mental condition and contents of the individual experiencing them. That perfectly sane people often have them there is no doubt. St. Paul considered the one which he received at the time of his conversion as an unique favour which conferred upon him the apostolic prerogative of an eye-witness.<sup>2</sup> But this was not his only experience: later he refers to having been caught up into the third heaven. Shortly before the victory of Constantine over Maxentius, the former asserted that he saw at noonday the vision of a flaming cross in the sky on which was the inscription in Greek, "By this conquer." It was, perhaps, an optical illusion, the effect of a parhelion beheld in the moment of the crisis of his destiny when he was greatly excited. He found it very useful, however, and adopted the standard of the cross as the banner at the head of his armies.<sup>3</sup>

Visions were, indeed, no invention of the mystics, but were of practical value to the percipients, and were a common phenomenon in the early and middle ages. "They played a much more important part in the life of the early church than many ecclesiastical historians are willing to admit. Tertullian, for instance, says calmly, 'The majority, almost, of men learn God from visions.' Such implicit reliance was placed on the divine authority of visions, that on one occasion an ignorant peasant and a married man was made Patriarch of Alexandria against his will, because his dying

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> C. D. Royse, "The Psychology of Saul's Conversion," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, pp. 149 ff.

<sup>3</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 88.

predecessor had a vision that the man who should bring him a present of grapes on the next day should be his successor! In course of time visions became rarer among the laity, but continued frequent among the monks and clergy.”<sup>1</sup>

Among the hermits of the early church visions were especially common. Of these Lecky says: “All the elements of hallucination were there. Ignorant and superstitious, believing as a matter of religious conviction that countless demons filled the air, attributing every fluctuation of his temperament, and every exceptional phenomenon in surrounding nature, to spiritual agency; delirious, too, from solitude and long-continued austerities, the hermit soon mistook for palpable realities the phantoms of his brain. In the ghastly gloom of the sepulchre, where, amid mouldering corpses, he took up his abode; in the long hours of the night penance, where the desert wind sobbed around his lonely cell, and the cries of wild beasts were borne upon his ears, visible forms of lust or terror appeared to haunt him, and strange dramas were enacted by those who were contending for his soul. An imagination strained to the utmost limit, acting upon a frame attenuated and diseased by macerations, produced bewildering psychological phenomena, paroxysms of conflicting passions, sudden alternations of joy and anguish, which he regarded as manifestly supernatural. Sometimes, in the very ecstasy of his devotion, the memory of old scenes would crowd upon his mind. The shady groves and soft, voluptuous gardens of his native city would arise, and, kneeling alone upon the burning sand, he seemed to see around him the fair groups of dancing-girls, on whose warm, undulating limbs and wanton smiles his youthful eyes had too fondly dwelt. . . . The simplest incident came at last to suggest diabolical influence.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, pp. 116 ff.

Brutus had a vision of Cæsar whom he had murdered. The spectre appeared when he was anxious about the battle which was to be the crisis in his career, and promised to meet him at Philippi, where the murderer afterward sustained disastrous defeat. St. Anthony, in the desert, heard the voice of Christ, was beaten by devils, was frightened by the spectre of a black boy, and was enticed by a phantom woman. St. Augustine's conversion was accompanied by an hallucination and his mother had visions. St. Teresa speaks of Jesus, St. François de Sales of the Virgin, and Henry Suso, a German mystic of the fourteenth century, of the "Eternal Wisdom" in the form of a beautiful maiden. To the latter the maiden was a lovely mistress and his soul embraced her. He also had a vision of the Holy Child on Candlemas Day, whom he handled and kissed in great joy. St. Gertrude had hallucinations of amatory caresses and favors from the Son of God. The Lord appeared and, "giving to her soul the softest kiss," talked with her and called her his beloved. Julian of Norwich prayed that she might have "a grievous sickness almost unto death," in order that she might enjoy a "bodily sight" of her Lord upon the cross, "like others that were Christ's lovers." The sickness came, and when she was thought to be dying the vision appeared. The blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque received the vision and revelation of the Sacred Heart. The Lord took her heart out of her breast and inflamed it; He then returned it to her. Raphael's "San Sisto" was presented as a vision to the astonished artist, who reproduced it on canvas. Luther threw an ink-bottle at a vision of the devil, the Lord appeared to St. Francis in the form of a seraph, and Emanuel Swedenborg beheld God himself. Engelbrecht relates how he was carried by the Holy Spirit through space to the gates of hell, and then borne in a golden chariot to heaven, where he saw choirs of saints and angels singing around the throne, and

received a message from God, delivered to him by an angel. Marie de Morel betrayed her vision by her attitude and the expression of her countenance. Thus at Christmas time she seemed to hold in her arms a new-born babe, at Epiphany she worshipped it on her knees as the Magi might, and on Holy Thursday she attended the marriage at Cana. The different scenes in the life of Christ were enacted, including the Passion and the crucifixion. Louise Lateau had a vision of the Passion which she enacted with considerable histrionic skill, and on awakening described with much detail the cross, vestments, crown of thorns, wounds, and other factors in the scene. Joan of Arc, at twelve years of age, heard voices commanding her, and shortly afterward saw the figures of the saints (St. Catherine and St. Margaret). Of the attire of the saints her Voice would not give her permission to speak, but she told of their being preceded by St. Michael and the angels of heaven. She said, "I saw them as clearly as I see you, and I used to weep when they departed, and would fain that they should have taken me with them." However, the auditory hallucinations controlled her life far more than the visions. Joseph Smith, among other religious founders, valued his visions very highly, and his followers still cite them.

Among the visions of this age, perhaps the most remarkable were a series of apparitions of the Virgin at Dordogne, in 1889. A neurotic child of eleven years, named Marie Magoutier, was the first to see the vision. She saw a figure like the statues in the churches in a hole in a wall situated in a lonely place. The vision next appeared to children of her own age, and then to a large number of peasants, both men and women. The suggestion was general, and each one filled in and particularized for himself. For this reason, while the visions were similar, the details differed. To some the Virgin appeared dressed in white, to others in black;

sometimes she was veiled and sometimes not; sometimes the figure was large and at other times small; sometimes the body was luminous, or lights were attached to the shoulders or breasts; at times the surroundings also changed. These visions were seen in cracks or holes in the wall, but some who had seen the Virgin in the wall also saw her in the fields or on the road. Convulsive movements and ecstasy were exhibited by a few. On August 11 more than fifteen hundred persons visited the wall, and many of these saw the Virgin.<sup>1</sup>

We have been talking of visions without any definition. By a vision we simply mean something seen. The idea has been narrowed so as to stand for visual hallucinations, *i. e.*, when there is nothing objectively present corresponding to our perception. By usage there is a further limitation, and the term "vision" is used for visual hallucination when the apparition is of a religious character. Most persons have had hallucinations of some sense, although the visual and auditory ones predominate; they are common phenomena. When we speak of a vision, however, the tendency is to think of it as a mysterious and abnormal experience. Of course, hallucinations with a reasonable and connected thread running through a complete picture or act are uncommon, but they are experienced, nevertheless, with no religious significance.

The possibility of vision depends on the temperament of the individual, and the character is determined by the content of mind, suggestion, and imitation. Some people correct their hallucinations and recognize them as such, others retain them as visions. The vision is a form of sensory automatism. Why the overflow of energy should take the sensory form as in vision rather than the motor form as in

<sup>1</sup> L. Marillier, "Apparitions of the Virgin," *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, VII, pp. 100-110.

glossolalia, is a secret wrapped up in the special constitution of the nervous system of the particular individual.

The character of the vision depends on many factors. Some are full of details and others are meagre. This may depend upon the amount of passionate feeling possessed by the individual, but it is more likely to be fixed by the content of the mind. A mind richly stored has more varied and richer visions. It may also depend on the suggestion given by word or that given by the experience of others. The incident of the visions of the Virgin seen by so many people is an example of the suggested vision, the details of which were supplied by the individual. There is also a great difference in the visionary répertoire of people. Some are confined to a single vision which is often repeated, with others visions are experienced on a great variety of subjects, and with the seer these may appear on demand or on suggestion. Visions cannot appear when thought is active; there must apparently be a cessation of active mentality. They differ from dreaming, however, for visions come when the subject is awake.

In the fifth century there was a passion for visions of heaven and hell, which was a natural continuation of the desire for dogmatic definition. Not all mystics or visionaries, however, put great dependence on visions, and some even consider their value doubtful. "We do not find that masters of the spiritual life attached very much importance to them, or often appealed to them as aids to faith. As a rule, visions were regarded as special rewards bestowed by the goodness of God on the struggling saint, and especially on the beginner, to refresh him and strengthen him in the hour of need. Very earnest cautions were issued that no effort must be made to induce them artificially, and aspirants were exhorted neither to desire them, nor to feel pride in having seen them. The spiritual guides of the Middle Ages

were well aware that such experiences often come of disordered nerves and weakened digestion; they believed also that they are sometimes delusions of Satan. Richard of St. Victor says, 'As Christ attested His transfiguration by the presence of Moses and Elias, so visions should not be believed unless they have the authority of Scripture.' Albertus Magnus tries to classify them, and says that those which contain a sensuous element are always dangerous. Eckhart is still more cautious, and Tauler attaches little value to them. Avila, the Spanish mystic, says that only those visions which minister to our spiritual necessities and make us *more humble* are genuine. Self-induced visions inflate us with pride, and do irreparable injury to health of mind and body."<sup>1</sup> St. John of the Cross said that at best visions are "childish toys"; "the fly that touches honey cannot fly," and the probability is that they come from the devil. Molinos took the same view. "The Hebrews were aware that the vision, in which spiritual truth is clothed in forms derived from the sphere of the outer senses, is not the highest form of revelation."<sup>2</sup>

The study of visions betrays the fact, then, that some are simply pictorial representations in consciousness, according to natural psychological laws, of fleeting thoughts, prayers, or beliefs, perhaps long forgotten, but carefully retained by the subconsciousness. These are sometimes recognized by consciousness as such, and at other times appear to be entirely new material. Other visions are but exaggerations of past experiences, or visual presentations of auditory or other than visual experiences of the past. Still others may not represent past experiences of any kind, but are simply newly created presentations; known facts may be weaved in or certain portions may be suggested. Most religious visions are, to some extent, a new creation, and so come under the latter

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 16 f.

<sup>2</sup> R. Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 220.

class, in which suggestion may play considerable part.<sup>1</sup> If the emotional pressure is considerable, and the intense concentration of attention, as already noted to be so necessary for ecstasy, is present, then suggestion completes the trio which fulfil the necessary conditions for visions.

We must not think, however, that all visions and hallucinations are experienced in connection with ecstasy; this is far from being true; it would be more correct to say that in most cases of ecstasy visions are present. Neither must we think that because hallucinations are not uncommon and come in connection with numerous subjects, and that we can trace some religious visions to previous experiences, and that all are due to subconscious activity, that God is eliminated from them and that He cannot give a revelation through them. This, again, is making a statement for which we have no evidence, for there are some visions for which we cannot account except by the creative imagination. To say this is but to designate method, not cause.

Visions may be obtained at will by some through the phenomenon of crystal gazing, and like ecstasy may be induced by certain hypnotics. Some persons have had genuine religious visions while under the influence of chloroform.<sup>2</sup> We find that at the time of definite religious experiences visions are liable to appear. At the time of conversion, healing by faith or at shrines, the taking of vows, or of consecration, they are common. These visions are usually of a religious character, but not necessarily so. Visions at conversion are not nearly so common as formerly. As an example of this form, the following is an account from the Wesleyan Revival. "One girl, who had 'come through' after shrieking and insensibility and violent distortion of

<sup>1</sup> M. Prince, "An Experimental Study of Visions," *Brain*, XXI, pp. 528 ff.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 391.

face, related that in the swoon she thought herself on an island and saw Satan in a hideous form just ready to devour her, hell all around open to receive her and herself just ready to drop in. But just as she was dropping, the Lord appeared between her and the gulf and would not let her fall.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 172.

## CHAPTER VII

### DREAMS

“Dreams,  
Which are the children of an idle brain,  
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,  
Which is as thin of substance as the air  
And more inconstant than the wind.”—SHAKESPEARE.

DREAMS as sleeping visions and visions as waking dreams are closely connected psychologically, as well as in the significance put upon them by primitive religions. The superstitions attached to dreams by so many people to-day might indicate their religious importance in days gone by. While they have little religious or prophetic value now, they were formerly considered visions from God. They furnished mythologies to the heathen, and have produced revelations for the exercise of faith.<sup>1</sup> But notwithstanding the recognition of both good and evil dream spirits, the savage does not seem to dread them, for he courts both sleep and dreams, the latter sometimes by artificial means, by fasting, for instance.<sup>2</sup> Nightmares have played no small part in the development of demonology, and in the belief in vampires and witches.<sup>3</sup> Dreams are really manifestations of the myth-making tendency of the human mind, examples of the activity of the uncontrolled imagination.

Not a little of the work of soothsayers among the early

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *Psychology*, II, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> C. C. Everett, *Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> E. Parish, *Hallucinations and Illusions*, p. 56.

nations was the interpretation of dreams. The Old Testament calls our attention to the need of discriminating between the dreams of the good and of the false prophets.<sup>1</sup> They were thought to be the suggestions of good or of evil spirits.<sup>2</sup> Among some of the less civilized races and peoples the dreams of women played a more important part than those of men. In the Lake Shirwa district of Central Africa, for example, sacred functions are performed by the prophetess, who is usually one of the chief's wives. The gods or ancestral spirits make known their will to her by means of dreams, from which she gives forth oracles according to the exigencies of the case. These oracles are usually delivered in a frenzied state.<sup>3</sup>

Even to-day there are some startling examples of veridical dreams, those which have come true, or are being enacted in real life at the time without the conscious knowledge of the dreamer. Dreams of prophecy, as far as disease of the body is concerned, are most valuable premonitory symptoms for the physician.<sup>4</sup> The organic sensations of a pathological character may be so vague and feeble that they are not consciously perceived, but they create subconscious impressions which give rise to dreams which to the illiterate seem strangely prophetic. It is possible that in some cases of mental trouble the dream may be, in a certain measure, a cause of the disorder. Hysterical paralysis not infrequently begins in this way, and other neurotic troubles take their form from the influence of dream suggestions. The delusions which afterward become permanent in insanity may be first noticed in a dream. In many cases of demoniacal possession the

<sup>1</sup> O. C. Whitehouse, "Soothsayer," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, IV, p. 601.

<sup>2</sup> M. de Manacéine, *Sleep*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> H. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, p. 263.

<sup>4</sup> L. Waldstein, *The Subconscious Self*, p. 98.

first symptoms occur during sleep, in dreams. So, in some cases, we still recognize the prophetic quality of dreams.<sup>1</sup>

Dreams have already been referred to as an example of the activity of subconsciousness; in fact, dreaming is a representative form of subconscious mental action.<sup>2</sup> In dreams, there is no guidance by consciousness; we commit acts for which we should never forgive ourselves, and yet we rarely feel the slightest remorse; there are no restrictions put upon our actions, no qualities of real or unreal, possible or impossible, right or wrong. We are surprised at nothing in our dreams and nothing seems incongruous; dreams are true while they last. Neither are there restrictions as far as purposes or ends are concerned; in dreamland there are no tasks to burden us, we may wander where we will, or rather we may follow the sportive vagaries of the uncontrolled imagination, without fear of rebuke or punishment. So rapid and intuitive is the succession of ideas in dreams as to remind us of the vision of Mohammed, in which he saw all the wonders of heaven and hell, although the jar of water which fell when his ecstasy commenced had not spilled its contents when he returned to his normal state.<sup>3</sup>

The immediate stimuli of dreams are usually insignificant.<sup>4</sup> It is a case of a little fire starting a great matter; for the imagination seizes the slightest suggestion and by subconscious processes elaborates it out of all proportion. These stimuli may be of two kinds: objective excitement and association of ideas.<sup>5</sup> The former variety is the more numerous and includes those already referred to as premonitory symptoms of disease, dreams suggested by noises, uncomfortable

<sup>1</sup> C. L. Tuckey, *Treatment by Hypnotism and Suggestion*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> J. Jastrow, *The Subconsciousness*, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> W. Scott, *Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Psychology, Descriptive and Explanatory*, p. 412.

<sup>5</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 210.

positions of the body, indigestion, and other forms of objective stimulation so well known to all who have examined dreams to any extent. For example, the noise made by a slamming door may serve as a stimulus, and a dream of some length is experienced ending in a climax of an exploding cannon. This is only possible on account of the wonderful rapidity of dream activity. A whispered word or some auto-suggestion may serve the same purpose.

Those dreams which come through the association of ideas, when there is no external stimulus, can only be explained by the constant activity of the subconsciousness. Failing to have a dream suggested to it by present physical sensation, the mind seems to revert to the subjects of thought of the previous day, or of some former period of life, and to take up one or other of them as a theme on which to play variations. Very rarely, however, do our dreams take up the matter which has most engrossed us for hours before sleep.<sup>1</sup> The ideas appear like stars at sunset. As soon as consciousness, with its watchful regulations, has subsided, subconsciousness assumes control, and uses or misuses the mental household. When the cat is away the mice will play.

It will be noticed that these two varieties of dreams correspond to the distinction made between hallucinations and illusions. The latter variety has some external stimulus, but is misinterpreted, the former is without objective stimulation. As there is no fixed line but a graduated scale between illusions and hallucinations, so the line of demarcation between these two forms of dreams is not always clear.

One phenomenon of the dream state is the exhibition of a marvellous power of memory. Much that is considered miraculous in dreams is but the working of an abnormally acute memory. Not a little of the material for dreams is

<sup>1</sup> F. B. Cobbe, "Unconscious Cerebration," *Macmillan's Magazine*, XXIII, pp. 24-27; "Dreams," *ibid.*, pp. 512-523.

furnished by impressions left on the subconsciousness by occurrences long since past, which have completely faded out of conscious memory or may, in truth, never have been consciously perceived.<sup>1</sup> There is sometimes a strange experience when a person is in a hypnagogic state—between waking and sleeping—when he knows he is dreaming, and knows the content is unreal, but makes an effort to prolong the dream if agreeable, or to stop it if it is not pleasant. The influence of these and other dreams is occasionally felt after awaking, and sometimes the same sensations continue.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever be the kind of dream, whatever its origin, its seat is always in the subconsciousness, and it must always be studied from this standpoint. Among the dreams designated as coming through the association of ideas are some of quite a different character from those which we have already mentioned. I refer to those in which problems are solved, work of different kinds developed or finished, and speeches or articles composed which would be difficult or quite impossible in the conscious state. Allow me to give one example. Coleridge, who was naturally a dreamer, fell asleep while reading the passage in *Purchas's Pilgrimage* in which is mentioned "the stately pleasure house." On awaking he felt as though he had composed two or three hundred lines with which he had nothing further to do but to write them down, "the images rising up as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort." The whole of this remarkable fragment—"Kubla Khan"—consisting of fifty-four lines, was written as fast as his pen could trace the words. When this much had been transcribed, he was interrupted by a person on business, who stayed over an hour. After this the poet found to his sur-

<sup>1</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> See F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, I, Chap. IV, for an interesting discussion of the whole subject.

prise and mortification that "although he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away, like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast; but alas! without the after-restoration of the latter."<sup>1</sup> Equally illustrative of the creative power of dreams is the delightful account given by Stevenson.<sup>2</sup>

After considering phenomena, of which these are but samples, the question naturally arises, if supernormal revelations are given to men in dreams dealing with poetry, mathematics, and business, would it be unreasonable to suppose that, on occasions when there appeared to be a necessity for them, supernormal revelations of religion should be vouchsafed? I have spoken of the seat of the dreams being the subconsciousness, the method of working being the association of ideas, but of the origin nothing has been opined. Might it be possible that we could opine a divine origin in some cases?

"The psychology of dreams and visions, so far as we can speak of such a psychology, furnishes us with neither sufficient motive nor sufficient means for denying the truth of the Biblical narratives. On the contrary, there are certain grounds for confirming the truth of some of these narratives. . . . Even in ordinary dreams, the dreamer is still the human soul. The soul acts, then, even in dreaming, as a unity, which involves within itself the functions and activities of the higher, even of the ethical and religious powers. . . . The possibilities of even the highest forms of ethical and religious activities in dreams cannot be denied. . . . There is nothing in the physiological or psychical conditions of dream-life to prevent such psychical activity for the recep-

<sup>1</sup> W. B. Carpenter, *Mental Physiology*, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> R. L. Stevenson, *Across the Plains*, Chapter on Dreams.

tion of revealed truth. . . . It remains in general true that the Bible does not transgress the safe limits of possible or even actual experience.”<sup>1</sup>

While the Bible as a whole does not emphasize the religious value of dreams, there are some incidents which seem to be important. Matthew records six supernatural dreams, of which at least the five found in the first two chapters are fundamentally important. These six are the only dreams referred to in the New Testament except in citation. Since Apostolic times many instances of the power of dreams in the lives of men have filled the pages of religious history. On the dream of Patrick hung his whole work as an apostle to the Irish; by a dream Elizabeth Fry was rescued from the indecision and doubt into which she fell after her conversion; dreams played a vital part in the conversions of John Bunyan, John Newton, James Gardiner, Alexander Duff, and many others.<sup>2</sup>

I have already noted that visions are experienced to-day in times of unusual religious experience. The same may be said of dreams. In some investigations made in connection with religious awakenings, the following striking dreams were noticed: dreams of being cast into hell and suffering all the torments of the damned, dreams of being cast out of heaven, dreams of a heavenly procession which the subject could not join, and dreams of being examined on fitness to go to heaven.<sup>3</sup> At such times the dreams are likely to be of a terrifying character, although this is not always the case.

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture*, II, p. 436.

<sup>2</sup> B. B. Warfield, “Dream,” *Hastings’ Dictionary of Christ, etc.*, I, pp. 494 ff.

<sup>3</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 122.

## CHAPTER VIII

### STIGMATIZATION

"He jests at scars that never felt a wound."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE ancient method of showing tribal connection was by certain marks branded or tatoood on the body similar to the brands which are now placed on cattle or horses. In describing a temple of Hercules in Egypt, Herodotus says that it was not lawful to retake runaway slaves who had sought refuge therein, if they had on their bodies marks consecrating them to Deity.<sup>1</sup> Paul may have had a similar idea in saying, "From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks (stigmata) of Jesus." Whether Paul meant by this marks of shipwreck and scourging received in the Master's service or definite marks signifying his discipleship, we do not know. He may have referred to the blindness which befell him at the time of his conversion.<sup>2</sup>

The New Testament speaks of voluntary mutilations for Christ's sake, and we know that later Christians marked themselves on the hands or arms with the cross or the name of Christ. In the middle centuries nuns marked themselves as a means of protection, and martyrs were branded on their foreheads as a form of persecution.<sup>3</sup> Some think the marks to which Paul referred were on his body typifying the pas-

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Art. "Stigmatization."

<sup>2</sup> J. Hastings, "Mark," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, III, p. 244 f.; J. C. Lambert, "Stigmata," *Hastings' Dictionary of Christ*, etc., II, p. 677 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Art. "Stigmatization."

sion and crucifixion of Jesus. While this is not likely, the term "stigmatization" now designates this condition. It consists of the marks of the nails on the hands and feet, of the spear thrust in the side, of the thorns on the forehead, and of scourgings on the body.

In genuine cases these wounds are not externally inflicted by the person experiencing them or by others, but they appear spontaneously in ecstasy. Less than four hundred cases have been reported scattered through the last seven hundred years, about one hundred of which were credited to the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> They have been experienced in every European country as well as in America, and among persons in every station of life, especially, though, by members of the Dominican and Franciscan orders. The reason for the latter fact will become apparent as we proceed with the description of this state. Only about one in twenty, or about a score in all, were married.

Unless we consider Paul thus branded, Saint Francis of Assisi, Italy, was the first one to receive these marks.<sup>2</sup> He was born in 1182, and after twenty years spent in a careless manner, being indulged by his mother and in business partnership with his father, he had a severe illness. He arose from his sick bed much altered, and forsaking his old friends and haunts he embraced a life of rigid penance and utter poverty. He tried to live a life modelled after that of Christ. He retired to a grotto near Assisi and gave himself up to profound meditation on the sufferings of Jesus. His austerities and simple eloquence soon attracted others to his life, and in 1208, with seven others, the Franciscan order was founded. It grew rapidly and was finally approved by Innocent III. On September 14, 1224, on Monte Alverno, a lonely mountain

<sup>1</sup> *New International Encyclopedia*, Art. "Stigmatization."

<sup>2</sup> Paul Sabatier, *St. Francis of Assisi*; F. P. L. Josa, *St. Francis of Assisi*.

near Assisi, the Lord appeared to Francis in the form of a seraph, with arms extended and feet as if fixed to a cross. After thinking what this might mean, in an ecstasy of prayer there appeared on his body marks corresponding to the nail wounds of Christ on his hands and feet, and a wound in his side. We are told by some authorities that the side wound bled occasionally, but Bonaventura calls it a scar. The evidence of Pope Alexander IV, Saint Bonaventura and other witnesses who saw the wounds both before and after his death appears satisfactory and incontrovertible. Francis died two years after the appearance of the stigmata, October 3, 1226.

The second stigmatic was Saint Catherine of Siena (Catherine Benincasa). She was born one hundred and eleven years after the death of Francis, in 1347. Early in life she began austerities and had religious experiences. At six years of age she flogged herself and had visions; at seven she deprived herself of food. Her main object in life seems to have been to conceive of some new cruelty to inflict upon herself, until it was said she went without food several years and slept only fifteen minutes out of every twenty-four hours (*sic*). She became a sister of the third rule of St. Dominic. When twenty-three years old, after receiving the sacrament, she fell into a trance as was her custom on similar occasions. During the trance she enacted the crucifixion and then came to her confessor and told him that she had received the much coveted stigmata. She related to him a vision in which she had seen the light streaming from the wounds in Jesus' body to the corresponding parts of her body, and thus she was stigmatized.

It is difficult to appreciate the value of this second case without a knowledge of the fierce and bitter rivalry which existed between the Dominicans and Franciscans at this time. St. Francis' experience was unique and the exclusive

boast of his followers. After the stigmatization of Catherine, the Dominicans considered themselves equally blessed. Pope Pius II, a townsman of Catherine, approved of a service incorporating her stigmatization, but Sixtus IV, a Franciscan who followed Pius, decreed that Francis had an exclusive right to this miracle. Further light is thrown on this rivalry by the constant attempts of Catherine to outdo Francis in all austerities, and were it necessary to make such an explanation, attention might be called to the fact that her frequent floggings would make fraud quite possible.

After the experience of Catherine, stigmatization occurred comparatively frequently, but almost without exception it was among members of these two orders. About four females were stigmatized to every male. Most of these experiences took place in religious houses after the austerities of Lent, and most frequently on Good Friday, when the minds of the inmates were concentrated on the Passion. All stigmatics were supposed to be thereby highly favored of God.

There is nothing incredible or miraculous about these cases of stigmatization. Similar phenomena have been produced by suggestion on hypnotic subjects, and although it may seem strange that the mind can hold such a powerful sway over the body, when we witness these phenomena on hypnotic subjects through suggestion we can easily account for them on ecstatic subjects through auto-suggestion. Even without ecstasy, hypnotism, or allied states, we know that under strong emotional excitement blood is transudated through the perspiratory ducts.<sup>1</sup> Stigmatization is one form of vesication, and it is interesting to note in some cases that blisters appear before the blood or marks. Notice, then, what has been experimentally accomplished with hypnotic subjects.

<sup>1</sup> W. B. Carpenter, *Mental Physiology*, p. 690.

By applying a piece of cold iron to the skin of a hypnotized person and suggesting that it was red hot, all the effects of a burn appeared, the blisters being prominent, and suppuration continuing for weeks afterward. The application of common paper or postage stamps with the suggestion of a blister has been tried successfully, the blister appearing within forty-eight hours and continuing to discharge for some time; the surrounding parts were also red and inflamed. The same effect has been accomplished by suggesting that pure water which was applied to the skin would cause a blister. By accident too much water was used and it spread over a large surface; the whole wet surface blistered. In certain subjects a fixed spot on the body may be made to appear red. This may take place within a few minutes after the suggestion and remain this way for some time. For instance, cases are on record where a hypnotic operator would simply lay his finger on the patient's body and tell him that on awaking a red spot would appear where he was touched by the finger. The suggestion was taken and that part of the patient's body gradually became red. In another case a blunt, smooth instrument was used to write the subject's name on his arm, and the suggestion was given that this writing would appear in red. Care was taken that the skin should not be scratched or broken. The suggestion took effect, and the name in raised and red letters was present for weeks.<sup>1</sup>

We may go a step further and report some cases where hemorrhage and bleeding stigmata were brought about by suggestion. In the famous subject Louis V. this was done several times. Professors Bourru and Burot made some experiments on a young marine who was afflicted with hysterio-epilepsy. After being hypnotized the following suggestion

<sup>1</sup> Binet and Féré, *Animal Magnetism*, pp. 197-199, report a number of cases.

was given. "At four o'clock this afternoon after the hypnosis you will come into my office, sit down in the arm-chair, cross your arms upon your breast, and your nose will begin to bleed." At the appointed time the suggestion was carried out, several drops of blood coming from the left nostril. On another occasion, with the same operator and subject, this suggestion was made: "At four o'clock this afternoon you will go to sleep and your arms will bleed along the lines which I have traced, and your name will appear written on your arm in letters of blood." The operator then with a dull instrument traced the subject's name on both forearms. At four o'clock he went to sleep and on the left arm the letters stood out in bright red relief, and in several places there were drops of blood. Three months later these letters were still visible, although they had grown gradually fainter. After this subject had been taken to the asylum similar experiments were successfully tried, and on one occasion, doubling his personality through spontaneous somnambulism, he suggested to himself hemorrhagic stigmata on his arm, which were soon realized.<sup>1</sup> This furnishes a case parallel to the religious bleeding stigmatics.

Artigales and Rémond published a case of a woman of twenty-two in whom tears of blood appeared. By suggestion it was also possible to call out bloody sweat on the palm of her hand.<sup>2</sup> In one interesting case where certain letters were suggested to appear, and the letters were marked off by the operator, when they did appear they were the correct letters, but were entirely different in form and handwriting from those suggested.<sup>3</sup>

With these experimental cases in mind, when we consider that most of the subjects of stigmatization were ecstasies—

<sup>1</sup> C. L. Tuckey, *Treatment by Hypnotism and Suggestion*, pp. 67-70.

<sup>2</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 132 f.

<sup>3</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality*, etc., I, p. 495 f.

usually females of strongly emotional temperaments—and that there was intense concentration of thought upon the Saviour's sufferings; when, I say, we think of their sympathetic attention upon the wounds of Christ, and remembering the effect of the mind upon the body, stigmatization ceases to be a miracle, and the physiological rationale is apparent. Many more hypnotic experiments could be cited to prove the power of the mind over the vaso-motor system and the secretions. Experiments which would show quite as remarkable, if not so spectacular, phenomena are frequently performed in the healing of disease by suggestion. A study of the subject will reveal this as a commonplace incident. The blood supply is controlled by the vaso-dilator and vaso-constrictor nerves, and these nerves are ruled by the sub-consciousness. The rush of blood to the face or a general pallor of countenance when certain emotions are strongly felt are familiar sights. Stigmatization is only a blush in a certain limited area, and in bleeding stigmatization the blush becomes so violent that the blood bursts through the skin. A blush is not an abnormal phenomenon, and the stigmatic blush is but an exaggeration of this.

Stigmatics may be divided into several classes according to the degree of stigmatization and the cause. First, then, we have full stigmatization with the wounds or marks in evidence, similar to the cases of St. Francis, St. Catherine, and others. In the second place we find some cases where only a portion of the marks could be seen and the others were subjectively felt, being indicated by severe pains. The third class is composed of those on whom no peripheral markings were apparent, but who claimed that impressions were made upon the heart alone. Post-mortem examinations proved this to be true. In the fourth class are those on whom no marks were made but who suffered great pain in the parts of the body corresponding to the wounds of Christ. It seems

that cases of the fourth class should be eliminated from the enumeration as these are not true stigmatics.<sup>1</sup>

When we consider causes there are three possible explanations. The first is that of fraud where the marks were produced by designing persons on others or by the persons themselves for the sake of notoriety or gain, for all stigmatics have thereby immediately risen to prominence in religious circles and received much attention from the curious. The second explanation is self-infliction by hysterical or ecstatic persons when in an abnormal state, the deceit being absolutely unknown to the person when normal. In the third class are the genuine stigmatics, and I believe this to be by far the most numerous class. Miracle is not included among the explanations.

The case of stigmatization which has been most thoroughly examined from a scientific standpoint is the comparatively recent one of Louise Lateau.<sup>2</sup> Next to St. Francis this is undoubtedly the most famous case. Louise Lateau was born at Bois d'Haine, Belgium, in 1850, and died in 1883. Up to seventeen years of age she was healthy, worked hard, had good common sense with power of self-control, and showed no traces of hysterical tendencies. At this time she had an exhausting illness, and in April, 1868, she was thought to be dying and received the sacrament. After this she recovered rapidly, so that in five days she was able to walk three-quarters of a mile to the village church. This was considered miraculous. Three days later, on Friday, the stigmata appeared and she discovered blood flowing from a wound in her side. The following Friday her feet were stigmatized, and one week later bleeding from the backs and palms of the hands took place. About four months after this there were

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Art. "Stigmatization."

<sup>2</sup> See G. E. Day, "Louise Lateau—A Biological Study," *Macmillan's Magazine*, XXIII, pp. 488-498, for a concise account.

added the marks of thorns on her forehead, which was moist with blood. These hemorrhages, during which there was a loss of about seven-eighths of a quart of blood, continued every Friday for at least four years. On other days these wounds were red patches, dry, glistening, and painless. Dr. Warloment examined her six years later and found that the stigmatic areas had become continuously painful, and that there was an additional mark on the right shoulder.

The anatomical process in her case was a rather complicated one. Blisters first appeared, and after they burst there was bleeding from the true skin without any visible injury. At the time of the beginning of the stigmatization ecstasy also commenced. This was confined to Fridays. Between eight and nine in the morning it began abruptly and she became apparently unconscious. She had a vision which she remembered on awaking, and enacted the Passion according to the time of day, until at three o'clock in the afternoon she extended her limbs in the form of a cross. This state terminated with extreme physical prostration, after which she returned to her normal condition.

This case has undergone a scrutiny so careful on the part of medical men determined to find out the deceit, if such should exist, that there seems no adequate reason for doubting its genuineness. The Belgian pathologist, Warloment, after personal investigation, decided that simulation was impossible and diagnosed her case as "stigmatic neuropathy." In this the Salpêtrière School of Neurology agreed, and took the position that stigmatization is only a neurotic phenomenon in hysterical individuals. Dr. Lefebvre, an eminent physician, Professor of Medicine at the University of Louvain, who had been for many years in attendance at two insane asylums, after a prolonged investigation pronounced it miraculous. Theodor Schwann, the distinguished biologist, also a professor at Louvain, and himself a Roman Catholic, refused after

careful examination to admit the preternatural character of the phenomena. Virchow thought that fraud or miracle were the only alternatives. With the additional light which we have had thrown on the phenomena by the experimental data of hypnotism, neurologists would hardly disagree on a similar case to-day. Louise Lateau was a member of the third order of St. Francis.

Many more cases might be cited, but I will simply add a very brief account of a recent one. A remarkable American case was reported in the *Courier-Journal* of Louisville, Ky., December 7, 1891, on the authority of Dr. M. F. Coomes and several other physicians. Mrs. Stuckenborg had bled from spontaneously formed stigmata on every Friday from the beginning of June of that year. There were wounds on her hands and feet, a wound on her side (whence issued a watery exudation tinged with blood), a cross on her forehead, a large cross and a heart on her chest, and the letters I. H. S. on her right shoulder. Simulation was quite out of the question. The patient seemed to desire neither money nor notoriety. She was a devout Roman Catholic, but did not talk about religion. She complained much of the pain and exhaustion due to the wounds and to a convulsive trance which accompanied the bleeding every Friday.<sup>1</sup>

Many young converts are much affected by the story of Jesus' crucifixion, some almost to the point of stigmatization. "Some press nails against their hands to deepen their sympathy, and one describes how a painful wound in the centre of the palm 'brought me to Jesus.' The spear is less prominent, but every item and detail of its thrust is sometimes exquisitely if not neurotically felt. With some the thorns are the apex of the pathos, with others the scourging."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, I, p. 495.

<sup>2</sup> G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, II, p. 334.

Hawthorne, in his masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*, makes use of the pathological phenomenon of stigmatization. In the climax of the story the conscience-smitten clergyman appears on the scaffold with the letter in blood red upon his naked breast, a duplicate of the one which his paramour was forced by the law to wear embroidered upon her breast.

## CHAPTER IX

### WITCHCRAFT

“And so with shrieks,  
She melted into air.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN the history of demonology we can easily recognize the development of this doctrine along two clearly defined lines. In some instances the demon was supposed to enter the individual and control him so that he would be unable to act according to his own desires; this was called Demoniacal Possession. At other times the person was thought to be in league with the devil to control the demon and use it to further malignant or benevolent designs; this was called Witchcraft. Both forms of this belief are very old and were firmly held by primitive peoples. Demoniacal Possession is still believed to be possible by some persons in orthodox churches, and is affirmed as the explanation of certain phenomena in the early centuries of the Christian era. Although an old woman was burned as a witch in Russia as late as 1889, and another old woman endeavored to bewitch a man in Georgia in 1890,<sup>1</sup> witchcraft is not accepted as a part of general or of Christian belief. Two centuries ago, however, both in Europe and America, witchcraft was held to be more essential to Christian doctrine than demoniacal possession is to-day. Disbelief in witches was synonymous with infidelity, so thought Luther and John Wesley. The latter said, “Infidels know, whether Christians know it or not, that the giving up of witchcraft is the giving up of the Bible.”

<sup>1</sup> W. S. Nevins, *Witchcraft in Salem Village in 1692*, p. 22.

In early times witchcraft was a form of magic, and was thus connected with sorcery and conjury. The crabbedness and idiosyncrasies of age, misfortunes, deformities, and strange actions were considered symptoms of witchcraft. This was especially true if the suspected person were an old woman. Bodin estimates the proportion of witches to wizards as not less than fifty to one.<sup>1</sup> People now known as neighbourhood gossips, who are always interfering with other persons' business, who tell secrets of the past and prognosticate concerning the future, who warn different persons in the village of the certain miscarriage of plans, and who make themselves generally obnoxious, would have had to answer to the accusations of witchcraft a few centuries ago, and might have given up their lives to atone for unusual conduct.

Witches were persons supposed to have made a compact with the devil to torture God's people and sometimes to put them to death. Prior to the seventeenth century they were thought to possess power to remove diseases as well as to inflict them, and they were consulted for this purpose. The removal might be by supposed transfer from the one consulting them to some one whom they disliked, nevertheless it sometimes resulted in a cure. Diseases could be transferred to animals as well as to persons, and at one time cattle seldom died of any other trouble than witchcraft; this was sure to be the cause if an epidemic appeared in a herd. The trouble brought on by one witch might be removed by another. Witchcraft was such a serious crime that persons were burned at the stake for curing as well as causing diseases to cattle and men.<sup>2</sup>

Many witches were charged with signing a book presented to them for signature by his Satanic Majesty, this signature being done at times in blood. They were given power to

<sup>1</sup> H. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> C. K. Sharp, *The History of Witchcraft in Scotland*, pp. 45 and 97.

ride through the air, not always on brooms, especially if they were going to attend a meeting of kindred spirits; they then resorted to desolate localities, where they held a sabbath or religious festival. They offered worship to Satan, who was present, and had criminal relations with him, the principal part of the worship being the Black Mass, an inversion and parody of the ceremony of the mass. In this it was not unlike the present-day cult of Satanism, which is said to have had its principal adherents in the ill-fated city of Saint Pierre, Martinique.<sup>1</sup>

It was said that witches could transform themselves into animals, especially when they were going to perform their supernatural deeds.<sup>2</sup> Hares and cats were the animals most usually employed, but also hogs, dogs, wolves, goats, or birds might be used. They seemed to take great delight in tormenting and terrifying men, women, and children, and were supposed to feed on the flesh of the latter when attending banquets with the devil. Magical potions were employed in which toads, snakes, and other reptiles were used in the preparation. The witch might tie knots in ropes while repeating certain formulæ, and by this means a victim was strangled, his mouth sealed, limbs racked, or entrails torn.<sup>3</sup> Effigies were made of some soft material like wax, and either burned or injured by running long needles into them; this tortured the original of the effigy whom it was desired to afflict. Invisible needles might be run into persons without the aid of figures made to represent them. The evil eye fixed on victims was sure to produce disastrous results. Not only did witches injure people and animals, but their powers and spells extended further. They blasted corn, grapes, fruit, and herbs in the fields, and spoiled milk, eggs, and butter in

<sup>1</sup> *New International Encyclopædia*, Art. "Witchcraft."      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> O. C. Whitehouse, "Magic," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, III, pp. 206 ff.

the farmyards. Perhaps the extraordinary powers attributed to witches can best be shown by reciting a few brief cases.

In 1657, Richard Jones, a lad of twelve years, living at Shepton Mallet, England, was bewitched by one Jane Brooks. He was seen to rise in the air and pass over a garden wall some thirty yards. At one time he was found in a room with his hands flat against a beam at the top of the room, and his body two or three feet from the ground; nine people saw him in this position. Jane Brooks was accordingly condemned and executed at the Chard Assizes, in March, 1658.<sup>1</sup>

In 1664, at Saint Edmondsbury, Suffolk, two widows, Amy Duny and Rose Cullender, were indicted for bewitching six young girls and one baby boy. The country doctor, on being consulted when the baby had fainting fits, told the mother to hang the baby's blanket on the chimney corner all day, and at night if anything strange came from it not to fear but to throw it in the fire. When the blanket was taken down a toad fell out, and on being cast into the fire there was a flash and an explosion, and the toad vanished. That same evening Amy Duny had her face scorched. That proved that Amy was the toad. The baby's sister became suddenly sick and died, and the mother became so lame that she had to use crutches; this was thought to be Amy's revenge for being cast into the fire. When Amy was condemned and her power ceased, the lame woman threw away her crutches and was well; this demonstrated Amy's guilt. The other children complained of "griping pains, and vomited crooked pins and two-penny nails." At the trial the children had convulsions when approached by the women, but were likewise convulsed when blindfolded and approached by others. Nevertheless the other evidence was so strong that the widows were sentenced and hanged at Cambridge.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. B. Carpenter, *Mental Physiology*, p. 634.

<sup>2</sup> John Fiske, *New France and New England*, p. 138.

In 1692, at Salem, Mass., Susannah Martin was condemned for witchcraft because she walked over a muddy country road on a rainy day without soiling her hose or skirts; this could only be accomplished by the help of the devil.<sup>1</sup>

In 1696, at Bargarran, Renfrewshire, Scotland, Christian Shaw, a girl of eleven years, had violent fits of leaping, dancing, running, crying, and fainting, from August of that year to the following March. Witchcraft was suspected, a commission was appointed, and a court was instituted. After the trial twenty women were condemned to the flames, and the sentence was faithfully executed on five of them at Paisley, on June 10, 1697.<sup>2</sup>

In 1716, Mrs. Hicks and her daughter aged nine years were hanged at Huntington, England, "for selling their souls to the devil; tormenting and destroying their neighbours by making them vomit pins; raising a storm so that a ship was almost lost by pulling off her stockings and making a lather soap."<sup>3</sup>

It seems remarkable to us in these days that persons could be convicted of witchcraft, and we are liable to question the honesty of the courts. Before doing this it is well for us to consider the evidence. The evidence was undoubtedly sufficiently strong had it been good; the sources would be considered unreliable to-day, but in those days were thought to be thoroughly trustworthy. We must remember that judges, juries, prosecutors, accused, and spectators believed in witchcraft as an established fact, and the disposition to believe in it changed irrelevant facts into evidence in its favor. The supposition, then, was in favor of conviction, for if witchcraft were a fact some one must be guilty, and the

<sup>1</sup> John Fiske, *New France and New England*, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> J. F. C. Hecker, *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, p. 108; W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, pp. 268 ff.

<sup>3</sup> C. Knight, *History of England*, Ch. CXLIV.

accused were most likely to be the ones. Roger North tells of one poor old woman who was accused of witchcraft by a neighbour. This neighbour testified that he saw a cat jump into the accused person's cottage window at twilight, one evening, and that he verily believed the said cat to be the devil; on this weighty evidence the poor wretch was accordingly hanged.<sup>1</sup>

We must further remember that the phenomena of hallucinations, trance, hypnotism, and hysteria were entirely unknown, and what to us is a ready explanation was wanting to them. If the judges were sure that there was no fraud connected with the case, guilt was the only alternative. The evidence was of four kinds: 1. Fraud; this was a small proportion. 2. Suspicion of some stranger or queer acting person to explain the trouble. 3. Genuine and trustworthy evidence of the facts supposed to prove witchcraft. It is notorious that this was almost entirely from uneducated persons and children. 4. Confessions, frequently extracted by torture or intimidation. An enormous mass of evidence was of this character.

There was, of course, opportunity for fraud. During the most active part of the witchcraft persecutions the Church of Rome was trying to stamp out heresy, and persons obnoxious to it could be destroyed on this charge. In some cases a charge of witchcraft was only a method of getting rid of a personal enemy or of confiscating the property of the rich. Sometimes the accusation started with deceit devoid of malice, but after starting the rumor the accusers became involved to such an extent that it was necessary to continue the deceit to save themselves even if it destroyed others. This was probably the situation in the Salem cases.<sup>2</sup> It may also be true

<sup>1</sup> W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> See also case W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, pp. 193 ff.

that in these cases the girls were so excited and carried along by their imaginations and the suggestions of others that they came to believe what at first was their own mere fancy.

Salem reveals a partisan factor in the accusations. The first evidence was given by the daughter and niece of Samuel Parris, the minister, Elizabeth Parris, aged nine, and Abigail Williams, aged eleven, and the daughter of the parish clerk, Ann Putnam, aged twelve. Mrs. Putnam, mother of Ann, a neurotic from a mentally unsound family, did much to influence the girls. From the beginning, Parris was the prime mover and persecutor in the awful tragedy. If the girls or other young witnesses were called upon to say who had troubled them, they would naturally think of those of whom they had heard uncomplimentary things said at home.

There was a quarrel in Parris' church and he had a rival for the pastorate in George Burroughs, a noble man who disbelieved in and openly expressed his contempt for witchcraft. Parris seized this opportunity to rid himself of his enemy by the aid of the superstition of the community, but at the execution of Burroughs the people broke into moans and moved to rescue him. Giles Corey, the octogenarian martyr who alone suffered death by the pressing of heavy stones piled on him, was one who opposed Parris in the church quarrel. It is a very significant fact that out of the first seventy-five persons arrested and sent to prison, not one partisan of Parris was among them; this may be true of the total number. With these facts before us, it is difficult to exclude the idea of malice from the persecution.

Salem presents us with a paradox, if not another instance of fraud. It would be humorous if it were not so tragic. The real crime seems to have been not witchcraft, but the denial of the doctrine. The truth of the writing and preaching on the subject was to be established by hanging any one who denied it. Any one who confessed witchcraft was freed

—this was sure to procure liberation; it was the person who denied being a witch, or who denied the existence of such a thing, who suffered death. Edward Bishop cured John Indian, his accuser, who fell down before him pretending to be under Satanic influence, with a sound flogging, and said that he could heal the others who were afflicted in the same manner. He and his wife were immediately arrested and condemned.<sup>1</sup> What for? Not for witchcraft, but for disbelief in it. Yet there is one bright spot in the sad affair. Although some of the accused were terrified into a confession and liberated, every one of the twenty who were put to death died protesting innocence when they knew confession would have saved them. If the people of America, or of Massachusetts, ever wish to raise a shaft to martyrs who died for the truth, it should be placed at Salem.

By misrepresentation Cotton Mather suffered only second to the victims.<sup>2</sup> In practically all accounts of the Salem tragedy he is represented as the tyrant who inspired and assisted Parris, accused the innocent, and relentlessly drove the executioners to their cruel tasks. Most recent investigation seems to disprove all this. As a man he had a loving heart and generous sympathies. He believed in witchcraft, as most persons did; but had his rules of evidence been followed, not one execution would have taken place. He believed in treating cases privately, and so took little Martha Goodwin into his own home and cured her. Parris' method was publicity, force, and execution; Mather's was privacy, suasion, and only execution when necessary and when no uncertainty prevailed. Cotton Mather has been for two centuries much misunderstood, a maligned Christian gentleman. Had Mather been in control in Salem, the last witch

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Ridpath, *History of the United States*, Ch. XVI, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> J. Fiske, *New France and New England*, pp. 150 ff.; cf. J. C. Ridpath, *History of the United States*, Ch. XVI, pp. 151 ff.

epidemic in the history of civilized nations would never have existed.

Something further must be said concerning the evidence. King James I, who published a treatise on demonology in 1597, in speaking on this subject, says that the crime is so abominable that evidence which would not be received against any other offence may prove this. Young children who knew not the nature of an oath and persons of infamous character were sufficient witnesses against witches. If James could have written of Salem he could not have more correctly described the witnesses. Look at them—two barbarous Indians, John Indian and Titula, both saturated in demonology, nine girls between the ages of nine and twenty, and the vindictive and half-crazed Mrs. Putnam. While Ann Putnam was a child of but twelve years and descended from a family afflicted with nervousness and hysteria, her power of life and death for a few months exceeded that of judge and jury. In the whole history of witchcraft, children have been the principal witnesses, the reason for this being their suggestibility.

During the crusade against witchcraft certain experts arose who procured evidence, and instructed others in the best methods of discovering criminals. Certain statements were sufficient to condemn, and in Europe, otherwise than in Salem, it was witchcraft which was the crime rather than the denial of the doctrine. The witch finders had certain questions which they always asked the suspects, *e. g.*, “Do you have midnight meetings with the devil?” “Do you attend witches’ sabbaths?” “Can you produce whirlwinds?” Nor would they be satisfied with negative answers, but the most excruciating tortures were employed to elicit affirmations.

As an example of the refinement to which the art of torture developed, the experience of Dr. Fian, of Edinburg, in 1591, may be cited. After the rack proved ineffectual, the boots were

tried, and during this he fainted from pain. Later his fingernails were riven out with pincers, and long needles thrust their entire length into the quick. Again he was consigned to the boots and was kept there "so long, and abode so many blows in them that his legs were crushed and beaten together as small as might be, and the bones and flesh so bruised that the blood and marrow spouted forth in great abundance."<sup>1</sup>

The awful condition of the accused may be gathered from the following quotation: "In Europe the act of suicide was very common among the witches, who underwent all the sufferings with none of the consolations of martyrdom. Without enthusiasm, without hope, without even the consciousness of innocence, decrepit in body, and distracted in mind, compelled in this world to endure torture, before which the most impassioned heroism might quail, and doomed, as they often believed, to eternal damnation in the next, they not infrequently killed themselves in the agony of despair. A French judge, named Remy, tells us that he knew no less than fifteen witches commit suicide in a single year."<sup>2</sup> Sprenger noticed the same tendency among the witches he tried.

Witches were supposed to be unable to repeat the Lord's Prayer, although Burroughs did on the scaffold at Salem; even the faltering pronunciation of one word was sufficient to prove guilt. If the spectre of a person was seen by a neighbor this was sufficient to prove the former a witch. This was called "spectral evidence." At Salem, Parris preached on the text, "Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil?" One woman went out of church, and she was immediately sent to prison as a witch. No more than three tears could be shed by the guilty, no matter how hard they tried, and water, the element with which a person

<sup>1</sup> B. Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion*, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, p. 54.

was baptized, refused to receive the body of a witch. Matthew Hopkins,<sup>1</sup> the English "Witchfinder General," used the latter as a favorite test. He took the suspected person and tied the right thumb to the great toe of the left foot, and the left thumb to the great toe of the right foot. Then wrapping the victims in heavy blankets they were laid on their backs in a pond or river. If they sank and were drowned, they were innocent; but if they floated they were guilty, and were speedily taken out and burned alive. One of the surest tests was the finding of witch spots. These were spots on persons which were painless when needles were run into the flesh. Hence the witchfinders carried with them long needles which they used on those who were accused. By evidence such as this and procured in this barbarous fashion, about 300,000 persons perished from the witchcraft crusade in the 16th and 17th centuries. Children as young as five years, and even dogs, lost their lives on this charge.<sup>2</sup>

How can these facts be explained psychologically? The main factor in the explanation, the phenomenon of mental epidemics, must be left for future discussion with other experiences of a similar character. However, some of the minor and yet important facts call for treatment here. In discussing the evidence, we have already mentioned some of the causes at Salem—the general belief in witchcraft, the malice of Parris, and the unintentional part which the Salem girls at first took. On the latter point let me add this fact: in 1688 a woman named Goodwin was tried and sent to the gallows for bewitching some children in Boston. It is not unlikely that an account of the antics of the Boston children was recited in the Salem minister's home, and by suggestion, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the same antics were re-

<sup>1</sup> W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, pp. 206-211; B. Sidis, *Psychology of Suggestion*, p. 338 f.

<sup>2</sup> W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 226.

peated by the children who heard it there. The impressionable child minds were diseased by the very suggestion.

But back of this, before the Salem tragedy, before the European epidemic, some other explanation must be given. The persons who propounded the witch theory were the forerunners of the modern scientist; they tried to give a theory which would explain. Of course we recognize now that their reasoning was *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, but in that they have had the company of many scientists of high repute. To the primitive mind all death was murder, and the guilty was either some superhuman power whose good will the tribe must try to regain, or some human being who must be punished. Thus, when sickness or some other disaster came to primitive people, they naturally asked, "What is the cause?" or, as it would frame itself in the savage mind, "Who is the cause?" No other cause being suggested, when the search becomes hot some one mentions a sorceress who claims to accomplish much by her spells. Suggestion immediately becomes belief on account of the emotional state of the people, and then the blame is fixed. Witchcraft therefore became an established fact, and later when disaster could be accounted for in no other way, this was a ready explanation, and there was no difficulty in discovering the witch. This state of affairs was much exaggerated by the doctrine, amounting almost to an equal belief in a good and an evil divinity.

A scrutiny of the evidence will reveal further that the testimony was not only almost entirely that of women and children, but it was given at a time when their minds were disordered by the excited state of the community, and when suggestions were given one day which developed into evidence on the next. Concerning the miraculous powers of riding through the air and transformation into animals, there is no first-hand evidence, even from the most illiterate, that these

were ever witnessed. The latter belief probably came as a false inference, as in the case of Amy Duny, the suspected witch who was injured on the day when the animal associated with her was injured.

The most valuable evidence was that given by the accused in the form of voluntary confession, that which had not been extracted by torture.<sup>1</sup> The evidence was true to the best of the knowledge and belief of the witness. The witness was sane enough, but was unable to distinguish self-suggested hallucinations from waking facts, for we know that subjective hallucinations may appear absolutely real to the percipient. Hallucinations may easily be produced by hypnotic suggestion, and are also frequent in spontaneous trance and hysteria, both of which latter conditions are contagious, and all of which were no doubt frequently present in witchcraft. Not only at the time of the hysterical attacks, but after they had passed, these persons believed in the reality of the hallucinatory scenes. On this account they confessed all manner of strange sins and endured with stubborn firmness the pangs of martyrdom rather than renounce their belief in their intercourse with the devil and their participation in orgies which had taken place only in their hysterical hallucinations.<sup>2</sup> This is why the questioning of the witchfinders was at times so successful. Occasionally some confessed, preferring death to the ignominy which would always cling to them on account of the accusation which had been made against them.<sup>3</sup> It is also true that because of the excited state of the community many confessed witchcraft on the testimony of others.

The witch spots, called "stigmata diaboli," those insensible patches on the bodies of the suspected, were undoubt-

<sup>1</sup> W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, pp. 123-130.

<sup>2</sup> E. Parish, *Hallucinations and Illusions*, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 239.

edly really anæsthetic.<sup>1</sup> This was the first discovery of a phenomenon which is now well known, the *zones analgésiques* of hysterical and hypnotic patients, so carefully studied by Charcot. In fact, in hysteria, spontaneous analgesia is the rule. It varies in degree, position, and extent, not only in different persons, but in the same person at different times.<sup>2</sup> We can now see that witchcraft was an awful mistake, a great tragedy conducted at the expense of hysterical persons by ignorant inquisitors. All of the phenomena are common to-day, but we explain them differently. The experiments made upon the hysterical might have been scientifically valuable had they not resulted in such murderous conclusions. Occasionally we find some evidence of perspicacity on the part of the court. At Ipswich, in 1652, John Bradstreet confessed to having conversation with the devil, whereupon the jury found that the said Bradstreet lied, and the judge sentenced him to pay a fine of twenty shillings, or to be whipped.<sup>3</sup>

If we examine the general decline in the belief in witchcraft we find that it was not killed by discussion or argument, but it perished by neglect on the one hand, and by the development of science and natural law on the other. Salem shows us an epidemic reaction—the people were stunned by the awfulness of the affair, and a change came in a few weeks or months. This was first apparent among the common people, for the juries changed before the judges and failed to convict, and the judges changed before the clergy, although before this the clergy warned the judges not to rely upon “spectral evidence” nor upon physical effects wrought upon the accusers in the presence of the accused. Increase Math-

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, I, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> T. Ribot, *The Psychology of the Emotions*, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> J. Fiske, *New France and New England*, p. 148.

er's discovery that the accusers, rather than the accused, might be the real victims of Satan's wiles, did much to end the persecutions.<sup>1</sup>

The last legal execution for witchcraft in England took place in 1682. Lynching for this supposed crime was committed as late as 1751; this led to the immediate abolition of the statute of James I.<sup>2</sup> In the last trial the judge saved the victim. Jane Wenham, the witch of Walkerne, was found guilty under the statute of James I, and was condemned to die in March, 1712. The prosecutors were Sir Henry Chauncy, knight, the learned author of the *Historical Antiquities of Hertfordshire*, and the reverend incumbent of Jane Wenham's parish. The judge, Powell, was happily in advance of his times and reprieved the unfortunate creature, very much to the scandal of the stupid jury and the learned prosecutors.<sup>3</sup> The last execution of a Scottish witch took place in Sutherland in 1722, and in 1735 the statutes against witchcraft were repealed. In Germany, Maria Renata, a nun, was beheaded for witchcraft in 1749.<sup>4</sup> The last case of witchcraft in Massachusetts was in 1793, when the governor abolished trials, and juries failed to convict.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, pp. 218 and 221.

<sup>3</sup> C. Knight, *History of England*, Chap. CXLIV.

<sup>4</sup> J. Fiske, *New France and New England*, p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> W. S. Nevins, *Witchcraft in Salem Village in 1692*, p. 30. The reader will find a most interesting and instructive résumé of the Witchcraft epidemic in C. Mackay, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions*, II, pp. 101-191.

## CHAPTER X

### DEMONIACAL POSSESSION

“Diseased nature oft-times breaks forth  
In strange eruptions.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN some form demoniacal possession is accepted by many Christian people to-day. Some think that it is experienced at the present time by certain persons everywhere, others opine that the manifestations are confined to heathen countries. Some believe it is possible, but do not credit any specific examples; while others hold that the day of possession is past, but that it was a special manifestation at the beginning of the Christian era.

One might reasonably ask why witchcraft is now considered a relic of barbarism and ignorance, while demoniacal possession is still retained, when they are both forms of demonology closely related. If any difference is to be noted from a scientific standpoint, witchcraft has rather the more convincing evidence. Both are taught in the Bible, and the Mosaic command, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,” was the foundation for the great persecution in the Middle Ages. There is no similar command concerning demoniacs. The difference in the status of the two doctrines, however, is due to the importance which Jesus seemed to attach to the one and His silence concerning the other.

Some Christians believe that to eliminate demoniacal possession from their tenets would entail a lack of faith in Jesus as the Saviour, just as Wesley and Mather thought that to give up witchcraft was to give up the Bible. Witchcraft has

been given up and the Bible still stands; some to-day do not posit the influence of demons as the cause of certain phenomena and yet they cling to Jesus as the Saviour. Both the Bible and our Saviour are stronger than some of their friends believe, and do not succumb when a doubtful prop is removed.

Let us first consider briefly the relation of Jesus to demonism. There is no doubt that in the reports we have of Jesus' connection with demoniacs He acts and speaks as though He believed it were a genuine phenomenon caused by the influence of evil spirits. We must not forget, however, that the reporters' minds were filled with the current ideas of demonism. There seems at first sight to be no middle ground—no halting-place—between the view that what Jesus said must be true, and that His attitude toward demoniacal possession was an example of the theory of Kenosis, *i. e.*, that in the incarnation He limited His knowledge to that of mankind. The theory of accommodation is the only half-way house. In this theory its advocates claim that Jesus, while knowing the true state of the case, accommodated Himself to the people among whom He worked and the language of the times in which He lived. In speaking of the afflicted as demoniacs He no more believed they were possessed by demons than a person to-day believes that an unfortunate is moon-struck if he calls him a lunatic;<sup>1</sup> the limitations of the language and the understanding of the people are to blame.

The supposed connection between possession and mental derangement in New Testament times is shown in John 10: 20, "He hath a demon and is mad."

Further, in His dealings with demoniacs He used the only language which psychologically could possibly be successful

<sup>1</sup> Consult T. H. Wright, "Lunatic," *Hastings' Dictionary of Christ*, etc., II, pp. 91 ff.; and W. O. E. Oesterley, "Demon," *Ibid*, I, pp. 438 ff.

if a cure were to be accomplished, and language which would be both proper and efficacious in dealing with a mentally unsound person to-day. Insanity was quite common in the East, and yet we do not read of Jesus' curing one case. The symptoms of demoniacal possession given in the New Testament and those of mania and epilepsy correspond so closely that many think these cases were similar to modern cases, only that a different explanation was given. When we come to consider the part which demons were supposed to play in disease, this will become more apparent. One ingenious theory, which hardly fits the case, however, takes account of this in the following manner: The phenomena of the New Testament are genuine and consist of two factors; the first is insanity and epilepsy, and forms the *natural* element, cases of which were successfully used by demons. The *supernatural* element was the recognition and confession of Jesus as the Messiah; this was the characteristic part—the mark of demoniacal possession.<sup>1</sup> We leave this discussion to take up a description of the phenomena.

The belief in demoniacal possession (this term is not found in the New Testament, but originated with Josephus) existed in the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Judea, Greece, and Rome. It held an important place in the beliefs of Christian nations until the end of the eighteenth century, is held by a portion of Christian people to-day, and by the mass of the inhabitants of India and of China, and almost without exception among uncivilized tribes. Demons at first included both good and evil spirits, but later angels were differentiated, and the term is now used only for the emissaries of the devil. The theory would be a natural explanation of certain forms of disease among people who believed

<sup>1</sup> Alexander, *Demonic Possession in the New Testament*, pp. 121, 150, quoted by W. Fairweather, "Development of Doctrine in the Apocryphal Period," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, V, p. 290.

in the possibility of spirits entering men. In cases of hysteria, epilepsy, and insanity, with raving and convulsions, the person does not seem to be *himself*, but it appears that some other being is in possession of the body, and even the patient may believe this when he returns to his normal condition. Again, when severe internal pain is experienced, or when the patient is wasting away without any apparent cause, this may be ascribed to some unseen being gnawing or devouring one within.

In the New Testament demoniacal possession is associated with diseases of different kinds, *e. g.*, dumbness, deafness, blindness, epilepsy, and fevers. We find a typical case of epilepsy described in Matt. 17:15, Mark 9:18, and Luke 9:38. Notice the symptoms: the cry, falling down, being convulsed, foaming at the mouth, grinding his teeth, bruising himself sorely, sometimes falling into the fire and sometimes into the water, and becoming as one dead; no medical work could enumerate the symptoms better. In Matthew's account the father speaks of the son as an epileptic, but the other two evangelists speak of a spirit. These are not inconsistent, for the very term "epilepsy" shows that in early times it was always considered the work of a demon, for it means "seizure," *i. e.*, by a demon. Fevers, especially intermittent fevers, where the rhythm of the fever apparently indicated some intelligent action back of the disease, were usually ascribed to demons; and anything of an unhealthy nature, such as an uncanny expression, especially of the eyes, was attributed to the same cause. Demons were supposed to be able to pass into animals as well as into men, and were able to speak and exercise mastery over the vocal organs and over other parts of the bodies of the victims.

Among those who wrote subsequent to New Testament times, demons were supposed to be responsible for insanity, epilepsy, and phenomena illustrated by the sacred frenzy of

the orgiastic worship of Bacchus. Among the Jews the exorcism of demons was a recognized profession, but among early Christians this power was exercised generally, without special authorization, down to the middle of the third century. Pope Fabian (236-250) seems to have been the first to assign a definite name and functions to exorcists as a separate order.<sup>1</sup> These functions may now be used by any Roman Catholic priest, since his priesthood ordination includes that of exorcist. In many dioceses, however, the special permission of the bishop is required for the exercise of this solemn rite. Among the reformers, opinion and practice were divided concerning exorcism; Luther and Melancthon favored it, but it was decisively rejected by Zwingli and Calvin.<sup>2</sup>

In most instances demoniacal possession is met with in isolated cases, but in the Middle Ages it appeared in epidemic form. In this it resembled witchcraft. In fact, it appeared sometimes in connection with witchcraft, the supposed witch being guilty of witchcraft and the bewitched being the victim of demoniacal possession. In 1350 an epidemic of this character attacked the convent of St. Brigitta, in Xanthen, and lasted for ten years. About the same time a convent near Cologne and others were also affected. The nuns declared that they were visited by the devil and had carnal conversation with him. These and other "possessed" wretches were sometimes thrown into dungeons and sometimes burned. In the sixteenth century such epidemics broke out in Brandenburg and in Holland and in Italy. These were also principally confined to the convents.

In 1609 and the two following years the convent of the Ursulines at Aix was the scene of such an experience. Two

<sup>1</sup> *New International Encyclopædia*, Art. "Exorcism."

<sup>2</sup> O. C. Whitehouse, "Exorcism," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, I, p. 811 f.

possessed nuns, tormented by all kinds of apparitions, accused a priest of witchcraft, on which charge he was burned to death. The famous case of the Ursuline nuns at Loudun, some twenty-five years later, led to a like tragic conclusion.<sup>1</sup> The superior of this convent was Sœur Jeanne des Anges, and her experience with demons was most vivid and realistic. Her belief in her own possession as well as in that of the nuns was so strong that although at one time she was a most ardent admirer, she was afterward the fiercest enemy of the unfortunate Urbain Grandier, who was burned alive in 1634, on the charge of bewitching the nuns. The demons who possessed her she called by name, *e. g.*, Asmodeus, Leviathan, Behemoth, Isacaarous, Balaam, Gresil, and Aman, and recognized them by their words and orthography and the special train of undesirable writings which each inspired. The editors of her autobiography have diagnosed her case as hysterio-epilepsy, that disease with which the Salpêtrière School has made us so familiar.<sup>2</sup>

Father Surin has left a detailed account of his mental experience during possession. In speaking of when the demon passed from the body of the possessed woman to his own, he says, "I am not able to describe to you what takes place within me at such a time, and how that spirit unites itself with mine, without depriving me of consciousness or of the freedom of my soul, yet becoming like another ego of myself, and as if I had two souls, of which one is dispossessed of its body, and of the use of its organs, and compelled to keep aloof, merely looking upon the doings of the other intruding soul. The two spirits wrestle together in the same field, which is the body, and the soul is as though it were divided. According to the one side of its ego, the soul is the subject of the diabolical impressions, and according to the

<sup>1</sup> E. Parish, *Hallucinations and Illusions*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality*, etc., II, p. 422.

other side it is the subject of the movements proper to it, or that God gives to it. When—by the movement of these two souls—I wish to make a sign of the cross on somebody's lips, the other soul very quickly deviates my hand and seizes my finger to bite it furiously with its teeth. . . . When I wish to speak I am stopped short; at table I cannot raise a morsel of food to my mouth; at confession I suddenly forget my sins; and I feel the demon coming and going within me as in his own house.”<sup>1</sup> In the Louvier case in 1642, the two principal victims found their end in life-long imprisonment and at the stake, respectively.

In 1739, during the revival under Wesley, another epidemic of demonism occurred, principally around Bristol. Wesley appeared in the rather unenviable rôle of exorcist, and cast out demons which he himself had been instrumental in originating, or at least of encouraging. For some time this and similar phenomena accompanied his services. The following, for instance, is a typical case of demoniacal possession, taken from Wesley's journal.

“October 25. I was sent for to one in Bristol who was taken ill the evening before. She lay on the ground furiously gnashing her teeth and after a while roared aloud. It was not easy for three or four hours to hold her, especially when the name of Jesus was named. We prayed. The violence of her symptoms ceased, although without a complete deliverance.” Wesley was again sent for in the evening. “She began screaming before I came into the room, then broke out into a horrid laughter, mixed with blasphemy, grievous to hear. One who from many circumstances apprehended a preternatural agent to be concerned in this, asking, ‘How didst thou dare to enter into a Christian?’ was answered, ‘She is not a Christian, she is mine.’ Then another question, ‘Dost thou not tremble at the name of Jesus?’ No

<sup>1</sup> Th. Ribot, *The Diseases of Personality*, p. 120 f., note.

words followed, but she shrank back and trembled exceedingly. 'Art thou not increasing thine own damnation?' It was faintly answered, 'Ay! Ay!' which was followed by fresh cursing and blasphemy . . . with spitting, and all the expressions of strong aversion." Again, the second day after, Wesley called and prayed with her with the happy conclusion that "all her pangs ceased in a moment, she was filled with peace, and knew that the son of wickedness was departed from her." Bunyan tells us of his obsession by a fixed idea, and speaks of it as a demon;<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr., successfully exorcised demons from his faithful followers.<sup>2</sup>

The last case of demoniacal possession of note in England was that of George Lukins of Yattan, a knavish epileptic, out of whom seven clergymen exorcised seven devils, at the Temple Church, at Bristol, in 1788. At Morzine, Savoy, a demon was exorcised in 1861. At Barcelona, in 1876, a priest in the Church of the Holy Spirit cast out demons in more than one instance. On one occasion the patient, a young woman, lay on the floor before the altar writhing in convulsions with distorted features and foaming at the mouth, while the priest carried on a dialogue with the demon, whom he addressed as Rusbel. The fiend's answers were, of course, spoken by the voice of the unfortunate girl. At last a number of demons were supposed to come out of the patient's body. Such scenes were repeated for days in the presence of many spectators until a riot arose, and the civil authorities intervening put a stop to the whole affair.<sup>3</sup>

In an account of an exorcism in Ceylon during the last half of last century, both priest and dancers took part. The demoniac, a woman, was brought forward in a kind of trance

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> *The Times*, Nov., 1876, quoted by *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. "Demonology."

with fixed and glassy stare. There was a long ceremony consisting of apparent hypnosis, sacrifices, incantations, and ridiculous forms lasting hours; after which the woman came to herself and appeared all right.<sup>1</sup> The Patagonians exorcise demons by beating, at the head of the bed on which the demoniac lies, a drum painted with figures of devils. In Australia the nightmare is recognized as a demon. Evidently this is the original idea, for the word means night-spirit, and the experience might well be interpreted as being held in the grasp of a spirit so as to be speechless and motionless and yet tortured by the fiend. Travellers tell us that demoniacal possessions are common among the aborigines of Africa, and the phenomena are not unlike those described in the New Testament. Frantic gestures, convulsions, foaming at the mouth, feats of supernatural strength, furious ravings, bodily lacerations, gnashing of teeth, and other things of a similar character may be witnessed in most cases.

At present, however, China seems to be the field where demoniacal possession flourishes best, and some very interesting cases have been reported.<sup>2</sup> The great mass of the material rests on the evidence of Chinese or Mongolian witnesses, which is invalidated to some extent for two reasons: all the witnesses were fully convinced of the diabolic origin of the phenomena, and those who obtained the accounts from them and reported them to us take the same view; this inevitably colors the accounts. The second reason is that the Chinese are not the most trustworthy witnesses on any subject. One case will serve as an example of the Chinese type.

<sup>1</sup> C. Corner-Ohlm's, "A Devil-Dance in Ceylon," *Nineteenth Century*, XLVI, p. 814.

<sup>2</sup> J. L. Nevius, *Demon Possession and Allied Themes*; also D. K. Lambuth, "Korean Devils and Christian Missionaries," *Independent*, 1907.

Kwo, a mountaineer, gives an account of his own experiences. He had been making arrangements for the household worship of the goddess Wang-Muniang, when one night he dreamed that the goddess appeared to him and announced that she had taken up her abode in his house. After a few days he had a feeling of restlessness coupled with an irrational impulse to gamble. His mind became confused and his memory was impaired. He was then seized by an epileptiform attack, followed by mania with homicidal impulses. The demon proclaimed its presence and demanded worship. Upon compliance with its demands it departed. For some months the demon reappeared at intervals and promised to heal diseases. There were many diseases, however, which were not under its control, and it seems that it was only able to effect a complete cure of such cases as were afflicted with spirit possession. This latter fact is quite significant. When the demoniac became a Christian the demon disappeared, saying, "Jesus Christ is the great Lord over all; and now I am going away and you will not see me again." Kwo was not troubled after that.<sup>1</sup>

If we do not accept the literal explanation of demoniacal possession, how are we to explain the phenomena? The similarity to witchcraft demands a somewhat similar explanation. The general belief in the possibility of such a thing proves to be a powerful suggestion. The nervous instability and excitement of the victim provide a basis and give ample opportunity for the suggestion to take root.<sup>2</sup> In some cases this is sufficient explanation, especially in those of an epidemic character. In other cases we have splendid examples of so-called "dual" or "multiple personality." This is common either as an artificial or spontaneous phenomenon. Many of these divisions are purely intellectual,

<sup>1</sup> J. L. Nevius, *Demon Possession and Allied Themes*, pp. 17-27

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, p. 63 f.

but we know that the moral nature—the will and the character—may split as easily as the intellect.

The question has been asked, however, "Can we suppose that the tormentor was a part of the tormented?" Instead of this question being an absurd one, the affirmative answer is supported by characteristic phenomena both in insanity and hysteria. At times the splits in personality seem to be of such a character that there is an entire lack of sympathy between the two conditions, normal and abnormal. In the celebrated case of Léonie, Léontine (Léonie II) was very antagonistic to Léonie, and during the whole history of the case continued to be so. Dr. Morton Pierce's patient, "The Misses Beauchamp," exhibited the same traits. B III never lost an opportunity for showing the greatest antagonism to B I, the normal personality. In Dr. Ira Barrows' famous case, reported by Professor James, the second personality was localized in the right hand and arm, and the most violent antagonism is shown toward it, which she never calls by any other name than "Old Stump."

Since the fiendish and hostile action of the Chinese demon does not prove its identity, but is rather a proof of its fraudulent nature, there is only one other claim made which is worthy of consideration, and that is the claim of supernormal knowledge. Taking these accounts at second-hand we cannot well discuss the point; but when we know of the heightened memory found in ecstatic and hypnotic cases, we need very strong evidence to satisfy us that what is termed supernormal knowledge is not exalted memory.

I must here insert, by way of pertinent example, an epitome of Professor Janet's case of Achille.<sup>1</sup> Achille was a timid and rather morbid young married man. After returning from a business journey he became sombre and taciturn,

<sup>1</sup> For a full description of this case see *Névrozes et Idées fixes*, I, pp. 377-389.

sometimes appearing unable to speak. He remained in his bed murmuring incomprehensible words, bade farewell to his wife and children, and stretched himself out motionless for a couple of days, while his family waited for his last breath. Suddenly he sat up in bed with wide-open eyes, and burst into a convulsive, exaggerated, Satanic laugh which lasted for more than two hours. He leapt from his bed and cried, "They are burning me—they are cutting me to pieces!" After an agitated sleep he awoke with the conviction that he was possessed with a devil. His mouth uttered blasphemies, his limbs were contorted, and he repeatedly made unsuccessful attempts at suicide. When taken to Professor Janet he kept protesting against the odious outrages on religion, which he attributed to a devil inside of him, moving his tongue against his will. Attempts to hypnotize him failed, but the wily psychologist finally persuaded the demon to show his power by putting Achille soundly asleep. No sooner was this done than he was delivered from his tormentor—from his own tormenting self. In that hypnotic sleep he was gently led on to tell all his story; and such stories, when told to a skilled and kindly auditor, are apt to come to an end in the very act of being told. Achille had been living in a day-dream; it had swollen to these nightmare proportions, and had, as it were, ousted his rational being; and in the deeper self-knowledge which the somnambulistic state brings with it, the dream and its interpretation became present to his bewildered mind. The fact was that on that fateful journey when Achille's troubles began he had committed an act of unfaithfulness to his wife. A gloomy anxiety to conceal this action prompted him to an increasing taciturnity, and morbid fancies as to his health grew on him until at last his day-dream led him to imagine himself as actually dead. What, then, was naturally the next stage of the dream's development? "He dreamed that, now that he was dead indeed,

the devil rose from the abyss and came to take him. The poor man, as in his somnambulic state he retraced the series of his dreams, remembered the precise instant when this lamentable event took place. It was about 11 A.M.: a dog barked in the court at the moment, incommoded, no doubt, by the smell of brimstone; flames filled the room; numbers of little fiends scourged the unhappy man, or drove nails into his eyes, and through the wounds in his body Satan entered in to take possession of head and heart." From this point the pseudo-possession may be said to have begun. The fixed idea developed itself into sensory and motor automatisms—visions of devils, uncontrollable utterances, automatic script—ascribed by the automatist to the possessing devil within. By Professor Janet's treatment the incidents of the miserable memory were modified, were explained away, were slowly dissolved from the brooding brain, and the hallucinatory image of the offended wife was presented to the sufferer at the proper moment with pardon in her eyes. Achille was restored to physical and moral health, and afterward led the life of a normal man. This case of demoniacal possession was completely cured by mental treatment. It shows the character of the phenomenon.

While demoniacs are found among all classes of people, usually those who are very suggestible, feeble-minded, with a melancholic temperament and a vicious education, furnish the subjects. Female demoniacs are more common than male, and the majority have been between forty and fifty years of age. There have been very few under the age of puberty or among old people.<sup>1</sup> Chinese demoniacs, according to Nevius, range between fifteen and fifty years of age, quite irrespective of sex. Chamberlain says, "The only difference between the cases of possession mentioned in the Bible and those observed in Japan is that it is almost exclu-

<sup>1</sup> E. Esquirol, *Mental Maladies*, pp. 235-252.

sively women that are attacked, mostly women of the lower class. Among the predisposing conditions may be mentioned a weak intellect, a superstitious turn of mind, and such debilitating diseases as, for instance, typhoid fever. Possession never occurs except in such subjects as have heard of it already and believe in the reality of its existence.”<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion I feel like reiterating the words of one writer concerning the oriental cases. He said, “If the case nowadays of the demonolators of Southern India differs from that of the Hebrews, who in the time of Christ were possessed with devils, will anyone point out to me the exact bound and limit of the difference?”<sup>2</sup> I believe them to be similar, but would differ from this writer in one particular. I would class them according to the diagnosis of to-day rather than that of 1900 years ago. Since we are able both to produce and cure demoniacal possession in our laboratories, it hardly seems necessary to invoke the aid of demons to furnish an explanation, especially when we can give a better one without it. The disaggregation of consciousness, or a split in personality, with an insistent idea in the secondary consciousness, is all that science needs to-day to furnish a case of demoniacal possession as wild and fiendish as the most fastidious could wish.

It will be readily recognized that a disbelief in demons or in demoniacal possession does not interfere with a belief in a personal devil if one chooses to entertain the latter, any more than a rejection of angelology would prevent the acceptance of a belief in God.

<sup>1</sup> B. H. Chamberlain, *Things Japanese*, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> R. C. Cardwell, “Demonology, Devil Dancing, and Demoniacal Possession,” *Contemporary Review*, 1876, p. 376.

## CHAPTER XI

### MONASTICISM AND ASCETICISM

“He lives in fame that died in virtue’s cause.”—SHAKESPEARE.

NEITHER Monasticism nor Asceticism is an unique product of Christianity. Both were known before the Christian era, and Egypt and India, rather than Palestine or western countries, may be looked upon as the homes of these practices. A remembrance of the Fakeers of India, the Galli and Vestales of Rome, the Pythagoreans of Greece, the Therapeutæ of Egypt, and the Essenes of Judea will instantly reveal the general prevalence of these ideas before the days of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The widespread and universal character of these practices shows that in some way either the results or processes find in many persons a responsive chord, that human nature delights in the arduous, or at least in the unusual. While it was usually considered that self-denial was an inevitable part of the life of the monk or of the hermit, there were certain compensations which to some persons more than repaid any sacrifice.

In the fourth century and later there was a stampede from the church, as though it were ruled by the devil as much as the world from which men were bound to make their escape. Both were left behind. Why was this? It was for the purpose of individual freedom. True, the monk took a vow, but this was to a monastery or abbot, which one could choose,

<sup>1</sup> T. G. Crippen, *History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 156.

and it meant entire freedom from the bondage of the church into which one was born without his consent.<sup>1</sup>

We see in the churchman and the monk a psychological distinction which is as old as man. The church upheld authority and union, while monasticism stood for individualism. Individualism is the highest product of human development. It is not first chronologically, but gradually the individual is differentiated from the mass which tries to subjugate him. Mr. Spencer's definition of evolution would lead us to think that the production of individualism was the business of the world. Notwithstanding the value of the monastery in developing individualism, it was a failure in the full development, for only by the free competition with untrammelled men, and through the family and the state—the two institutions which monasticism rejected—could the pinnacle of individualism be reached.

There were three stages of development: 1. the anchorite; 2. the community, independent of other communities; and 3. the organization of communities, although the later stages never did away entirely with the former. It is also noticeable that the three vows of the monk found emphasis and expression in three different orders: Clugny forced celibacy on the clergy, the Mendicant orders typified poverty, while the Jesuits were the soul of obedience. Although the monks and anchorites fled from the church, the church never allowed them to escape, and they brought new blood into it and infused it with fresh enthusiasm and loyalty. Among all the extravagances this was not the only good trait. They exercised hospitality, they were kind to the poor, and befriended those who were in distress. They boldly rebuked the sins of the powerful, which they were able to do on account of the respect entertained for their sanctity, although such rebukes would have cost others their lives. They led in intellectual

<sup>1</sup> A. V. G. Allen, *Christian Institutions*, pp. 139 and 175.

development, produced many great church teachers, and established schools. They developed the arts, and saved agriculture in days when both were neglected by others, and led also in piety and religious growth. Truly it may be said that "Western civilization was cradled in the monastery." In the fourteenth century times changed so that individual opportunities became greater, and men could develop far better outside the monasteries than within their walls. So well have the results of Monasticism been summed up by another that I venture to give a most excellent, if rather long, quotation:

"Every direct specific purpose of the monk seemed in the long run to have been reversed, or to have proved a failure. He began with indifference to the extension of the visible church and ended with reviving the primitive order of the Apostolate for the conversion of Western Europe. His foremost aim was the salvation of his own soul, and he became the most successful of missionaries for accomplishing the salvation of others. He left the world of towns and cities behind him, but where he went the world followed him and towns and cities sprang up around him. He started, as did the Montanists, his predecessors, with an inward revolt against the laws of outward nature, or the ties which bind the body and soul together; he lived in deserts and in dens and in caves of the earth, he fought the constitution of his being with rigid and prolonged physical discipline. And yet it was the monk who was the first in the modern world, as in the case of St. Bernard or St. Francis, to acquire the love of nature. In the contact with nature, which was forced upon him by his desire to be in solitude and alone with God, there entered into his soul the healing power of nature through communion with his spirit. Through this communion with nature, which begot the love of nature, came the preparation for modern art. From holding the human body as an evil

thing at war with the soul, he came to recognize the divineness of the human form as the expression of the inward spirit. He lived in the atmosphere of the miracle, a world of his own creation where all laws might be suspended at the bidding of faith, where the power of the holy man was revealed as stronger than the forces of life or death, and thus, as with Albert the Great or Roger Bacon, prepared the way for modern science which reveals nature as at the service of man. Monasticism started with a contempt for the human reason, as if intellect were necessarily at war with piety, and, like the Montanist, despised philosophy, as incompatible with true religion. But the monasteries, when they reached the height of their development, produced the scholars, the thinkers, the philosophers of the age. The one supreme object of scholasticism was to defend the doctrines of the church, but in order to this end it was necessary to cultivate the reason. When the process of scholasticism was complete, it ended in what is known as nominalism, which asserts the importance of the thinking mind as that which gives reality to human thought. In its origin, monasticism, like Montanism, was indifferent to the welfare of the state, fleeing to the desert to escape its control. Its indifference to the political order, the absence of loyalty to one's country, or the sense of patriotism, had hastened the downfall of the Roman Empire. The monks contributed nothing to the cause of nationality; they were cosmopolitan, equally at home in every country. And yet it was the monks who were called to rule the world which they despised. It was a dream of ancient times that it would be desirable if a philosopher, who lightly regarded the world, could be brought to govern the world, sitting on the throne of the Roman Empire; and it happened once in the case of Marcus Aurelius. So in the case of Hildebrand and of others who succeeded him, monks ruled over the states of Europe and subjected princes, kings, and emperors to their

sway. They abandoned property and took the vow of poverty but they could not escape from wealth. Each successive attempt to make the monasteries poor ended in their being richer than before. They cultivated obedience as an art, taking a special vow to obey, and the end of the process was individual freedom. . . . They took the vow of celibacy and called it chastity, and the result, it is needless to say, was such disastrous moral failure and collapse as to cast a discredit upon the system of the monastery from which it has not yet recovered.”<sup>1</sup>

We will now take up some of the different factors of Monasticism and Asceticism and endeavor to gauge their psychological significance.

#### SELF-DENIAL

“Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day. That is, be systematically ascetic or heroic in little unnecessary points, do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it, so that when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test. Asceticism of this sort is like the insurance which a man pays on his house and goods. The tax does him no good at the time, and possibly may never bring him a return. But if the fire does come, his having paid it will be his salvation from ruin.”<sup>2</sup> This is not third century but twentieth century advice. It is not particularly religious, but it makes for character. There is needed the asceticism of art, of business, and of sport as well as of religion, for unless a man is willing to deny himself he cannot see the Kingdom of God in religion, nor his ideal in any branch of life.

<sup>1</sup> A. V. G. Allen, *Christian Institutions*, pp. 173 ff.; see also A. W. Wishart, *Monks and Monasteries*, pp. 386-393, for a valuation of Monasticism.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *Psychology*, I, p. 126.

The attitude of the ascetic toward the self was both negative and positive; the former was exhibited by self-denial, and the latter by torture. Of course the negative side has a positive aim, and in its legitimate culmination is self-realization rather than self-suppression. We are all now familiar with the effect of the body upon the mind and therefore upon the religious life, and not the mutilated, but the sound, healthy body is of the most value in religion. We are trying now to reinstate the body in its original place of honor. If Jesus advocated any asceticism it amounted, as Harnack has said,<sup>1</sup> to His putting us on our guard against the three enemies—Mammon, care, and selfishness; and to His exacting of every man, who should find the way of salvation through Him, a certain unlimited devotion of purpose and life to the imperative interests of an ethical and religious ideal. This excludes the positive attitude of the ascetic toward the body—it leaves no room for the torture of the self.

In the early centuries there were some Christians who practised the negative side of self-denial only. They did not withdraw from society, but they thought that they were prohibited from enjoying many things which were lawful for those less pious. With this belief they did not drink wine, eat flesh, nor engage in any commerce. Neither would they marry, for they looked for happiness in solitude rather than in the peace of domestic life. Since that time we have found many like-minded, who espouse the negative aspect only, and others also who incorporate both the negative and the positive into their ideals.

Of course the root-idea of all self-suppression was that the world was evil and the body was a servant of the devil. "Our wretched and weak human flesh," wrote Brother Giles, "is like the pig, that ever delighteth to wallow and befoul itself in the mud, deeming the mud its greatest delight. Our flesh

<sup>1</sup> A. Harnack, *What is Christianity?* p. 91 f.

is the devil's knight; for it resists and fights against all those things that are of God for our salvation." <sup>1</sup> If sin proceeded from the body and the ideal of perfection was the negative principle of avoidance of sin, then the theory of self-suppression was a legitimate one; and there are not wanting those in any age who court the unpleasant and difficult, and rejoice in hardship and danger—"their souls growing in happiness just in proportion as their outward state grew more intolerable. No other emotion than religious emotion can bring a man to this peculiar pass." <sup>2</sup>

The negative principle of self-denial is most frequently and thoroughly expressed in Solitude, Humility, Obedience, Poverty, Fasting, and Sexual Continence. Solitude and Fasting will be treated under separate rubrics in this chapter, while the discussion of Sexual Continence will be reserved until we take up the whole subject of sexuality. Let us then take up briefly the three other subjects—humility, obedience, and poverty. Of course every ascetic, *per se*, was supposed to be humble. His sins, his weakness, his failures, his privation, all made him humble, and not infrequently, so much was the humility of this or that particular saint extolled that I fear he came to be in the paradoxical state where he was proud of his humility, and the effort defeated itself. With St. Louis, for example, humility became a fine art; his eyes were hardly ever raised, and he excelled in rudeness and incivility. <sup>3</sup> Mr. Dickens has created a very humble man in Uriah Heep, and Uriah, like many of the saints, was humble for a purpose.

One further way in which humility became paradoxical was in the Christian practice of Confession. <sup>4</sup> As practised

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religion*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 352.

<sup>4</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, pp. 272 ff.; W. James, *ibid.*, p. 462 f.

to-day it is of two kinds, public in some Protestant churches, and private in the Roman Catholic Church. The value of confession seems to be in getting ourselves fairly and squarely before ourselves, rather than in the influence on or of others.<sup>1</sup> The private recital of all or the worst of one's sins is very liable to react in an injurious manner by way of suggestion on the penitent, or on the confessor, or on both; and the public recital of a part, and that the least evil part, of one's sins inevitably leads to hypocrisy. Granger says, "On the whole it would appear that the tendency of the confessional is to an indulgent view of sin, and the penitent is let off more easily by another than by his own conscience." The Society of Friends eschews confession in any form, and this, except as particular friends may be able to help, seems the wisest, although James evidently thinks that we do without the confessional for other causes, for he says, "We English-speaking Protestants, in the general self-reliance and unsociability of our nature, seem to find it enough if we take God alone into our confidence."

Whatever examples of counterfeit humility we may be able to point out, there were, at least, many attempts to cultivate the genuine grace. St. Francis of Assisi embraced the lepers and kissed them; Margaret Mary Alacoque, St. Catherine, Charlotte Laporte (known as "the sucker"), Francis Xavier, St. John of God, and others "are said to have cleansed the sores and ulcers of their patients with their respective tongues; and the lives of such saints as Elizabeth of Hungary and Madame de Chantal are full of a sort of revelling in hospital purulence, disagreeable to read of, and which makes us admire and shudder at the same time." Nothing could be more humiliating than incidents of this kind.

As already intimated, the monk's vow of obedience was really the method of achieving a larger liberty. Neverthe-

<sup>1</sup> Compare G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, II, p. 308.

less, it is a kind of self-surrender to those to whom the vow is made, be it God, the abbot, or the church. All thought and will are thereby denied the monk, which consequently relieves him of all responsibility. The monk who obeys virtually becomes incapable of any wrong-doing, and all his sins must be charged to his superior. Some quite remarkable cases of obedience might be cited to show how really passive a person may become.

Although the instinct for possession is one of the most fundamental, religious enthusiasm can easily keep it in check. In some religious orders, *e. g.*, the Benedictine, the vow of poverty only pertained to the individual monk and not to the corporate body. St. Francis endeavored to make it general, but failed. His wisdom was exemplified by subsequent events, for it was in eschewing poverty in 1321 that both monasticism and the papacy began to decline. It is a necessary part of self-surrender, and typifies a trust in God without reserve. It lays emphasis on doing and being rather than on having, and thereby has a distinctly religious value. Professor James speaks of the fear of poverty as our worst moral disease at the present time.

One of the most important reasons advanced for self-denial is that of strengthening the will power by this voluntary and unnecessary sacrifice. The power of self-control and repression is really a most important element in the development of character, and it may be especially necessary to cultivate it in these easy and self-indulgent days. The question might well arise whether the ordinary circumstances of life do not afford ample opportunity for the cultivation of this virtue, and whether more intrinsically useful forms of self-denial might not be tried than those usually employed by the church. We might further ask how far a person would be justified in his self-denial when this brought involuntary suffering on others, as when the early and mediæval saints

left parents or family, and refused to see or talk to a heart-broken mother, who had suffered untold hardships in searching for the heartless anchorite. Instead of developing the divine spark in man, the ideal life among these ascetics seems to have been to dehumanize themselves and become something other than man. In this some of them succeeded, and they did not become angels either.

#### FASTING

Modern Protestantism is the only form of religion that has eschewed fasting as a religious exercise, and it has done this notwithstanding the authority of Paul and of Jesus who correlated it with prayer as a means of grace. The aborigines of America, and other less civilized races and tribes,<sup>1</sup> as well as Eastern peoples, incorporated fasting into their religions, and it was especially prescribed for special occasions and people—the seers and prophets using it. In America we have jealously remembered the Puritan feasts, *e. g.*, Thanksgiving, and as carefully forgotten their fasts, *e. g.*, Good Friday, perhaps to our disadvantage. In the early church, the custom was established of observing Wednesday and Friday until three o'clock in the afternoon as fast days. These days were designated *dies stationum*, or sentry days, when the soldier of Christ stood on guard. At this time, fasting was also practised by the penitent when under church discipline.<sup>2</sup>

Saints and monks have used fasting as a favorite form of self-denial, and one which repaid them in producing much-sought-after religious experiences. The traditional fasting of the Roman Catholic Church has, by the rigidity of the rule and the changes wrought by time, been turned into luxury. To-day, in most parts of this country at least, fish is more

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Pratt, *Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 60, 64 f., 97 f.; F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 56 f.

<sup>2</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 62.

rare than flesh. Who would not exchange fried tripe for boiled salmon, and willingly suffer all the sacrifice which it entailed? The sting of the deprivation or the value of the sacrifice has been lost in the shuffle. There has lately been a movement in Dublin to request the Pope to change the rule so that it shall be abstinence from alcoholic liquors that is required, instead of abstinence from meat. While this would rob the total abstainer of any sacrifice, it would confer both a physical and spiritual benefit on the others. The rule for fasting in the Roman Catholic Church, however, is not the same for all countries; in Spain, and its colonies, for instance, no Friday abstinence is required. Hygienic rather than ascetic fasting is the fad, or perhaps the valuable agitation, of the times, and more men are abstaining from eating for their stomach's sake than for the good of their souls.

Marvellous tales have been related concerning the ability of certain persons, mostly saints, to fast. A wonderful difference is to be noticed, either in the fasting powers of different individuals or in the credulity of their admirers and friends. St. Catherine fasted for several years, so it is said, while St. Simeon Stylites, no less a saint, nearly lost his life by trying to fast for forty days. A number of cases of famous fasting girls have been collated.<sup>1</sup> Margaret Weiss, ten years old, who lived near Spires, went without food and drink for three years, during which time there were no excretions. In the meantime she grew and acted like other children. Paulus Lentulus, a virgin of Berne, went without food for over two years. She was watched by a magistrate without detection of fraud. Katherine Binder, of the Palatinate, was closely watched by a clergyman, a statesman, and two doctors of medicine, but no fraud was detected. She had nothing but

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Hammond, *Spiritism and Nervous Derangement*, pp. 263-268, from which the following cases have been taken.

air for nine years. Eve Fliegen, of Meurs, took no food for fourteen years, from her twenty-second to her thirty-sixth year. This was from 1597 to 1611. Joan Balaam, of Constance, went three years without eating, and exercised actively all the time. She gradually learned to eat and drink again. Near Cologne, another girl of thirteen did not eat for three years. A little sugar put into her mouth caused her to swoon. She acted like other children and was fleshy enough, except "only that her belly was compressed so that it seemed to cleave to her backbone."

About 1811, Ann Moore, of Sudbury, Staffordshire, England, claimed to live without eating. After being watched for three weeks the case was reported genuine and she became famous. She was again watched for nine days very carefully, at the end of which time she had to confess that she was an impostor. During the first watch, her daughter, while washing her, fed her by using towels soaked in gravy, milk, and arrowroot gruel, and conveyed food from mouth to mouth by kissing. After this another case attracted attention, but it was found that a hysterical girl in a London hospital obtained food from the other patients. The most famous case of recent years was that of Sarah Jacob, known as "the Welsh Fasting Girl." In 1867, when ten years old, she had an illness and suffered from hysteria. It was claimed that for two years and two months she lived without eating. A loose watch of three weeks was maintained, after which the case was reported genuine. Later, some hospital nurses were sent to watch, and the parents and friends were kept from the bed. The girl lived for only a few days after this, and the jury brought in a verdict of "Starved to Death." The father was sentenced to twelve months' and the mother to six months' imprisonment.<sup>1</sup>

I have quoted an epitome of these cases in order that we

<sup>1</sup> See also F. Galton, *Inquiries into the Human Faculty*, p. 207.

might have some standard by which to judge the reputed fasting of the ascetic saints. Where fraud is carefully excluded the tests do not last long, and although there are probably great differences in the ability of people to fast, it seems hardly possible that the body can subsist long without food. We must consider all cases where years are spoken of as fraud, or the exaggeration of prejudiced friends. There is no doubt that some saints did practise fasting, and for a purpose which seemed legitimate to them. Undoubtedly the discovery of the religious value of fasting was accidental. In primitive times when the race was stricken by famine, or the individual suffered from hunger, and vitality was lowered even to include trance conditions, then visions were seen and dreams were experienced which could be artificially produced by the same means. Not only the individual religious longings were thus satisfied, but the tribe thereby obtained the services of a seer.<sup>1</sup>

The help to seeing visions and having dreams is the chief reason for fasting among all religionists. "The opening of the refectory door must many a time have closed the gate of heaven to the ascetic's gaze."<sup>2</sup> It seems hardly possible that heaven is lying around us, and fasting will put us into the condition for recognizing it, as some of the saints and early mystics maintained.<sup>3</sup> We know from experience, outside the realm of religious experiment, that lowered vitality produces illusions, hallucinations, and delirium, as well as we know that moderate fasting may be beneficial to the activity of both body and mind. On the latter point we have the testimony of one observer regarding the inmates of the monastery of Our Lady of the Snows.

<sup>1</sup> C. C. Everett, *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, p. 46 f.; J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, II, p. 415.

<sup>3</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 12.

“Without doubt the most of mankind grossly overeat themselves; our meals serve not only for support, but as a hearty and natural diversion from the labor of life. Yet, though excess may be hurtful, I should have thought this Trappist regimen defective. And I am astonished, as I look back, at the freshness of face and cheerfulness of manner of all whom I beheld. A happier nor a healthier company I should scarce suppose that I have ever seen. . . . They seemed all firm of flesh and high in colour; and the only morbid sign that I could observe, an unusual brilliancy of the eye, was one that served rather to increase the general impression of vivacity and strength.”<sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly there are some virtues, as there are some vices, which are peculiar to and more easily cultivated by a fasting saint. In fact, we see these in equal proportion in the saints who suffered from malnutrition; and in these practical, active, and positive days it is hardly possible that we would voluntarily choose these anemic virtues if we had to take the anemic vices with them. A part of the argument has been put in this form: “It is questionable whether the visions induced by an empty stomach are of any greater benefit to humanity than the nightmare generated by an overfilled one. A deficiency of red corpuscles undoubtedly makes certain temptations less alluring, but there are some moral diseases which, like physical contagion, more readily attack a weakened system. After forty days of fasting even Christ was approachable by the devil. A fasting person may be more aspiring, but he is less benevolent. Abundant domestic experience shows that before dinner a man’s temper is not especially angelic, but after dinner he feels more kindly toward his fellow-men. When his hunger is allayed his selfishness is quelled. It is the hour which is taken advantage of by minstrels to approach the table to beg, and by our

<sup>1</sup> R. L. Stevenson, *Journey through the Cevennes*, p. 97.

friends, whose most atrocious jests are received by indulgence and even applause.”<sup>1</sup>

There were some rebellions among the monks against fasting. An amusing story of vigorous protest against the rule of St. Martin of Tours comes down to us. The Egyptian monks could live on a few figs a day, but the rude Gauls who followed Martin were just emerging out of barbarism and were accustomed to devour great slices of roasted meat and to drink deep draughts of ale. Such sturdy children of the northern forests did not take kindly to dainty morsels of barley bread and small potations of wine. Athanasius had said, “Fasting is the food of angels,” but the reply of Martin’s novices was, “We are accused of gluttony, but we are Gauls; it is ridiculous and cruel to make us live like angels; we are not angels; once more, we are only Gauls.” This was the protest of common sense against ascetic fanaticism. St. Bonaventura has related a touching story of St. Francis of Assisi. As the dying victim of asceticism sank back exhausted with spitting blood, he avowed while viewing his emaciated body that “he had sinned against his brother, the ass.” (This was Francis’s name for his body.) Then, his mental activity taking, as was usual with him, the form of an hallucination, he imagined that, when at prayer during the night, he heard a voice saying, “Francis, there is no sinner in the world whom, if he be converted, God will not pardon; but he who kills himself by hard penances will find no mercy in eternity.” He attributed the voice to the devil.

Some investigations concerning the disturbances of the mind caused by the deprivation of food were recently made by Dr. Lassiguardie, a French physiologist. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* sums up the results as follows: “His conclusions were to the effect that fasting promoted the development of the intellectual faculties, es-

<sup>1</sup> *Independent*, LX, pp. 981 ff.

pecially the imagination. In actual starvation the character changed and became irritable and cruel, with loss of memory and will power, and development of hallucinations, agreeable or distressing. He has recently been studying the miners who were buried for so many days in the mine at Courrières. One miner was not released until after an interval of twenty-five days. He frequently imagined himself at home and talked with his wife, and imagined that he found scraps of bread, which he ate with relish. Like most of the others, he frequently imagined he saw bright lights before him. All the miners said that they became very irritable and frequently quarrelled. They all had hallucinations, generally agreeable, but nearly all retained their reason, only a few being actual dupes of their imagination."

#### SOLITUDE

Solitude has been considered an important part of ascetic life, and the greater religious founders and leaders craved and insisted on seclusion. Jesus and Paul, no less than Mohammed and Buddha, fled to the desert or retired from the crowd. Saints, in imitation of these or for other reasons, have chosen a life of solitude. Some persons are temperamentally constituted so that they find this life an attractive one. They are unable to adapt themselves to social duties and requirements, in fact they seem to be deficient in social instincts, and an opportunity for silence and contemplation is sought. The East rather than the West supplies this type, and conditions of climate have not a little influence.<sup>1</sup> With others the seclusion was not voluntary. About the middle of the third century persecution drove many to the desert, where they lived as anchorites. The unpleasant conditions where anarchy and terror reigned for the next thirty years augmented the numbers, and at the beginning of the fourth cen-

<sup>1</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, p. 254.

ture, the ten years' persecution of Diocletian again forced many into involuntary seclusion.<sup>1</sup> Probably many, like Paul of Thebes, the first Christian hermit, became so accustomed to solitude that they preferred it to society.

Some were stimulated to ascetic retirement by the state of the times in which they lived. The world was morally corrupt and the purity of the church was imperilled. Alarmed at this condition, not a few who lacked the courage to combat the growing depravity sought a secure retreat where they could develop religiously outside the influence of evil. Perhaps some also thought that evil could only be conquered by withdrawing from it.<sup>2</sup> Some who condemned the life of the anchorite still favored the calling of the monk. Among these were Basil and Jerome. The silence and gloom of the solitary life, together with the heat of the tropical sun, drove many into insanity, and the dangers and excesses, the evils and temptations of the anchorite, were against the lonely life. The monk suffered from these things also, but to a less extent. But in both cases it was a withdrawal from the world for individual piety.

It was not by common consent that the solitary life was exalted, for some objected to both the cell and the monastery. They claimed that Christians who fled to the desert or to the cloister were lost to the world, but the ascetic answered that the prayers of the godly were useful. At first their lives did present a sharp contrast to the prevailing corruption of society, but unfortunately this condition did not last. Undoubtedly the chief reason for the solitary life was the opportunity it gave for personal religious development, for it was considered perfectly legitimate to leave the world to the devil while trying to save one's own soul. "To break by his ingratitude the heart of the mother who had borne him, to

<sup>1</sup> T. G. Crippen, *History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. III.

persuade the wife who adored him that it was her duty to separate from him forever, to abandon his children, uncared for and beggars, to the mercy of the world, was regarded by the true hermit as the most acceptable offering he could make to his God. His business was to save his own soul. The serenity of his devotion would be impaired by the discharge of the simplest duties to his family.”<sup>1</sup> So we find that parents’ hearts were broken, mothers were spurned, and so great was the demand for undisturbed worship that it is said a saint called Boniface struck dead a man who unintentionally disturbed him at his prayers.

We have the record of many cases of retirement by saints who had become so famous for their sanctity that they had to retreat further and further from the domain of man, sometimes without avail. St. Simeon Stylites conceived the unique scheme of ascending a pillar sixty feet high to attain the solitude of which his fame threatened to rob him. Anthony of Thebes, the patron saint of ascetics, spent his life, from his youth, in the desert. The first few years he used wrestling with evil spirits, but he abandoned that for the positive life of contemplation and good works. Tradition has embellished him with much sanctity, and his life has stood as the pattern for anchorites, who, following him, rapidly increased in numbers, spreading their cells over the desolate and secluded regions of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine.

Psychologically the saint found seclusion of great religious value. In solitude it is natural to experience a great range of feelings, and usually extremes of feeling.<sup>2</sup> The saint was either in the depths of depression or on the heights of exalta-

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, p. 125; see further, pp. 127-131, for the monk’s insane determination to be separated from women, even refusing to look upon or receive a visit from aged and pleading mothers and sisters. Simeon Stylites killed his mother in this way.

<sup>2</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 101.

tion, either fighting with the devil or in intimate and friendly conversation with the Lord. In ecstasy, either demons or angels were his companions, but seldom or never did common men and women enter his field of vision at such times. These extremes of feeling satisfied the cravings of the anchorites. The solitary state was also conducive to the production of visions and dreams, ecstasy and possession, especially as it was almost unavoidably associated with some degree of fasting. It was usually in solitude that the saint received messages and other forms of revelation, which he afterward divulged to his less fortunate fellow-men; and it was here also that he overcame the fierce temptations which vied in intensity with more carnal victories. The inevitable fixation of thought tended to assist these hallucinatory experiences, especially when combined with the lack of ordinary stimuli.<sup>1</sup> Rather more prosaic, but a not less valuable function of solitude, was the stimulus which it gave and the opportunity which it allowed for study and contemplation. The monk or anchorite, being freed from the distractions of the common duties of life, with few personal needs and no social demands, could devote himself to uninterrupted intellectual work. And well it was for civilization that the monk did thus employ his time, for we owe it to him that much of the ancient treasure has been preserved, as well as that many new and valuable additions have been made to the life of the Middle Ages.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the world which the anchorite pretended to eschew was absolutely indispensable to him. Only let some breathless messenger reach the cavern of the hermit and announce to him that his love of solitude was at length effectively and forever gratified by the utter extinction of the human race, and solitude, from that instant, would not

<sup>1</sup> H. R. Marshall, "The Function of Religious Expression," *Mind*, N. S., VI, pp. 182 ff.

merely lose all its fancied charms, but would become terrible and insufferable; and this man of seclusion, starting like a maniac from his wilderness, would run round the world in search of some possible straggling survivors.

It seems hardly necessary to note the injurious aspects of asceticism, so obvious to all. The tendency to inordinate selfishness, the withdrawal of so many persons from the active affairs of life, the atrophy of altruistic virtues, and the opportunity for immorality under the guise of the isolated life, cannot be disregarded in a study of the effects of seclusion. Spiritual pride was also fostered in the solitary life. It is well to notice that a man may be as truly selfish about the next world as about this.

#### TORTURE

The positive side of the ascetic's attitude toward the body was that of torture. The most energetic frequently subjected themselves to every form of physical suffering, often devising curious and extravagant modes of self-torture. By crucifying the body mystical communion with God was supposed to be realized, and thereby the joys of heaven were experienced. But this torture is seldom or never really selfish. It is the blind way which men have of trying to obtain satisfaction for the religious impulse of self-surrender.<sup>1</sup> This is founded on a wrong conception of God. To this class of ascetics, God is not a kind and loving Father, but an angry and revengeful Master. He is, therefore, much pleased by painful sufferings and cruel martyrdoms.<sup>2</sup> All torture then becomes propitiation to this kind of Deity, and merit was thus acquired by the maltreatment of the body.

There were many other causes of torture. It was nurtured by the instinctive recoil against the poison of sensuality,

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, p. 244.

which had helped to destroy the old civilization.<sup>1</sup> This recoil was shown by all degrees of austerities. The rules of the monks were severe, but the monks vied with each other in adding voluntary hardships and torture, and the anchorites tried to surpass the experiences of former days, both their own and others. Some found a sort of morbid pleasure in the most excruciating pain by some strange inversion of feeling, but with others it was always objectionable and they had to drive themselves to it. Tauler did not value torture *per se*, and said, "we are to kill our passions, not our flesh and blood," but many others thought the two synonymous, and to them there was no such thing as killing passions without destroying the body. Jovinian (406), although himself a celibate and an ascetic, went so far as to hold that all these austerities were purely voluntary, and involved no peculiar merit. He maintained that the ordinary Christian life was holy. The Roman Catholic Church decrees that health must not be sacrificed to mortification, for the latter is not an end in itself, and because both may be means to a higher attainment neither should be advanced at the expense of the other. St. John of the Cross presented the life of holiness in a very repellent aspect and welcomed every kind of suffering, choosing the most painful because it was such. Henry Suso succeeded in taming his body after sixteen years of cruel austerities, but many others found that their efforts were never successful, and that the older they grew the more severe the tortures necessary. The widely varying effects of torture on different people, and the different ideas concerning its value and use, only go to show, what we meet with at every turn, that the same stimuli cause vastly different reactions when they meet with different temperaments.

Torture of a more refined character than bodily mutilation was sometimes practised. Sometimes men on entering

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 244.

a monastery were commanded by the abbot to throw their sons into a river or into a fire, or to watch all kinds of punishment and torture inflicted upon the innocent little ones. They usually obeyed these inhuman commands, and thereby showed their separation from the world and their love to Christ. To outrage the affections of the nearest and dearest relations was not only regarded as innocent, but proposed as the highest virtue.

These ascetic practices did enable the spiritually ambitious to rise above their surroundings, and the delirium and visions of the sick and weakened were vouchsafed to the tortured. Suso was favored by many visions, the most valuable of which was the one by which he was informed that he was relieved of the obligation of further torture. Even those who have not felt the necessity of torturing themselves have admired the ascetics and monks who have had such supreme contempt for the physical man that they would undergo so much mutilation of the body to make the soul more perfect. Many, who have eschewed the monastery and the cell of the anchorite have, in their despair of attaining self-mastery, even amid the usual surroundings of life, fled to special means of self-torture that they might win the indispensable victory. The great trouble has been that torture not infrequently defeated the end in view by emphasizing and keeping in prominence the very body and passions which it tried to destroy. Indifference, rather than torture, would have accomplished the object far better, and to have dwelt upon the spiritual edification rather than the physical destruction would have given success to many who knew only failure. Torture may have been valuable in some cases, but it is only another example of the fact that "the fruits of religion . . . are, like all human products, liable to corruption by excess." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 339.

As an example of the extent to which torture was carried, let us take the case of Henry Suso, rather than recite the various forms resorted to by many ascetics who might be portrayed.

“He sought by many devices how he might bring his body into subjection. He wore for a long time a hair shirt and an iron chain, until the blood ran from him, so that he was obliged to leave them off. He secretly caused an undergarment to be made for him; and in the undergarment he had strips of leather fixed, into which a hundred and fifty brass nails, pointed and filed sharp, were driven, and the points of the nails were always turned toward the flesh. He had this garment made very tight, and so arranged as to go around him and fasten in front, in order that it might fit the closer to his body, and the pointed nails might be driven into his flesh; and it was high enough to reach upwards to his navel. In this he used to sleep at night. . . . It often seemed to him as if he were lying upon an ant-hill, from the torture caused by the insects [lice, which were an unfailing token of mediæval sainthood]; for if he wished to sleep, or when he had fallen asleep, they vied with one another. . . . He devised something further—two leathern loops into which he put his hands, and fastened one on each side his throat, and made the fastenings so secure that even if his cell had been on fire about him he could not have helped himself. This he continued until his hands and arms had become tremulous with the strain, and then he devised something else: two leather gloves; and he caused a brazier to fit them all over with sharp-pointed brass tacks, and he used to put them on at night, in order that if he should try while asleep to throw off the hair undergarment, or relieve himself from the gnawings of the vile insects, the tacks might then stick into his body. And so it came to pass. If ever he sought to help himself with his hands in his sleep,

he drove the sharp tacks into his breast, and tore himself, so that his flesh festered. When after many weeks the wounds had healed, he tore himself again and made fresh wounds."

Suso then tells how, to emulate the sorrows of his crucified Lord, he made himself a cross with thirty protruding iron needles and nails. This he bore on his bare back between his shoulders day and night. "The first time that he stretched out this cross upon his back his tender frame was struck with terror at it, and blunted the sharp nails slightly against a stone. But soon, repenting of this womanly cowardice, he pointed them all again with a file and placed once more the cross upon him. It made his back, where the bones are, bloody and seared. Whenever he sat down or stood up, it was as if a hedgehog-skin were on him. If any one touched him unawares, or pushed against his clothes, it tore him. . . . At this same period the Servitor procured an old castaway door, and he used to lie upon it at night without any bed-clothes to make him comfortable, except that he took off his shoes and wrapped a thick cloak round him. . . . In winter he suffered very much from the frost. If he stretched out his feet they lay bare on the floor and froze, and if he gathered them up the blood became all on fire in his legs, and this was great pain. His feet were full of sores, his legs dropsical, his knees bloody and seared, his loins covered with scars from the horsehair, his body wasted, his mouth parched with intense thirst, and his hands tremulous from weakness. . . . Throughout all these years [twenty-five] he never took a bath, either a water or a sweating bath; and this he did in order to mortify his comfort-seeking body. He practised during a long time such rigid poverty that he would neither receive nor touch a penny, either with leave or without it. For a considerable time he strove to attain such a high degree of purity that he would neither scratch nor touch any part of his body,

save only his hands and feet.”<sup>1</sup> If, as some authors think, the impulse to sacrifice is the main religious phenomenon, then Suso was the most religious of men.

Other experiences have come to the saint which we cannot discuss in full here.<sup>2</sup> Some saints are said to have exhaled a delicious perfume, “the odor of sanctity.” From the personal habits of most of those of whom we have record, we should be inclined to think that it must have been far from agreeable. St. Antony had never, to extreme old age, been guilty of washing his feet; St. Poeman fell into the same habit late in life. St. Abraham, who lived fifty years after his conversion, never washed his face or feet after that time; his biographer somewhat strangely remarks that “his face reflected the purity of his soul.” A famous virgin named Silvia rigidly refused to wash any part of her body except her fingers. St. Euphraxia joined a convent of one hundred and thirty nuns who never washed their feet, and who shuddered at the mention of a bath. Paula said, “A clean body and a clean dress mean an unclean soul”; Jerome wrote Rusticus, “Baths stimulate the senses and are therefore to be avoided.” The occasional degeneration of the monks into habits of decency was a subject of much reproach.

But this “odor of sanctity” was not only a product of the living body but it is said to have been emitted from the corpses of some saints. Recent investigations have been made to ascertain if there were any scientific foundation for the reports. The following quotation gives an epitome of the results.

“In Malory’s ‘History of Prince Arthur,’ written in the

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of the Blessed Henry Suso, by Himself* (trans. T. F. Knox), pp. 56-80, quoted by W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 307 ff.

<sup>2</sup> For an epitome of these experiences, see W. E. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, pp. 107-112.

fifteenth century, . . . when his comrades found Sir Launcelot dead, they noticed 'the sweetest savor about him that ever they smelled.' Malory explains that this was the odor of sanctity. In the *Revue de Paris* for December 1, Dr. George Dumas analyzes materialistically, but not unkindly, a number of the legends of this odor recorded of the saints of the church. While recognizing the elusive nature of odors, how easily one may be mistaken for another, and how possible it is to fancy them, Dr. Dumas credits most of these stories; but he spoils his testimony by explaining them. For example, St. Theresa's death is traced to diabetic acetony, and from the facts of physiology he shows how likely pleasant odors might be observed in such a case. Usually, the saintly odors are compared to those of violet, pineapple, musk, benzoin, yellow amber, canella, cloves, orange, lily, and rose. For many of these it is now possible to substitute chemical terms. In cases where the nutrition is checked acetones and fatty acids may be developed. These, combining with aldehydes and acetous aromatic derivatives of alcohol, give rise to the perfumes of the orange or violet, or it may be to those of canella or musk. Butyric ether, with a little bicarbonate of soda, will yield the odor of pineapple. Subject to special modifications, Dr. Dumas gives  $C_6H_{12}O_3$  as the formula for the odor of sanctity."<sup>1</sup>

Some cases of "transfiguration" have also been reported. George Fox says of himself on one occasion (Journal, 1647), "I was very much altered in countenance and person, as if my body had been new moulded and changed." The Norfolk *Beacon*, August 19, 1824, reports the case of Miss Narcissa Crippen, whose face became transformed and dazzling when on one occasion she experienced ecstasy.<sup>2</sup> The case of

<sup>1</sup>*The National Druggist*: March, 1908, quoting *The Chemist and Druggist*.

<sup>2</sup>W. A. Hammond, *Spiritism and Nervous Derangement*, p. 298.

Valentine Burke, reported by Mr. Moody, while taking longer to accomplish, might be classed here.

So far we have said little of women in connection with monastic life, but we find that the origin of nunneries was contemporaneous with that of monasteries, and the history of female recluses runs parallel to that of the monks. Almost every male order had its counterpart in some sort of a sisterhood. The general moral character of these female organizations was higher than that of their brethren. Hermit life was unsuited to women, but they early retired to the seclusion of convent life. The frivolity, shallowness, and immorality of the life of women drove the more thoughtful ones to attempt a more serious existence, and at that time this could only be found in religious orders. On account of the fine quality of mercy that distinguished woman's character, even although she retired to a convent, she could not forget her fellow-creatures so completely as the monks; she was always less selfish in her asceticism than her male companions. In the main, however, the male and female ascetics were much alike.<sup>1</sup> I append a chronological table:

	A.D.
Ignatius writes to a convent of virgins . . . . .	107
Council of Chalcedon formulates rules . . . . .	154
Paul of Thebes . . . . .	228-340
St. Antony gathers hermits into lauras . . . . .	251-356
Monasteries built and monks live together, Pachomius forms first set of rules for mon- astery . . . . .	300 340
Macarius of Alexandria attracts many . . . . .	394
Basil builds monastery in Asia and has strict rules . . . . .	330-379
Jerome translated Pachomius' rule . . . . .	340-420
Monasticism recognized as an integral part of the church . . . . . about	375
Benedictines . . . . .	529

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Wishart, *Monks and Monasteries*, pp. 106-115.

Columbanes . . . . .	543-615
Cluniacs . . . . .	910
Carthusians . . . . .	1084
Knights of St. John . . . . .	1074
Cistercians . . . . .	1098
Beguines . . . . .	1100
Templars . . . . .	1119
Premonstratenians . . . . .	1126
Carmelites . . . . .	1156
Franciscans . . . . .	1209
Dominicans . . . . .	1215
Jesuits . . . . .	1534
Trappists . . . . .	1664

## CHAPTER XII

### RELIGIOUS EPIDEMICS

“Was ever feather so lightly blown to and fro as this multitude?”—  
SHAKESPEARE.

SOCIAL groups at certain times and under certain circumstances are easily stampeded. This is true of both animals and men. It is true regardless of the occurrence which may initiate it, but probably more true when the incident happens to be one which seems vital to the social group. Perhaps we have no better examples of psychic epidemics than those furnished by religious incidents—religion is a vital issue. The history of Christianity, which lies open before every one who will read, gives indisputable evidence of this. It is not only true of Christianity, however, but as this alone is our concern we confine ourselves to viewing the phenomena from this standpoint only. The first seventeen hundred years of the Christian era, or perhaps more definitely we should say the years from the middle of the third century to the end of the seventeenth, are made up of one succession of religious epidemics.

The experience of men as recorded in history is seen to move in waves. The more primitive the group the shorter the wave, other things being equal; but the rapid communication of later years has more than counteracted the advance in civilization, for while the latter tends to lengthen and modify the epidemic, the former makes it much shorter and more intense. Individual history also moves in waves; from the crest of one interest through the valley of monotony

to the crest of a new interest—thus the surges roll. The effect of social suggestibility, the heightened power of mob consciousness, intensifies and augments the individual waves. It is as though the myriads of ripples, making but little impression on the sandy beach, were united in one great wave which should overwhelm the shore. Now, religion being the most vital issue and the chief business of mankind for the first seventeen centuries of this era, it is only natural to suppose that all social excitement should centre upon this one theme, since most individual effort was directed into this channel. These we find to be the facts.

During the first two hundred and fifty years of Christianity a Christian epidemic was impossible. In the first place, it was a time of beginnings. There were hardly enough Christians to constitute an epidemic; they were unorganized, unacquainted, and their energies were chiefly directed in an effort to keep out of the circus and the open claws and gaping mouths of the Emperor's lions, or to escape the prisons and the galleys. This furnished all the excitement necessary for health, and was the chief concern and subject of conversation and thought, together with the desire to add to their numbers. Later, when persecution was lessened, when the numbers became greater, and when opportunity for meditation was given, there sprang up a form of mental epidemic which had only to be suggested to be carried into the manifold phases of Christian activity; and only a new and more wholesome view of life has tended to cause it to decay in the last five hundred years. I refer to Monasticism, which was discussed in the last chapter.

Perhaps some would say, "We cannot call this an epidemic, for it meant separating men from the world rather than bringing them together in a social group." That is the result of the epidemic, but from the time of Paul of Thebes down through the Dark and Middle Ages, when this form of

psychic contagion joined itself to other forms as they appeared, as when certain orders were formed to assist in the Crusades, social suggestibility was the kernel of the movement. At one time this movement swept over the country so as to include the mass of the people in its sympathy, and almost incredible numbers in actual residence in monasteries.

After the first blaze of enthusiasm under Paul, Anthony, Pachomius, and Basil, the flame died down under the unfavorable circumstances of the fifth and sixth centuries, and had some other suggestion been brought forward at this time Monasticism would probably have been forgotten; but Monasticism held the minds of the people. The revival under Benedict, after the foundation of the order which bears his name, was sufficient to arouse the slumbering people, and with the ardor of an entirely new movement it swept the world from the storm-bound coasts of England to the sunny deserts of Egypt, and from the Pillars of Hercules to the land of Ur.

It is said that St. Pachomius had 14,000 monks in his monastery, 7,000 of whom were under his own rule. St. Jerome said that 50,000 monks were sometimes assembled at the Easter festivals. An Egyptian city named Oxyrynchus, which devoted itself almost exclusively to the ascetic life, contained 20,000 virgins and 10,000 monks. Five thousand monks were sometimes under one abbot, and St. Serapion presided over 10,000. In the fifth century there were more than 100,000 persons in monasteries, three-quarters of whom were men; the monastic population in the greater part of Egypt was nearly equal to the population of the cities. These figures pertain, however, to the beginnings, and are small compared with the enormous numbers gathered in monasteries after the Benedictine revival.

At one time the Benedictine order alone had not less than 37,000 monasteries, and for the space of two hundred and

thirty-nine years this order governed the church by forty-eight popes chosen from their number. They boast of 200 cardinals, 7,000 archbishops, 15,000 bishops, and 4,000 saints. The assertion is also made that no less than twenty emperors and forty-seven kings resigned their crowns to become Benedictine monks, and ten empresses and fifty queens were included among their converts. Bernard of Clairvaux, of the Cistercians, had phenomenal success in winning men to the monastic life. It was said that "mothers hid their sons, wives their husbands, and companions their friends, lest they be persuaded by his eloquent message to enter the cloister." "He was avoided like the plague."

In the twelfth century the Cluniacs had 2,000 monasteries situated in France, besides many in other countries. It seems hardly credible; we wonder whence the people came to inhabit them. In less than fifty years after the foundation of the Franciscan order it consisted of 200,000 members and had 8,000 houses. When we consider the number of orders we can compute the prevalence of the epidemic.

This, in common with all epidemics, exhibited gross exaggeration, and the higher faculties of the people seemed to be in abeyance. Women were shunned and hated, to prove purity; wealth was shunned, to show unworldliness; and friend had no more claim on friend than the bitterest enemy, to exhibit charity. To eschew idle words a monk held a stone in his mouth three years; pride was defeated by disfiguring the body to prevent being appointed bishop; idiocy was feigned to stop the spread of a reputation for wisdom; the plundered monk pursued the robber to give him something he had overlooked. Aristotle the pagan might have taught the Christian his valuable system of ethics with profit, for the mean certainly has much advantage over extremes of this kind. But to say that there was an epidemic is to predicate extremes.

The decline of Monasticism was brought about by three factors: a renewal of activity both inside and outside the church, of which the crusades were an example; the founding of the mendicant orders in the early part of the thirteenth century, which struck a blow at retirement; and the choice made against poverty by both church and orders in 1321. Monasticism gave way to a life of more valuable activity.

Before passing from this epidemic, attention must be called to one important element. Monasticism was not only an epidemic itself, but it did much to prepare the ground for the Golden Age of epidemics, the Middle Ages. The reader will recall that the rule of all monasteries contained for a basis three factors, however many more might be added. These were obedience, poverty, and chastity. Now, one characteristic of the Middle Ages was the great weight of authority. In the monastery and out, a person's life was planned for him by custom and the will of another, so that there was little or no exercise of the individual will. Every detail of life was fixed through the various classes and groups into which society was divided, and the monk especially knew no exception to this law of obedience. It cannot be doubted that the influence of the monastery on the outside world was in the direction of the abnegation of individual initiative. The part which the individual had in the direction of his life was confined to its narrowest limits. Nothing could be more favorable to the exercise of the subconsciousness, and the effect of suggestion is easily seen.

In addition to this, other circumstances added to the development of the mob consciousness among a diversified people: the great religious zeal already referred to, the thirst for colonization and conquest which exhibited itself in any direction presented, and commercial relations, which were now extending so as to influence public opinion and make of a heterogeneous mass a more or less homogeneous people.

These, coupled with the social conditions which were brought about not a little by the influence of monasticism, prepared the people for the suggestible state which at times bordered on to, if it did not quite enter, the region of real mania.

The beginning of the mediæval epidemics is seen in the influx of pilgrims to the Holy Land. Pilgrimages are not original with Christianity. In primitive religions the gods were local and could only be approached in certain places. As their worshippers became scattered, pilgrimages were necessary. Where miracles were performed, or the gods seemed to appear with special power, people flocked to worship, as it was most likely that where the god had appeared once he would come again. The early Christians venerated certain places; they visited the saints, and after their deaths visited their former habitations. It is only natural that they should consider the Holy Land, the country round about and including Jerusalem, as especially sacred on account of the work of Jesus there; and particularly so the scenes of the Passion of our Lord. The tombs of the saints and martyrs were also held in great veneration.

In addition to the attraction furnished by these religious ideas, we must also reckon on some other factors, probably not so prominent in consciousness, but none the less real. A pilgrimage gratified the love of adventure, which was possessed by the people of this time in an exaggerated degree; it gave an opportunity to see foreign countries; and provided a change from the irksome duties which many did not relish. The pilgrim usually took upon himself a temporary vow of ascetic observances which was only binding so long as he was on his pilgrimage. He wore a distinctive costume, consisting of a broad hat, a black or gray cloak, girt round about with a cincture, and he carried a staff in his hand. The pilgrim brought from the Holy Land a palm leaf, and consequently was called a palmer. Different badges distinguished

pilgrims of different places. On account of the meritorious endeavors of pilgrims they had many privileges. They were entitled to entertainment and assistance from all Christians, and were not molested, for being holy men their persons were considered sacred.

At first pilgrims were rare, but gradually the epidemic became well-nigh universal. Caravans consisting of bishops, princes, merchants, peasants, and paupers journeyed to Jerusalem to fulfil vows and perform acts of religious veneration in the land where our Saviour trod. In history, pilgrimages became famous as being the indirect cause of the Crusades. What were the crusaders, in fact, but armed and persistent pilgrims determined to achieve by force what had been denied them by privilege? We may obtain a hint of the extent of the pilgrim mania when we realize that a single band of pilgrims sometimes numbered as many as 7,000 persons. In 1064 a caravan of this number, led by the Archbishop of Mainz and four bishops, was attacked by the Bedouins near Jerusalem. The pilgrims were reported to have lost 3,000 of their number and were forced to return home without visiting the Jordan. In 1076 the Seljouk Turks took possession of Jerusalem and began harassing the pilgrims, plundering the rich ones, insulting the poor, and exacting exorbitant tolls for scanty privileges. Christians were much incensed at this treatment and also pained over the loss of commerce. All Europe cried for vengeance, and when Peter the Hermit began to preach the sacred duty of rescuing the Holy City from the unholy Turks he found ready ears and open minds. Thus we see how the one epidemic, pilgrimages, developed into a greater and more far-reaching one in the Crusades.

We usually think of the Crusades as a series of organized military expeditions, led by Christian princes, which proceeded in an orderly manner to recapture the Holy Sepulchre

from the infidels. This is but half the truth. The epidemic was so intense that no respect for law, custom, religion, or humanity could restrain some from their maniacal acts. A hermit named Peter, from Amiens, France, visited the Holy Land about twenty years after its capture by the Turks. The oppression of the Christians and his personal injuries aroused him to try to awaken the Christian world to battle. He returned to Europe and visited Pope Urban II, one of two rival pontiffs then contesting for the papacy. Urban, perhaps as much for political as for religious reasons, gave the movement his hearty support, and these two men stirred Europe with their appeals. Peter, robed only in a coarse garment, carrying a heavy crucifix, and riding upon an ass, inspired in the common people the passion which he felt, and men, women, and children crowded to his side.

Urban's masterly stroke was made at the council of Clermont in 1094. In addition to a host of bishops, clergy, and laity, which filled the city to overflowing, an army encamped outside; and his fiery eloquence, for which he was famed, evoked the most intense enthusiasm. He appealed to a variety of motives—religious enthusiasm, love for fighting and adventure, hope of commercial gain, revenge for insult. Listen to a few extracts from this wonderful speech. After portraying the defilement of the holy places, and the ravishing of wives and daughters by pagan lust, he said, "You who hear me, and who have received the true faith, and been endowed by God with power, and strength, and greatness of soul—whose ancestors have been the prop of Christendom, and whose kings have put a barrier against the progress of the infidel—I call upon you to wipe off these impurities from the face of the earth, and lift your oppressed fellow-Christians from the depths into which they have been trampled. . . . Listen to nothing but the groans of Jerusalem! . . . And remember that the Lord has said, 'He that will not take up

his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.' You are the soldiers of the cross; wear, then, on your breast or on your shoulders the blood red sign of Him who died for the salvation of your soul. . . . Go, then, in expiation of your sins; and go assured that after this world shall have passed away imperishable glory shall be yours in the world which is to come." Sobs were heard, the enthusiasm could no longer be restrained. The people exclaimed as with one voice, "Dieu le veult! Dieu le veult!" and men hurried to take the cross. The news of this council spread to the remotest parts of Europe in an incredibly short time—so quickly, in fact, as to be considered supernatural. But then it was in everybody's mouth, nothing else was talked of. Men's minds were prepared for anything, any statement was believed, and visions and miracles followed. Europe was beside itself.

The nobles made preparation for an expedition which culminated in what is known as the First Crusade, but the common people were too poor, too impatient, and too insane to wait. In the summer of 1096 an immense mob of men, women, and children, from the lower classes, gathered, with few horses, scanty provisions, few arms, and not many who knew how to use arms if they had them. But nine knights were numbered with them. The ringleader of the first mob was Walter the Penniless. With his vagabonds he marched through Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria, devastating the country as he went, robbing and murdering. While passing through Servia, they stormed Belgrade and were almost annihilated, but a starving remnant found its way to Constantinople.

Peter the Hermit was the leader of the second mob, consisting of all sorts of inefficient people, the sick, the aged, and the babe in arms. This senseless throng provoked the wrath of the Hungarians by storming the city of Semlin and slaughtering 4,000 of its inhabitants. The remnant, which

escaped hunger, disease, and the anger of those protecting property along the way, also arrived in Constantinople, but later was almost completely destroyed across the Bosphorus.

A third and a fourth crowd of like kind followed under the leadership of a German priest called Gottschalk, another priest named Volkar, and Count Enricon. These employed themselves *en route* in robbing and slaughtering all the Jews whom they could find. It is said that, notwithstanding the awful mortality, 100,000 of these different bands reached Constantinople and assembled under the leadership of Peter and Walter. Still refusing to wait for reinforcements of trained military men, they pushed forward into Asia Minor, where the ferocious Turks made short work of them. The significance and magnitude of this initial stage of the epidemic may be gathered from the following words of Gibbon: "Of the first Crusaders, 300,000 had already perished before a single city was rescued from the infidels—before their braver and more noble brethren had completed the preparations for their enterprise."

It is not my intention to give in detail a history of the regular Crusades which are so well known to every one, but I must mention one other incident. Between the Fifth and Sixth Crusades, occurred one of the most remarkable events in history, one which showed better than any other the epidemical fanaticism of the period. I refer to the so-called Children's Crusade (1212). The sins of the other crusaders were given as a reason for their failure, and several mad priests went about France and Germany calling on the children to perform what the wickedness of their fathers had prevented their doing. The children were promised that the sea would dry up, the Saracens be stricken, and the Cross and Sepulchre recovered. Stephen of Cloyes, a peasant lad of twelve years, became the real preacher of the Crusade, and, telling of a vision and his commission to lead the Crusade,

quickly aroused the children around Paris. From there the contagion spread rapidly over France and Germany. So intense was the fanatical zeal of the children that nothing could restrain them. They were locked up, but escaped; they were prohibited by parents, but disobeyed; persuasions they disregarded, threats they laughed at, and punishment was unsuccessful; nothing had any effect on the mania. Even if forcibly restrained the mania continued, and the children sickened and in some cases died. In addition to the children, decrepit old men in their second childhood joined the ranks.

Forty thousand German children, both boys and girls, gathered in Cologne to start on this holy war. They were without money or provisions, but they cared not. Dividing into two armies of 20,000 strong, one led by Nicholas, a boy of ten, and the other by an unnamed child, they started for Italy. They were robbed of gifts, maltreated, and overcome by disease or weather conditions, so that but a small proportion crossed the Alps. Some went to Rome, where Innocent III persuaded them to return home; a few of these succeeded in getting back to their native land, in rags and barefoot. Laughed at by their friends and unable to explain their strange action, the girls having lost their virtue and the boys their faith, they wondered why they had ever left their homes. The majority, however, never returned, but were sold into slavery or into infamous resorts.

The French army, 30,000 boys and girls, followed Stephen, notwithstanding the edict of the king and the attempted restraint of parents. Arriving at Marseilles, and being disappointed at the failure of the sea to dry up, about 6,000 accepted the kind offer of transportation from two merchants, Hugh Ferreus and William Porcus (Iron Hugh and Pig William). The children were crowded into seven ships and started. Two of the ships were fortunately lost at sea, but the others transported their cargoes to the slave markets of

Africa. This Crusade exhibits in the most striking manner the ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism of the age.

The total loss to Europe by the Crusades is variously estimated from 2,000,000 to 7,000,000 lives, the latter being nearer correct. In addition to the crusades against the Mohammedans, so thoroughly were the people of the time possessed by this epidemic that crusades were also organized against the Moors in Spain (1146-1232), against the heathen Slavonians on the Baltic (1201-1283), and against the Albigenses (1209-1242). During the last crusade the women crusaders were attacked by a strange mania; entirely devoid of clothing, they rushed about the streets speechless, and in some cases fell into ecstatic convulsions. The Crusades ended in 1299.

When the Crusade epidemic was abating, a new one arose. In 1260, bands of people in Italy were seized with a craze for public scourging, and were called Flagellants. A remorse for sin and a belief that blood shed in self-flagellation had a share with the blood of Christ in atoning for sin were the bases for this movement. Both men and women went in groups from town to town and, stripped to the waist, or with but a loin cloth about them, they stood in public places and scourged one another, at the same time singing or exhorting the bystanders. Being vigorously suppressed in Italy, they later appeared in Bavaria, Austria, Bohemia, Poland, and France. The second main outbreak appeared in 1349, directly following the Black Death, which latter epidemic was partially of a psychic nature. The terror inspired by this great plague aided the flagellants. Many took vows to submit to public scourging for thirty-three days, corresponding to the thirty-three years of Jesus' life. They then considered themselves cleansed from sin by this "baptism of blood." The Jews were greatly abhorred by these pious fanatics and suffered much from their fury in Germany and the Nether-

lands. Aided by others, Jews of both sexes and all ages were slaughtered by thousands, death sometimes being inflicted at the stake. In 1414 there was a fresh outbreak, and, although they appeared occasionally afterward, history does not mention them after 1544. It is affirmed that they numbered sometimes as many as ten thousand, and included persons of the highest rank.

During the decline of Flagellation there appeared the Dancing epidemic. There were three distinct factors in this epidemic, *viz.*, St. John's Dance beginning in 1374, St. Vitus' Dance beginning in 1418, and Tarantism which began about the middle of the fourteenth century and continued to the end. It was thereafter contemporaneous with St. Vitus' Dance. While Hecker recognizes these dates, he says, "The dancing mania of the year 1374 was, in fact, no new disease, but a phenomenon well known in the Middle Ages, of which many wondrous stories were traditionally current among the people." In 1374, assemblies of men and women appeared on the streets and in the churches of Aix-la-Chapelle who seemed to be demented, dancing for hours in a wild delirium. While dancing they seemed to be insensible to external impressions, but they saw visions of spirits whose names they would shriek, of rivers of blood which they would try to escape by leaping high in the air, or of the Saviour, the Virgin Mary, or some saints. When completely exhausted they fell to the ground suffering from tympanites, which was relieved by binding clothes about the abdomens of the prostrate dancers or by pounding them or by jumping on them. The epidemic took different forms according to the personal equation or the local conditions, as, *e. g.*, in some places pointed toes or red colors irritated the dancers. In a few months this mania had spread over the Netherlands, Belgium, and other countries. The extent of the epidemic may be computed when we consider that in Metz alone 1100 dancers

occupied the streets. Occupations were forgotten and homes were forsaken by the older ones, and the children left their play to join the mad dancers. The clergy tried exorcism, and this coupled with natural exhaustion was quite effective. St. John the Baptist's Day was solemnized by all sorts of strange and rude customs, heathen rites, and superstitious ceremonies, hence the name, "St. John's Dance." Probably it began with the revels on St. John's Day, 1374.

Strasburg was visited by the dancing mania in 1418. The town authorities had the afflicted ones led to St. Vitus' Chapel, where priests ministered to them. At St. Vitus' altar persons bitten by mad dogs and those with small-pox were cured, and it was thought that the dancers would be healed here also. Some were, and the disease was therefore called "St. Vitus' Dance." The afflicted ones would sometimes dance as long as a month, unmindful of lacerated feet. If they sat to take nourishment, or tried to sleep, a hopping movement of the body continued. Sometimes persons would dash out their brains against a wall or building, or rush headlong into rivers and drown. At the beginning of the sixteenth century physicians began to treat the affection. Exhaustion cured many, music assisted, but some never regained health. The disease was still in existence in the seventeenth century, but not in an epidemic form.

Tarantism was supposed to have been caused by the bite of a tarantula, and appeared first in Italy. In addition to the symptoms of spider bites, some would dance until insensible or exhausted, others would weep, become melancholic, and perhaps die. Fear of spider bites affected nervous people, and at the close of the fifteenth century it had spread beyond the borders of its original starting-place. When affected, death was expected, and the victims pined away, becoming

weak-sighted and hard of hearing. Music of a certain kind, called tarantella, afforded the only relief, and this must be played on the flute or the zither. At the sound of the music the victims danced, and by this means it was thought that the poison was distributed or excreted. The symptoms varied. Victims were excited by metallic lustre, and were quieted or enraged by certain colors, not always the same. So potent was the poison supposed to be that some had to dance once annually for a quarter of a century to be cured for the remainder of each year. It continued for nearly four hundred years, but gradually declined until it was confined to individual cases with an hysterical or melancholic diathesis. Both sexes and all ages suffered, and it is interesting to note that the poison of mental contagion, not that of the tarantula, was alone the source of danger.

The witchcraft epidemic has already been described, and, as will be remembered, dated from the Bull of Innocent VII, in 1484, and lasted down to the middle of the eighteenth century. The last execution for witchcraft directly connected with this epidemic took place in 1749. In 1515, 500 persons were executed at Geneva for witchcraft. In Lorraine, the learned inquisitor, Remigius, boasted that he put to death 900 witches in fifteen years. As many more were banished from that country, so that whole towns were in danger of becoming depopulated. In 1524, 1,000 persons were put to death in one year at Como, in Italy, and about 100 every year after for several years. Nuremberg, Geneva, Paris, Toulouse, Lyons, and many other cities made an average sacrifice of 200 witches every year; Cologne burned 300, and the district of Bamberg 400 witches and sorcerers annually. In Scotland, for forty years, from 1560-1600, the annual average for the execution of witches was 200, *i. e.*, a total of 8,000, or four per week for nearly half a century in a population less than that of Massachusetts to-day. It is

conservatively estimated that 30,000 persons in England, 75,000 in France, and 100,000 in Germany were put to death on the charge of witchcraft, and no less than a total of 300,000 lost their lives in this epidemic. When we consider that such men as Blackstone, the authority on law; John Wesley, the founder of Methodism; Ralph Cudworth, the philosopher and theologian; Sir Thomas Browne, the eminent physician, and Sir Matthew Hale, the celebrated jurist, believed in witchcraft and condemned witches, we cannot blame the common people for their credulity. This ended the great epidemics which had lasted for fifteen hundred years.

But why did they, or why should they, end at this time? Two factors enter into the explanation. Up to this time religion was the chief concern of the people; after this, commerce seized the mind of the world, and the epidemics since then, which have been many and continuous, have been of a financial character. The second factor is found in religious enthusiasm and excitement seeking an outlet in another form. This was the revival. The Great Awakening in America, and the Wesleyan Revival in England, began during the first half of the eighteenth century, and a continuous series can be traced since that time.

Appended is a chronological table to assist in tracing the epidemics:

Monasticism	.	.	.	.	.	250-1209
Pilgrimages	.	.	.	.	.	1000-1095
Crusades	.	.	.	.	.	1096-1299
Flagellants	.	.	.	.	.	1260-1454
Dancing	.	.	.	.	.	1374-1650
Witchcraft	.	.	.	.	.	1484-1749

These epidemics necessarily overlap, for a few hold on to the old fads until the new ones have a firm hold on the

people. This is more noticeable with Monasticism than with any of the others, for it is of such a character that it easily combines with other forms.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the material used in this chapter, I am indebted to C. Mackay, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions*; B. Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion*, Pt. II; J. F. C. Hecker, *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages*; as well as various histories and encyclopedic articles.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CONTAGIOUS PHENOMENA

“For all the rest,  
They’ll take a suggestion as a cat laps milk.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN the history of religious experience we meet with many instances of contagious phenomena which are not sufficiently widespread to be called epidemics, and may be confined to a few individuals for a short time, or agitate a mob for months. Of all infatuations, that of religion is most fertile in abnormal conditions of both mind and body, and both spread with the greatest facility by imitation. Of course, this contagious tendency is not confined to religious phenomena, but finds an abundant opportunity for expression in religion, especially during emotional excitement.

In the recent study of the psychology of the crowd certain observations have been made and certain generalizations have been framed into laws. It may be well to look at some of these. The law of origin is thus stated: “Impulsive social action originates among people who have least inhibitory control.” Others may follow, but it begins with the unstable. In 1787, at a cotton factory at Hodden Bridge, Lancashire, a girl was thrown into convulsions by a mouse being put into her bosom. The next day three more were seized, and the day following six more. The idea prevailed that a new disease had been conveyed in the cotton, and about thirty girls were affected, all of whom were cured by electricity.<sup>1</sup> The cure was probably as suggestive as the disease.

<sup>1</sup> J. F. C. Hecker, *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, p. 140.

Compare with this Finney's experience in a cotton factory at New York Mills, N. Y., in 1825. "The next morning after breakfast I went into the factory, to look through it. As I went through, I observed there was a good deal of agitation among those who were busy at their looms, and their mules, and other implements of work. On passing through one of the apartments, where a great number of young women were attending to their weaving, I observed a couple of them eyeing me, and speaking very earnestly to each other; and I could see that they were a good deal agitated, although they both laughed. I went slowly toward them. They saw me coming, and were evidently much excited. One of them was trying to mend a broken thread, and I observed that her hands trembled so that she could not mend it. I approached slowly, looking on each side, at the machinery, as I passed; but observed that this girl grew more and more agitated, and could not proceed with her work. When I came within eight or ten feet of her, I looked solemnly at her. She observed it, and was quite overcome, and sunk down, and burst into tears. The impression caught almost like powder, and in a few moments nearly all the room were in tears. This feeling spread through the factory. . . . The revival went through the mill with astonishing power, and in the course of a few days nearly all in the mill were hopefully converted."<sup>1</sup> It will readily be seen that both the mouse and the evangelist owed the beginning of their power to the nervous condition of the first person affected.

The second law, the law of extension, is that "Impulsive social action tends, through imitation, to extend and intensify in geometrical progression." In a Methodist chapel at Redruth, a man during divine service cried out with a loud voice, "What shall I do to be saved?" and manifested great solicitude for his salvation. Others followed his example and all

<sup>1</sup> C. G. Finney, *Autobiography*, p. 183 f.

were afflicted with great bodily pain. This was soon publicly known, and many who came to see fell into the same state. The disorder spread over the towns of Camborne, Helston, Truro, Penryn, Falmouth, and other neighboring towns. It was confined to Methodist chapels, and it seized only people of the lowest education. Great anguish was manifested, convulsions appeared, and the victims cried out like those possessed. Four thousand were affected in a short time. Exhaustion finally came to their relief, but before this appeared there was no way to quiet them. Neither age nor sex was spared by the contagion.<sup>1</sup> Many cases of a similar nature will be noticed of Revivals.

The law of control has been given in these words: "Sympathetic popular movements tend to spread themselves with abandon, and are held in check only if there are a considerable number of individuals scattered through the population who are trained in the habit of control, who are accustomed to subordinate feeling to rational considerations and who act as bulwarks against the advance of the overwhelming tide of imitation and emotion."<sup>2</sup> The epidemic nature of the suggestion among the children at the time of the Children's Crusade, and the attempted inhibition on the part of the King, the Pope, and the parents, give us an example of this third law.

Gustave Le Bon's psychological analysis of the crowd<sup>3</sup> was and is a most valuable addition to science. In his study he discovered principles of crowd behavior which, we may readily see, apply to the religious crowd. Let me epitomize some of his conclusions in an endeavor to show how rigidly normal we are in our most abnormal religious experiences,

<sup>1</sup> J. F. C. Hecker, *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, pp. 3-7, gives all three of these rules.

<sup>3</sup> G. Le Bon, *The Crowd*.

which some people designate as supernatural. A crowd, while little adapted to reasoning, is quick to act. It is impulsive, mobile, and irritable. The sentiments of a crowd are simple and exaggerated; crowds may be criminal, but they are also virtuous and heroic, and excesses of one kind or another are usually present. A crowd has its own way of reasoning—it jumps at conclusions, yet this is mostly in superficial matters, in greater things it is conservative. Thus it is that civilizations have been created and directed by a small intellectual aristocracy, and never by crowds. The crowd is destructive, not creative. The intellectual aptitude of the individual is merged in the crowd, and the subconscious elements, which are largely primitive, prevail. By forming a part of an organized crowd the individual descends several rungs in the ladder of civilization.

The primitive character of the crowd is shown by its credulity, *i. e.*, its suggestibleness; this is the reason it is so easily moved. The same trait is seen in children who accept almost any suggestion without questioning. "Magistrates are in the habit of repeating that children do not lie. Did they possess a psychological culture a little less rudimentary than is the case they would know that, on the contrary, children invariably lie; the lie is doubtless innocent, but it is none the less a lie." This fact has already been brought out in connection with the witchcraft evidence, but it is also true of crowds as of children. In connection with suggestibleness there is noticed the vivid imagination of the crowd, by which the unreal easily becomes real. The speech of Antony in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* is a skilful portrayal of the effect of the imagination and of suggestion on the crowd. In its effect the impulsive and unreasonable attitude of the crowd is also shown. The crowd meets Cinna, and it matters not to them that it is Cinna the poet rather than Cinna the conspirator, his name is Cinna, and they will kill him just the same.

The leader of a crowd is usually a despot, for the crowd respects force, but interprets kindness as weakness. He never sways the crowd by reason, the crowd is not reasonable; but the *modus operandi* is to affirm stoutly even to exaggeration, to repeat the affirmation adroitly, and to trust to the emotional contagion, which is part of the crowd mind. The crowd is dictatorial and intolerant, but after placing itself, which it instinctively does, under a leader, who is usually a strong-willed man who knows how to impose himself upon the members, it follows him blindly.

The more primitive the people, the more easily is the crowd spirit inculcated; but regardless of the personnel, under proper conditions the mob consciousness may appear and the highly cultivated gentleman become the savage in company with his suddenly degenerated brethren. "Once the mob self is . . . brought to the surface, it possesses a strong, attractive power and a great capacity of assimilation. It attracts fresh individuals, breaks down their personal life, and quickly assimilates them; it effects in them a disaggregation of consciousness and assimilates the sub-waking selves. The assimilated individual . . . enters fully into the spirit of the mob."<sup>1</sup>

So great is the collective power of suggestion that a crowd sees things which never exist, and hears sounds which are purely imaginary. Not only does this apply to one depraved member, but it may be experienced by every member in the crowd. Those who read and observe cannot avoid noticing this phenomenon in all avenues of life. The incident is told of a humorist who planted himself in an attitude of astonishment, with his eyes riveted on the well-known bronze lion that graces the front of Northumberland House in the Strand. Having attracted the attention of those who were passing, he muttered, "By heaven it wags! it wags again!"

<sup>1</sup> B. Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion*, p. 304.

and in a few minutes he contrived to blockade the whole street with an immense crowd, some conceiving that they had absolutely seen the lion of Percy wag its tail, others expecting to witness the same phenomenon. Whether this is true or not, it is well within the bounds of possibility, and if it must be classed under the head of fiction, it was invented by some person who understood the psychology of the crowd.

In the heat and excitement of battle a vision experienced by one person is suggested to his comrades, and whole armies may see the same. The ancients supposed that they saw their deities, Castor and Pollux, fighting in the van for their encouragement; the heathen Scandinavians beheld the Choosers of the Slain, and Christians were no less easily led to recognize the warlike St. George and St. James in the front of the strife, showing them the way to conquest. It will be remembered that St. George was seen on the walls of Jerusalem by the army of the Crusaders, who did not doubt the reality of the suggested vision. There have been many religious experiences which may be explained by applying these principles of collective psychology, and while we cannot enumerate all of them, we can, at least, present examples which might be extended indefinitely, and may be applied by others to incidents that may come under their observation or be presented by history.

In 1727, there died in Paris a certain Francis, the Deacon Paris, connected with the Jansenists. He was thought to be very holy on account of his extravagant asceticism. His tomb was in the cemetery of St. Médard, and three years after his death it was rumored that miracles had taken place there. Immediately many persons crowded to the cemetery, and fanatical prayers, prophesying, and preaching were heard. The sick were brought to be cured, and many excited persons found their way there. Presently, violent physical manifestations were experienced by some patients, and before long the

contagion of the nervous disorder was so great that about eight hundred people were seized by it. These actions have been variously described: "Patients were seized with convulsions and tetanic spasms, rolled upon the ground like persons possessed, were thrown into violent contortions of their heads and limbs, and suffered the greatest oppression, accompanied by quickness and irregularity of pulse." "They threw themselves into the most violent contortions of body, rolled about on the ground, imitated birds, beasts, and fishes, and at last when they had completely spent themselves went off in a swoon." It was on account of these strange actions that they were called "Convulsionaries." All sorts of contortions were experienced, and many disorders of the nerves developed. Sometimes they were in such pain that they needed the assistance of their brethren in the faith, hence they were called by some "Secourists." This degenerated at last into insanity. In 1733, by order of King Louis XV the cemetery was closed and the fanatics were imprisoned; but this tended to increase rather than to decrease the numbers. They continued without interruption until 1790, and existed as late as 1828.

The Convulsionaries were a type. We find scattered through history certain sects that indulged in these nervous twitchings and contortions. The Camisards before them, and the French Prophets later, were known to favor like actions. The Jumpers of England founded in 1760, the Jumpers of Russia founded in 1873, and other sects of Jumpers, Shakers, and Jerkers, received their respective names on account of these contagious nervous phenomena.

In 1893, I attended a meeting of a sect called "McDonaldites," on Prince Edward Island, Canada. The process of conversion extended over some weeks or months, and there were two young people then "going through the works." The process was very similar to that described as "the jerks"

in the Kentucky revival. As soon as the pastor commenced to preach the candidates began to twitch and jerk. One of the candidates, a young woman, was particularly susceptible. She twitched and moved her head so violently that her hat was thrown off, her hair pins scattered, her long hair waved, and finally snapped. This was continued for over an hour, reminding one of a severe attack of chorea. The interesting part, in connection with our subject, was the difficulty experienced, after watching these people twitch, in controlling myself. It seemed that it would have required but little longer to put me in the candidate class. The very fear of the on-looker that he may be similarly attacked acts as a powerful suggestion, and the more suggestible soon realize their fears. In accordance with the law of suggestion, every new case adds power to the new cause, and soon conditions are ripe for the rapid spread of the psychic disorder over a whole community.

The Jews have had a number of "Messiahs." When Sabbathai Zevi, in 1666, declared himself the Messiah, men, women, and children flocked to him, became hysterical, and then contagious nervous disorders were soon present in great force. Since then both Jews and Christians have experienced like phenomena in espousing the cause of numerous "Messiahs." In our own times some of the best examples of contagious phenomena may be seen in connection with the few remaining camp meetings. At Old Orchard Beach a crowd of several thousands is made to give up all the valuables and money carried into the amphitheatre, and some of those who contribute most have simply gone in to "see how it was done." They come out with more experience and less money, but still unable to comprehend the rationale of the process.

Probably the best example we have of contagious phenomena under the name of the Christian religion is that found among the ignorant and primitive negroes of the southern

United States. Living to-day but a few generations from savagery, we cannot expect a fully developed religious consciousness. The negroes, being imported into America as full-grown men and women, would naturally bring some of their religious beliefs with them. Although the priests were left behind, the language changed, and the rites prohibited, some vestiges of the religion yet remain.<sup>1</sup> Savagery and civilization dwell in the same spirit, Voodooism and Christianity are mixed in strange confusion. The negro saw spirits in everything while in Africa, and if he kept on good terms with spirits his duty was done. He felt no obligation to his fellowmen, and religion had nothing to do with moral conduct. There was therefore no inconsistency between piety toward his gods, and crime against his companions. Thus we find the negro to-day the most religious and the most immoral of men, the present paradoxical condition being a survival of his former beliefs.

In addition to these superstitious and immoral traits in his character, the negro combines dense ignorance and weak will with vivid imagination and volatile emotion. This causes him to be especially easily moved in a crowd, and he is particularly susceptible to psychic contagion. The negro preacher is the "leader" of the crowd, and owes his position to his peculiar power of swaying the congregation. He leads them in religion as he leads them in politics and in all other social affairs. "The colored minister has been the social radical, proclaiming the equality of races according to the Scriptures, always the emotional orator swaying his audiences at will, expounding the doctrines of depravity and damnation, and too often illustrating them in his daily practice, appealing to the instinctive emotions of fear and hate as well as love, the mourner, the shouter, the visioner, rioting in word pictures,

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Tillinghart, "The Negro in Africa and America," *Publication of the American Economic Association*, III, No. 2, p. 151.

his preaching an incoherent, irrational, rhythmic ecstasy, his thinking following absolutely the psychological law of the blending of mental images. Here is a primitive man with primitive traits in a modern environment.”<sup>1</sup> As the natural descendant of the African medicine-man, “he early appeared on the plantation and found his function as the healer of the sick, the interpreter of the Unknown, the comforter of the sorrowing, the supernatural avenger of wrong, and the one who rudely but picturesquely expressed the longing, disappointment, and resentment of a stolen and oppressed people.”<sup>2</sup> With such a leader and such a crowd the effect may well be imagined.

The church is the social centre and every negro belongs to it. Meetings are held two or three times a week besides Sunday, and often last all night. So exhausting are they that a “revival” season is dreaded by the planters, as it impairs work in the field.<sup>3</sup> The meetings are conducted in such a way as to excite the greatest emotion and to be favorable to the highest degree of suggestion. Monotonous hymns are chanted through perhaps twenty verses, some of the sisters, especially, sway rhythmically through the sermon, while others pray, and the brethren shout. The sermon consists of distorted imagery, exciting for the moment, but more hurtful than helpful to ignorant minds, assisting greatly as it does in increasing the excitement. When the emotion becomes violent, muscular contractions and other physical manifestations are to be seen. Then, at some of the protracted meetings, foaming at the mouth, uncontrolled muscular contractions, collapse, catalepsy, convulsions, and dancing are not infrequent. The collapse, called “falling out,” is considered a clear manifestation of the working of the Divine Spirit, and must be ex-

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folks*, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> C. Deming, *By-Ways of Nature and Life, Negro Rites and Worship*.

perienced by all who are called to preach. The rhythmic movement and sound, the encouraging shout, and "falling out" are characteristic of the negro religion.

In large assemblies one shout or one person swaying will be sufficient to set the whole meeting in motion. Inquiring of a teacher in a negro school for higher education in the South if she had ever witnessed any of these characteristic negro phenomena, she replied that in her experience only once had she seen anything of that nature, for the students were very particular not to exhibit these peculiarities, as they considered them to be undignified and unbecoming students in an institution for higher education. The exceptional occasion was when the students were gathered together, several hundred of them, and sang one of the negro songs in as proper a manner as any white students could do. In some way an old negro "auntie" had found her way into the building, and at the end of the first verse she shouted, swayed, and started into the second verse before the organ could begin. Like wildfire the students followed the "auntie," as if all the native, pent-up emotion were but tinder to the spark so unconsciously set by this illiterate old woman. It was sufficiently contagious to carry them excitedly through the song, notwithstanding the former control of years.

## CHAPTER XIV

### REVIVALS

“There is some soul of goodness in things evil,  
Would men observingly distil it out.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN our study of revivals our attention will inevitably be called to certain extravagances. It may be well to say at the beginning and to keep in mind throughout, that the value of revivals is recognized. Revivals have been an incomprehensible confusion of good and evil, and there is no desire to minimize the former. In the chapter on Conversion an attempt will be made to analyze the beneficent effects of revival and other forms of conversion, but here let us look at the movements of the past and point out the psychological elements, in order that we may, if possible, determine their proper value.

Not a few of the evil practices and results have already been forced into desuetude by the enlightenment of our age, but so many object to any criticism of revivals and revival methods that many undesirable features are still to be found. The following quotation very fairly presents the attitude of many. “An effeminate preacher of the academic sort in the present day, sitting down to analyze such a work [Kentucky Revival of 1800] is as incapable of comprehending it as the dainty dandies of the days of Rehoboam would have been unable to understand the miraculous achievements of Gideon’s three hundred.”<sup>1</sup> A most charming comparison, which means, of course, “Hands off.” That is the trouble—the very ex-

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*, p. 181.

travagances, the very defects, the very evils, the very crimes, are precisely what the revivalist clings to tenaciously as the special seal of God's approval on his work. The fruits of the spirit in a revival service are not love, joy, peace, etc., but shouting, weeping, fainting, hysteria, and epilepsy. Jesus Christ, who moved quietly among men, who talked like a rational human being and gained individual men's consent to the good life in a sane manner, who eschewed the crowd and never had an experience, of which we have any record, which had the least semblance to a revival, would to-day be classed by some revivalists as a rationalist, or as one lacking in *spirituality*. Pentecost is the only New Testament incident which coincides with the revival, yet we do not read of any effort of Peter or of the other apostles to duplicate it. Paul's is the only typical explosive conversion of which we read there, yet we do not find him trying to set it as the type for all men to follow.

Of course, there are revivals and revivals. As the word has been used, it refers to the widespread religious movements of the last century and a half. We have had, we have now, and shall have probably for a while longer, miniature copies of these movements in different localities. Some who have charge of them endeavor to imitate especially the extravagances, while others try to procure the good results without the concomitant evil. The ideal is to have all who endeavor to advance the Kingdom of God by means of special, large gatherings, eliminate the injurious factors and cling only to the good and profitable. Let us examine the revivals.

The revival movement began with "The Great Awakening" in 1734. No one would claim that this was the first revival. Most of the great religious movements might be classed as revivals. The Reformation has been so classed, but the Reformation was a religio-political revolution rather than a

revival. In the seventeenth century we have some fore-runners. In 1625 a revival took place in the North of Ireland which was not unlike some later ones. Of this it has been said, "The people, awakened and inquiring, many of them both desponding and alarmed, both desired guidance and instruction. The judicious exhibition of evangelical doctrines and promises by these faithful men [the leaders] was in due time productive of those happy and tranquillizing effects which were early predicted as the characteristic of gospel times." In the same year a revival took place in Scotland, beginning at Stewarton. Some idea of its character may be gained from the fact that it was called the "Stewarton Sickness." At Shotts, Scotland, John Livingston preached a sermon on June 21, 1630, under which five hundred are said to have been converted.<sup>1</sup> In the very church where "The Great Awakening" began, Solomon Stoddard, the grandfather of Jonathan Edwards, had five "harvests" during his pastorate from 1672 to 1729. These were in 1679, 1683, 1696, 1712, and 1718, and the converts at these times included most of the young people in town. These and similar experiences were but harbingers—the first gusts before the whirlwind.

Prior to 1734 religion was at a low ebb in New England, although there still remained a reverence for God and a fear of His wrath, of the devil, and of hell. These fears the revivalists used and played on very successfully. Edwards, with his remarkable personality and vivid imagery presented such themes as, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," "The justice of God in the damnation of sinners," "Wrath upon the wicked to the uttermost," and "The eternity of hell torments." With much skill and tremendous effect he pictured the spider being devoured by the fierce flames, the hyperæsthetic human writhing in the fiery furnace, and

<sup>1</sup> John Macpherson, *Revival and Revival Work*.

the soul in the clutches of cruel devils. With such seed sown the harvest can well be imagined. Weeping, crying, wailing, shrieking, and fainting were common in meetings, and in the beginning Edwards justified them; later, his good sense came to his rescue and he lamented that he had not taken a more decided stand against such delusions.

In 1735 there was scarcely an unconverted person in Northampton, and most of the recent converts had become such by the only method Edwards preached—a spiritual convulsion. It was not long before the revival spread over the surrounding country, and then over all New England. The revival thus started was carried on by Davenport, Wheelock, Barber, Parsons, Bellamy, Pomroy, Allen, Bliss, and others. Most of them preached the same doctrines that Edwards did, but lacked his good common sense. All manner of extravagances were indulged and encouraged. Davenport, especially, was successful in producing tremblings, shriekings, fallings, and faintings. In his method he used not only the passionate appeal, but laying aside his coat he would leap, clap his hands, stamp, and scream, until the already excited audience would shriek and fall into fits. Fortunately he was arrested and brought before the Assembly of Connecticut, which judged him insane and ordered him deported from the colony. Later he was arrested in Boston and indicted for a breach of the peace. Barber and others continued the irrational and disorderly work until Whitefield came in 1740. Of course this is not the whole story; Edwards was driven out of his parish a few years later, dissensions arose in the churches, and much bitterness developed; but we must also note that churches were founded, theological doctrines were changed and modified, and some apathetic and unrighteous persons became sane Christians notwithstanding the insane methods.

The culmination of "The Great Awakening" took place

not to  
revival

under the ministry of Whitefield, who travelled from Maine to Georgia several times, frequently speaking many times a day to large crowds, and meeting with much success in reclaiming men. He was assisted by clergymen in different states, not the least of whom were Gilbert and William Tennant in New Jersey. Naturally there were extravagances, Whitefield himself laying much emphasis on the value of impressions and impulses. He spoke very enthusiastically of Davenport's work, and did not apparently criticise the excesses. Weeping and crying were not uncommon at his meetings, and less frequently more disorder. It is estimated that at least 50,000 converts resulted from "The Great Awakening"; and this, considering the population, was a large number. Those physically, mentally, and spiritually injured have not been estimated. Through Whitefield's untiring efforts this revival did not die out until 1770, but it abated after 1750.<sup>1</sup>

The Wesleyan revival, as is common with all revivals, followed a period of religious decline. The leader read of the Northampton revival with its bodily manifestations, and in 1739, when his revival began, these physical concomitants were seen for the first time in England. They took place at the beginning of his ministry, principally at Bristol and among the ignorant inhabitants of the nearby town of Kingswood, and after an almost complete suspension for four years they appeared with great force in Chowden, which Wesley called "the Kingswood of the North." The manifestations

<sup>1</sup> See further Jonathan Edwards' *Works*; J. Tracy, *The Great Awakening*; C. Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England*; F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*; W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*; J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*; R. Philip, *The Life and Times of George Whitefield*; S. P. Hayes, "An Historical Study of the Edwardean Revivals," *American Journal of Psychology*, XV, pp. 550-574; G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, II, pp. 281-288.

consisted of trembling, screaming, and weeping, but principally of falling to the ground and suffering excruciating pain. Wesley at first encouraged these things and looked upon them as a sign of God's favor, but later the good sense, so characteristic of him as of Edwards, revealed to him his error, and he henceforth looked upon them as the work of Satan. Wesley was not emotional, and there was very little of the sensational in his meetings; but his forceful personality created emotion in his hearers, which showed itself in this falling phenomenon.

As Edwards had his Davenport and Barber, so Wesley had his Berridge and Hicks, who preached near Cambridge, where the manifestations were carried to awful extremes by them. In 1790, one year before his death, Wesley found that the organization, of which he was the head, boasted of 511 preachers, 120,000 members, and about 500,000 adherents in all. Notwithstanding the extravagances of the first part of his ministry, Wesley's later life exhibited marked control and remarkably good judgment for the age in which he lived, a judgment and control in glaring contrast to that of some of his followers in later, and what should be more sensible, times.<sup>1</sup>

The Kentucky revival of 1800 is emblazoned on the pages of history on account of the enormous numbers in attendance at the camp-meetings and the violence and variety of the abnormal manifestations. The population in Kentucky at this time was fundamentally Scotch-Irish of good stock, but mixed with this were lazy, shiftless, cowardly descendants of criminal and convict emigrants; Logan County was called "Rogues' Harbor" and "Satan's Stronghold." The latter

<sup>1</sup> For first-hand material see Wesley's Journals; see further over forty biographies which have been published of Wesley; F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*; W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*.

element furnished the tinder so essential for the sweeping conflagration. The suggestive and contagious character of the population may be estimated by the parallelism known to exist between the revival counties and the lynching counties of Kentucky.<sup>1</sup>

When Rev. James McGready, a Presbyterian minister, came to Logan County, he brought with him the Edwardsian slogan of the awful wrath of God upon impenitent sinners. He would portray hell so vividly that persons would grasp the seats to prevent falling into the burning abyss which they saw yawning at their feet. His meetings attracted great crowds and his fame was widespread. In 1799, the two McGee brothers turned aside, while on their way to Ohio, to attend a sacramental solemnity, and incidentally to hear the noted McGready. Both brothers spoke during the meeting that day, at the end of which began the manifestations which make this series of meetings so famous. John McGee said that when the first meeting closed, "the floor was covered with the slain."

From here the revival spread over Kentucky, North Carolina, and Virginia with great rapidity. The camp-meetings, however, held at Gasper River, Logan Co., and Cane Ridge, Bourbon Co., Kentucky, eclipsed all other meetings. At the Cane Ridge meeting it is estimated that 20,000 people attended, some driving in carts fifty miles. Everything was forsaken on farms and in villages, and with their families, bedding, and provisions in their wagons, men drove to the meetings. On arriving there the wagons were placed in rows, like streets, and people gave themselves up to excitement and excesses, never thinking of returning home until the provisions were exhausted.

Especially at night, with the camp-fires blazing around the auditorium cut out of the dense woods, the breeze echoing

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 302 f.

back the shrieks and other noises from the impenetrable forest, and several men preaching at different parts of the grounds at the same time, the effects were greatly increased. Large numbers fell and would lie breathless and motionless for hours, or would shriek or groan at intervals. As many as one in every six present at some meetings fell. At times these were carried to the meeting-house and laid down so that the floor was nearly covered. Some were motionless, "some talked but could not move. Some beat the floor with their heels. Some, shrieking in agony, bounded about like a live fish out of water. Many lay down and rolled over and over for hours at a time. Others rushed wildly over the stumps and benches, and then plunged, shouting, 'Lost! Lost!' into the forest." It was a common sight to see men leap, sob, shout, laugh, or swoon, and when a meeting seemed dull, one attack would immediately increase the spirituality. The "jerks" seized saint and sinner alike, it was no respecter of persons. Those affected shook, twitched, jumped like frogs, or bounded like fish, and the scoffer was as likely to be stricken as the convert. These reflex movements first appeared, but when the cerebral hemispheres became involved, then unconsciousness was the result. Then the "barkers" were seen. Groups of men and women, on all fours, snarling, and growling, and snapping their teeth, barked at the foot of a tree. This they called "treeing the devil." The "holy laugh" became a part of the worship; both in chorus and in series the congregation burst out into loud and uncontrollable laughter. All kinds of preachers and exhorters developed; in one instance a little girl of seven years was allowed to preach until she was so exhausted that she could not utter another word.

Notwithstanding these fearful extravagances, some good was mixed with the evil, and by careful nursing developed righteousness in after years. The great revival ended in an

excess of camp meetings in 1815. Contemporaneous with this movement in Kentucky, there were revivals in New England which affected some of the more important colleges, and, being less tumultuous, accomplished much good.<sup>1</sup>

The revival of 1832, as it is called, began several years earlier and continued several years later. So far as definite leaders can be named, Rev. Asahel Nettleton was the preacher leader in New England, and Rev. C. G. Finney in New York. Nettleton preached the strictest Calvinism with hell and damnation unadulterated. With this, however, he discouraged outbursts of emotion and physical manifestations, advising the people to go quietly to their homes apart from the crowd, and there to meditate. His work was deep, but not boisterous. Mr. Finney's was a remarkable personality, with some strange influence, almost hypnotic, which all who came in contact with him noticed. This was even more marked in him than in Wesley. He inclined toward free will in his preaching, encouraged physical manifestations, and saw people weep, cry, and fall senseless. In his later years, he eschewed trying to scare people, and with him the appeal to crude and instinctive fear terminated. Finney's work continued, with the interruptions necessary on account of his duties as president of Oberlin, until 1860. Many were brought into better lives by the work of these men and their helpers.<sup>2</sup>

We will not pause to notice the Miller Mania of 1840-1844,

<sup>1</sup> See further F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*; W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*; J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*; B. Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion*; D. W. Yandell, "Epidemic Convulsions," *Brain*, IV, pp. 339-350; E. B. Sherman, "A Voice from the Past," *Outlook*, March 21, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> See further F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*; W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*; *Memoirs of Charles G. Finney written by himself*; C. Cotton, *History and Character of American Revivals of Religion*.

but pass on to the revival of 1857. At a time of great financial depression, a noon-day prayer-meeting for business men was started in Brooklyn, and from this sprang the great revival which became national in extent. Prayer-meetings were held in all the large cities. In fact, it was a revival characterized by prayer rather than by preaching. It was born of the need which men felt for something greater than their own ability, hence there was no great preacher who might be styled the leader. This was rather a layman's movement. On account of its deep, helpful character no physical manifestations were evident. It is estimated that nearly one million persons were converted at this time. The contemporaneous revivals in Ireland and Wales were not so free from excesses. The revival, especially in Ireland, was spoken of as a disease. People were prostrated, shrieked or cried, or were afflicted with dumbness, blindness, stigmata, catalepsy, or sleeping sickness. Preachers seemed powerless to prevent the manifestations. In Wales 30,000 are said to have been converted, and in Ireland many more.<sup>1</sup>

The revival of 1875 was led by the great apostle of common sense, D. L. Moody. In company with Mr. Sankey, he went to England in 1873, and there achieved his initial success. Returning to America, he visited Brooklyn, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago, and had a large number of converts resultant from his work; for the remainder of his life he devoted his time to revival work and Christian education. His meetings were not characterized by physical manifestations. Each of the three factors so prominent in early revivals in producing these effects was now absent. The man, the message, and the masses had changed. I first heard Moody in 1895, but heard him often afterward, and his method was

<sup>1</sup> See further F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*; W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*; B. Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion*.

never objectionable—of course that was late in his life; the message was not “the wrath of God,” but “the love of God”—there were no longer terrifying appeals to fear to create nervous disorders. The people, moreover, had developed in intelligence so as to be less easily carried away by excitement. It was a great surprise to many that Mr. Moody should devote the latter part of his life almost entirely to educational work, but his course has been justified. His great revival meetings no doubt accomplished much, but his chief and lasting work was done at his summer assemblies and at the institutions at Northfield, Mt. Hermon, and Chicago. His great power of organization and his rugged common sense, displayed in his evangelistic work, were brought out even more clearly in his labors for Christian education. In Finney we see the transition from the “old-fashioned” revival to the new, and in Moody we see the only great revival leader under the new regime.<sup>1</sup>

The Welsh revival of 1905 is so recent as to be familiar to all. Evan Roberts has been called the leader, so far as there was one. Similar to the 1857 revival, it was a lay movement, and, like the 1875 revival, the love rather than the wrath of God was preached. Intense excitement prevailed at times, but this fortunately found vent in the singing, which was a feature of the revival. In the rural and primitive communities of Wales one would expect some physical manifestations; but, thanks to the singing, these were largely absent, being confined to sobbing, disorderly meetings, and “holy laughter.” Over 100,000 are said to have been converted. Notwithstanding the prognostications of the leader, and the attempts of men, especially in America, this did not become a world-wide movement. Some statistics concerning the

<sup>1</sup> See further W. R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*; F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*; W. A. Chandler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*.

permanency of this revival are now available.<sup>1</sup> During the revival, the Baptists of Wales received the largest proportionate increase, between 30,000 and 40,000. Their diary for 1908, containing the statistics for 1907, shows that there has been a total decrease in the membership for the year of 5,271. During the years before the revival the returns used to show an annual increase of between 2,000 and 3,000; the reaction is, therefore, responsible for a difference of about 8,000 in this one year—nearly, if not quite, one-quarter of the amount of the total accessions during the revival. Some districts find the present permanent residuum to be not more than twenty per cent., while in other districts the deflections are not over that amount. Of course it is still too soon to form a judicial estimate of the effects of the revival.

While physical manifestations are fortunately a thing of the past in the more civilized countries, or, better, among the more intelligent peoples, we must expect a continuance among the more primitive ones, as with our negroes, and the inhabitants of Eastern lands. Let me quote from an account of a revival in Nellore, India, in July, 1906. "There were people . . . on the floor fairly writhing over the realization of sin as it came over them. . . . Saturday we were favoured with a wonderful manifestation of the spirit [?]. One of the older girls, who had had a remarkable experience, went into a trance with her head thrown back, her arms folded, and motionless, except for a slight movement of her foot. She seemed to be seeing something wonderful, for she would marvel at it and then laugh excitedly. . . . One girl rushed to the back of the vestibule and, lying across a bench, with her head and hands against the wall, she fairly writhed in agony for about two hours before peace came to her."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I. M. Price, "Results of the Revival in Wales," *Standard*, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>*The Examiner*, Sept. 6, 1906; see also *The Maritime Baptist*, Nov. 12 and 19, Dec. 21, 1906.

Reports from different parts of India in the summer and fall of 1906 show that this revival rivals that of 1800 in physical manifestations.

An epitome of revival phenomena has been presented in order that we may have material from which to make some observations. In the first place, the periodic character of the occurrences is noticeable. This was seen also in the treatment of epidemics. The revivals come more frequently than the epidemics, and last a shorter time, as the following table clearly shows.<sup>1</sup>

## REVIVALS

The Great Awakening	.	.	.	1734-1750
Wesley	.	.	.	1740-1790
Kentucky	.	.	.	1796-1815
Nettleton and Finney	.	.	.	1828-1840
Miller	.	.	.	1840-1844
American, Irish, and Welsh	.	.	.	1857-1859
Moody	.	.	.	1873-1880
Welsh	.	.	.	1905-1906

This periodicity is characteristic of all national movements, and between the revivals come seasons of great religious declension. This is true of the individual as well as of the race.

We must also notice what have been called "fashions"<sup>2</sup> in physical manifestations; Wesley's converts fell as though thunderstruck, the Kentucky converts had the "jerks." Over-wrought emotion may take different forms with different people according to the temperament and habits, but when one person in a meeting has been affected in a particular manner the power of suggestion and imitation overcomes the tendencies of the different temperaments, and a common affection is the result. We have in this another

<sup>1</sup> See also Table, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 106; see also pp. 76 and 102.

example of what has been called, in a too loose use of the word, I believe, "crowd hypnotism." At any rate the contagious quality of the manifestations cannot be doubted. The revival is characterized by conditions most favorable to this state, *e. g.*, monotony, fixed attention, control gained by singing manœuvres, limitation of voluntary movements, the excitation and depression of fear, intense emotion, eager expectation, and the suggestions given by both speaker and audience.<sup>1</sup> Of course, we recognize the additional intensity of such a condition on account of the presence of the crowd surrounding one. We have also seen that the more primitive the people the more easily it is moved. All crowds tend to return to primitive conditions under favorable circumstances, and children more readily than their elders. In every crowd there are always a few susceptible ones, and these furnish fire for the explosion, for even a slight rise in the general feeling of a crowd affects each individual by a loss of inhibition, where the same rise in feeling in a solitary person would be impotent. At such times every member of the crowd is especially susceptible. The revivalist, although not a trained psychologist, and perhaps even ignorant of his *modus operandi*, is a past master of "crowd hypnotism." His methods are cleverly calculated to put the mind into an abnormal condition and then seize it when it is most susceptible. To this end "pride" is decried and "self-surrender" is exalted. It is said that one of the lesser revivalists, after inviting sinners to the penitent bench, and before any had started, would exclaim, "See them coming! See them coming!" and the effort was frequently successful.<sup>2</sup> The suggestion is often made at the beginning of the service thus, "A number have come forward at every meeting," or "Some-

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, pp. 216-251.

<sup>2</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 145.

one is going to be converted to-night." In Starbuck's examination, Fear, Example, Imitation, and Social Pressure were the motives in no less than 46 per cent. of revival conversions.<sup>1</sup>

Revivals have always been characterized by intense emotion. This has been at the same time the source of their strength and of their weakness, of their success and of their danger. Thousands have been swept through a revival by the torrent of emotion, some to moral transformation and useful lives, others to moral degradation and loss of all respect for religious things. When the sensibilities alone are affected, and the intellect and will are neglected, the result is inevitably disappointing. This emotional method has developed a special, explosive type of conversion, and its apologists have frequently assumed that this is the only type. The danger from this is twofold: those who have gone through such an experience are liable to look upon it as a miraculous rather than a natural process,<sup>2</sup> and they, and others as well, are prone to believe that this is the only method by which a person can be saved. When there is laid down one method which all must follow, and that an emotional and explosive one, those who are temperamentally constituted so as to be unable to experience these sudden changes and overpowering emotions are hopeless of knowing God or of obtaining salvation.<sup>3</sup> They are taught to seek something which they can never find, and either despair or revolt is the result: they either give up trying, or consider religion all humbug. This grave mistake on the part of many revivalists has done incalculable harm. Feeling, or any other subjective test, cannot be the only one—"by their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots."

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *Psychology of Religion*, pp. 50 ff.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 228.

<sup>3</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 147-150.

Closely connected with this is the danger that persons will obtain an erroneous idea of Christianity. It not infrequently occurs that mere emotional excitement which accompanies a revival is mistaken for the transforming power of the Spirit of God,<sup>1</sup> or what is the product of simple suggestion is incorrectly attributed to the presence of God, or to a change of character. The confusion has not only been noticed by the psychologist, but the contradictions on the part of revivalists themselves are evidence that the source of certain phenomena is not clear. By some the emotional concomitants have been attributed to God and by others to the devil. It is not strange that persons who have been induced to "go forward," but who were not fitted to do so, should indulge in scoffing the next day and claim that the gospel was inefficacious. If salvation consists simply in the emotional surging of the over-wrought mind, the scoffer is correct; but it does not. It is therefore very essential that excitement or suggestion should not be confused with spirituality. It is a matter beyond dispute that revivalists are allowed to perpetrate certain mutilations upon souls which they claim are immortal, while the health authorities would not allow similar mutilations upon bodies which are admitted to be mortal. One of the greatest mistakes, and one which has caused much suffering to the little ones, is the classification of the most hardened criminal and the most innocent child together as both equally sinful and both needing to pass through the most torturing remorse for sin.

A matter of not a little concern to those who are striving hard against the *Zeitgeist* to continue revivals is the comparatively low standard of character of the men who go from place to place "getting up" revivals. This statement does not apply to all, far from it; there are some notable exceptions. The predominance of the commercial spirit in their method, where the "free-will offering" is so adroitly and in-

<sup>1</sup> J. H. McDonald, *The Revival, a Symposium*, p. 55 f.

tensely emphasized, the apparent monopoly of ignorance of exegesis and interpretation, concomitant vaudeville actions, and other features antithetic to the dignity of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to the spirit of the Master, cause the pastor who has the good of his church at heart to scrutinize the revivalist very carefully, respecting both character and methods, before he trusts his people to the influence of a power which is as puissant for evil as for good. As an illustration of these things, allow me to quote an account of a revival held in Bloomington, Illinois, in this year of our Lord, 1908.

A local paper heads its columns in great letters: "5,843 CONVERTS," "683 IN A DAY"—"TOTAL GIFT TO MR. SUNDAY, \$10,431."—"GREATEST REVIVAL IN HISTORY"—"WILL ATTRACT ATTENTION OF RELIGIOUS WORLD"—"SERMON ON 'BOOZE' THE GREAT EFFORT OF THE REVIVAL." Six columns of space are used to present an account of the meetings, evidently in consideration of the deep interest of the readers. The sermon on "Booze" and an account of the physical exertions of the preacher are given in detail. The following is a fragment of the report: "He began with his coat, vest, tie, and collar off. In a few moments his shirt and undershirt were gaping open to the waist and the muscles of his neck and chest were seen working like those in the arm of a blacksmith, while perspiration poured from every pore. His clothing was soaked as if a hose had been turned on him.

"He strained, and twisted, and reached up and down. Once he was on the floor for just a second, in the attitude of crawling, to show that all crime crawled out of the saloon; then he was on his feet as quickly as a cat could jump. At the end of forty-five minutes he mounted a chair, reached high, as he shouted, then again was on the floor and dropped prostrate to illustrate a story of a drunken man, bounded to his feet again as if steel springs filled that lithe, slender, lightning-like body.

“He generally breaks a common kitchen chair in this sermon, and this came after a terrible effort, with eyes flashing, face scowling, the picture of hate. He whirled the chair over his head, smashed the chair to the platform floor, whirled the shattered wreck in the air again, then threw it to the ground in front of the pulpit.

“In two minutes men from the front row were tearing the wreck to pieces and dividing it up, a round here, a leg there, a piece of the back to another, and so on. Later men carried away in cheering could be seen in the audience waving those chair fragments in the air.” Power there was there, but how was it used?

Here we have touched the key-note; the revival is a power.<sup>1</sup> The question of moment is, how shall this power be turned, and can it be guided safely? All powers are capable of reverse action: water, fire, steam, electricity, are wonderful aids to mankind if regulated, but if they get beyond control, how great is the destruction! A child can start a fire, it is not so easily stopped. A revival is such a power that when once started it may sweep a community. It may arouse the passions and degrade religion to the frenzies of savages or beasts, or it may permeate the minds of men and cause a growth to the full stature of the true man.

What can the psychologist prognosticate regarding the future of revivals?<sup>2</sup> Prognosticate he may, for revivals are not only dependent upon God but upon men—both factors must be taken into account. First, we may say definitely that the “old-fashioned” revival is an impossibility in the more civilized and educated countries. By “old-fashioned” we mean, of course, those of 1740 and 1800; Finney and Nettleton were the transition revivalists. It does not seem

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, pp. 262-282; F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, pp. 211-215.

likely that a great revival even of the modern type, *i. e.*, that of Moody, is a possibility. The attempt to duplicate the Welsh revival in England and America was a signal failure. Notice also the silent testimony of Mr. Moody that something deeper than the public meeting was necessary; his educational institutions were the offspring of keen insight. The revival looks into the future and says, "I must decrease, but He must increase." It will not, it cannot, stand in the way of the coming of the Kingdom. It takes its place with the Old Testament, with the Jews, with John the Baptist. It has done its work and fulfilled its mission, a work and a mission not without value, and its very success is shown in the fact that it has outgrown its usefulness.

Notwithstanding all that has been said regarding extravagances, good has been accomplished by the revival. Why not, then, continue it? We cannot do it any more than we can use yesterday's sunshine for the growth of to-day. The revivalists recognize the decline of the revival, and a great variety of reasons are given for it. Listen to some of them: material prosperity; growth of science and the passing of blind faith; the teaching of the theological seminaries; the effect of higher criticism; the evolutionary theory of sin; and the widening of the range of human motives. There is probably some truth in all of them, but the comprehensive reason is that people have changed, they have grown. Through the influence of education, business, civilization, and the revival itself they have gained self-control, increased in intelligence, and acquired a rational inhibition. These make men less unstable, less suggestible, and less influenced by revival methods. Life requires a conformity to environment; if the revival is to live it must change to fit the times. When we say, then, that revivals are unlikely for the future, we do not mean that there will be no great religious movements, for these are continually going on; nor do we say that there will

be no more mass meetings for religious purposes; but we do say that the movements will have to change their methods and the mass meetings will have to be permeated with intellectual activity *as well as* emotion. This prognostication does not apply to primitive people like the aborigines or negroes of this continent, nor does it apply to the Eastern nations, where great revivals will probably continue until they have reached our standard of civilization and intelligence.

One of the principal reasons why there will probably be no more great revivals, and one of the chief reasons why revivals have declined, is that since the last great revival we have made a marvellous discovery. We have discovered the child. I do not mean that the child was not known to some extent before 1873, for Horace Bushnell wrote his *Christian Nurture* in 1847; but the fact should be noted that the sciences of paidology and pedagogy have arisen during the last quarter of a century. We are revising our ideas as we read God's thoughts after Him. We see the great religious and spiritual waste resulting from our past action in allowing persons to grow up in sin, teaching them that they were the blackest sinners, and then trying to convert them. They tried to live up to our estimate of them, as all people do. Now we try to educate the child so that he may, naturally and appropriately, take his place in the Kingdom, and never suggest to him that his place is anywhere else. Instead of teaching him that he is expected to sow "wild oats," we look to him to sow the seed of the Kingdom. The educational methods of the last few years, which we have found so efficacious in business and in secular education, we are now using for the training of the child in righteousness. This has been no small gain, and we rejoice that instead of the camp-meeting we find the Chautauqua, and in place of the terrifying message of condemnation and repulsion, we have the comforting and profitable gospel of Divine childhood. If we were asked to designate

the present great religious movement—or call it the present revival, if you will—we should point to the continuous nurture of the Divine life from the cradle to the grave. This is a revival which has come to stay.

I must close this chapter as I began it, with an appreciation of the revival. No one can possibly take an unbiassed view<sup>1</sup> and fail to be impressed with the wonderful amount of good which has been accomplished by revivals, as no one can become familiar with them and fail to recognize the harm they have done. It takes two or three years for churches to get rid of the unsanctified riff-raff which is swept in on the tide of a revival, and which brings discredit to the name of the church and to the gospel; yet there are usually a few who remain steadfast, and some men who have been most valuable in after years have come in through revival influence. It is well known that revivals are a productive, exciting cause of nervous disorders and insanity; yet, on the other hand, we know that many a man who for years has been beside himself is now "clothed and in his right mind" on account of the beneficent effects of a revival. This is especially true of the more ignorant and unstable. The drunkard, for example, if reformed by religious influences, usually begins his religious life in a revival. Further, we are bound to admit that even when the conversion is accompanied by abnormal phenomena, it sometimes works for lasting good; this effect is not on account of such phenomena, but notwithstanding them. We recognize that the revival movement "has contributed little or nothing to theology, nothing to the science of ethics, and has stood aloof from and discouraged science, poetry, philosophy, and the fine arts,"<sup>2</sup> but notwithstanding the persons who have been hardened against, suspicious of, and incorrectly impressed concerning religion on account of revivals, we must still

<sup>1</sup> B. Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion*, pp. 360 f.

<sup>2</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 253.

realize that revivals have emphasized and attracted attention to religion during times of great moral and spiritual depression, quickened altruistic impulses, destroyed the canker of formalism, and by turning the search-light inward caused individual morality to be more indissolubly connected with the religious life. The emotionalism of revivals has led to many sad extravagances, but, on the other hand, as Newman has so well said, "Calculation never made a hero."

To conclude, then, the value of the revival cannot be determined by asking the question, Do revivals do any good? We must ask, is the maximum of good accomplished with the concomitant minimum of evil? Suppose in some revival services 300 are reported converted, 100 join the church, and in one year's time 50 are faithful (a large percentage). We must all rejoice concerning the 50, but what are we to say about the remaining 250 who are spiritually mutilated, mangled, and incapacitated?

I have not said anything in this chapter on the divine power in revivals, because we have been discussing some phenomena which have had little divine influence in them. However, it is not on account of unbelief in God's influence upon men's lives, but because this properly belongs and will be considered in the chapter on Conversion.

## CHAPTER XV

### FAITH CURE

“Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to heaven.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN all ages wonderful cures have been wrought by means of the belief on the part of the diseased in the healing power of certain objects or persons. In fact, primitive therapeutics consisted in little else. Talismans, amulets, and charms have been the occasions of many miracles of healing of which the belief by the patient has been the true medicine. In early times the cure was usually associated with and credited to religious influence of some kind. To effect a cure among some people the image of a certain demon was applied to the part of the body supposed to be suffering from the malign influence of that demon; or else the image might be used as a preventive, protecting the possessor from the evil eye, which all ancient people believed to be peculiarly sinister. Among savages, as well as in early civilization, the magician was also physician and priest, and the practice of magic was primarily religious. In magic aimed to cure disease there were many rites and ceremonies to be performed, all thought to be of a religious nature, and at the same time there were formulæ for exorcising the demon of disease, which priest as well as layman believed to be essential to the cure.

Even for centuries after men wrote history this form of therapeutics was regarded as the principal means of healing. As far as we are able to trace the subject into the remote past, the healing touch was used by the old Egyptians and other Orientals. The Ebers papyrus represents that an important

part of the treatment of the patient prior to 1552 B.C. consisted in the laying on of hands, combined with an extensive formulary and many ceremonial rites.<sup>1</sup> The early Hebrews, who derived their medical knowledge from Egypt, considered disease a punishment for sin, and the Levites were the sole practitioners. After the return from the Babylonian deportation there arose a class of temple physicians and special surgeons, all, however, as with other nations, connected with religious rites. The Vedas, the sacred books of India, reveal demonology, in that country, as a great influence in the practice, and a large part of the belief among physicians, from whom decorum and piety were required.

The excavations of Cavvadias at Epidaurus have furnished us with much interesting material concerning the cures performed at this ancient Greek shrine five hundred years before the beginning of the Christian era. If the modern physician still recognizes Æsculapius as his patron saint, he must have great respect for faith cure. It appears certain from inscriptions found upon "stelæ" that were dug up at Epidaurus and published in 1891, that the system of Æsculapius was based upon the miracle workings of a demi-god, and not upon the medical art as we now know it. The *modus operandi* was unique in some details. The patients, mostly incurables, came laden with sacrifices. They first cleansed themselves with water from the holy well, and, after certain ceremonial acts had been performed by the priests, fell into a deep sleep. The son of Apollo then appeared to them in dreams, attended to the particular ailment of the sufferer, and specified sacrifices or acts which would restore health. In most cases the sick awoke suddenly cured. Large sums of money were asked for these cures; from one inscription we learn that a sum corresponding to \$12,000 was paid as a fee. It was not until five centuries later, when credulity concerning miracles

<sup>1</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 4.

was on the wane, that the priests began to study and to apply medical means in order to sustain the reputation of the place and to keep up its enormous revenues.<sup>1</sup> The temple sleep used at Epidaurus, and in common use among the old Greeks and Egyptians, corresponded to the artificial sleep now called hypnotism, and was a means of facilitating the effects of suggestion.

From this time to the Middle Ages, while some progress was made in the study of anatomy and diagnosis, there was little advance in therapeutics. The reason for this will be apparent when we remember that whatever the disease might be, its cure was largely a prerogative of religion, and any other system of therapeutics would have been sacrilege. Being thus in the thralldom of religious superstition and misapprehension, the science of healing, which from the nature of the case must be one of the oldest studies of mankind, was the most backward, and only the work of the last three centuries has raised it to the level of a true science. Dr. Munger makes the following comparisons: "Aristotle mapped out philosophy and morals in lines the world yet accepts in the main, but he did not know the difference between the nerves and the tendons. Rome had a sound system of jurisprudence before it had a physician, using only priestcraft for healing. Cicero was the greatest lawyer the world has seen, but there was not a man in Rome who could have cured him of a colic. The Greek was an expert dialectician when he was using incantations for his diseases. As late as when the Puritans were enunciating their lofty principles, it was generally held that the king's touch would cure scrofula. Governor Winthrop, of colonial days, treated 'small-pox and all fevers' by a powder made from 'live toads baked in an earthen pot in the open air.'" <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. Waldstein, *The Subconscious Self*, p. 164 f.

<sup>2</sup> T. Munger, *On the Threshold*, p. 126 f.

While there was probably some advance when the saints of the Church usurped the place of the zodiacal constellations in their government of the various parts of the human body, the saints and relics have proved themselves the greatest enemies to the advance of the science of therapeutics. As early as the latter part of the fourth century "miraculous powers were ascribed to these images [of Jesus and the saints hung in the churches] and legends of marvellous cures and wonderful portents were related of them. . . . Their [the saints] intercessions were invoked, especially for the cure of diseases, and if, perchance, help seemed to come to any one, he hung up in the church a gold or silver image of the part which had been healed. . . . Their relics began to work miracles."<sup>1</sup>

But the Middle Ages were the golden days of superstition—golden at least for the papacy. Nothing seemed to be too extravagant to be believed; in fact, the more unreasonable the statements the quicker they seemed to be imbibed by the credulous people. "Fragments, purporting to have been cut from it [the 'true cross'], were, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, to be found in almost every church in Europe, and would, if collected together in one place, have been almost sufficient to have built a cathedral. . . . They were thought to preserve from all evils, and to cure the most inveterate diseases. . . . Next in renown were those precious relics, the tears of the Saviour. By whom and in what manner they were preserved, the pilgrims did not enquire. . . . Tears of the Virgin Mary, and tears of St. Peter, were also to be had, carefully enclosed in little caskets, which the pious might wear in their bosoms. After the tears the next most precious relics were drops of the blood of Jesus and the martyrs, and the milk of the Virgin Mary. Hair and toe-nails were also in great repute, and were sold at extravagant prices. . . . Many

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 117.

a nail, cut from the filthy foot of some unscrupulous ecclesiastic, was sold at a diamond's price, within six months after its severance from its parent toe, upon the supposition that it had once belonged to a saint or an apostle. Peter's toes were uncommonly prolific, for there were nails enough in Europe, at the time of the Council of Clermont, to have filled a sack, all of which were devoutly believed to have grown on the sacred feet of that great apostle. Some of them are still shown in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle."<sup>1</sup>

"A lucrative trade was carried on in iron filings from the chains with which it was claimed that Peter and Paul had been bound. These filings were regarded by Pope Gregory I as efficacious in healing as were the bones of the martyrs."<sup>2</sup>

The absurdity of the claims of some of these remedies seems not to have appealed to the people. "Elias Ashmole in his diary for 1681 has entered the following: 'I tooke this morning a good dose of elixir, and hung three spiders about my neck, and they drove my ague away. Deo gratias.' . . . We have even a striking instance of the benefit derived from an amulet by a horse, who could not be suspected of having helped forward the cure by the strength of his faith in it. 'The root of cut Malowe hanged about the neck driveth away blemishes of the eyen, whether it be in a man or a horse, as I, Jerome of Brunswieg, have seene myselfe. I have myselfe done it to a blind horse that I bought for X crounes, and was sold agayn for XL crounes'—a trick distinctly worth knowing."<sup>3</sup>

Not only did the Church assume the prerogative of healing, but it would brook no interference from external sources. All diseases contracted by Christians were ascribed to demons,

<sup>1</sup> C. Mackay, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions*, II, p. 303 f.

<sup>2</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, pp. 132 ff.

<sup>3</sup> E. A. King, "Mediæval Medicine," *Nineteenth Century*, July, 1893.

and all recourse to physicians or surgeons was discouraged or forbidden. Surgery also suffered on account of the feeling against dissections, but not to the same extent as therapeutics. Monks who took medicine were guilty of irreligious conduct, and no physician was allowed to treat a patient without receiving ecclesiastical advice; the penalty for a breach of the latter rule was exclusion from the church. "Pilgrimages and visits to holy shrines have usurped the place of medicine. . . . St. Dominic, St. Bellinus, and St. Vitus have been greatly renowned in the cure of diseases in general."<sup>1</sup> To combat the rising science of medicine the Church itself developed a ludicrous system of therapeutics. In addition to this, the body was supposed to be made undesirable for a habitation for the demon of disease by administering torture and all manner of vile and disgusting doses.<sup>2</sup>

"Even such serious matters as fractures, calculi, and difficult parturition, in which modern science has achieved some of its greatest triumphs, were then dealt with by relics; and to this hour the *exvotos* hanging at such shrines as those of St. Geneviève at Paris, of St. Antony at Padua, of the Druid image at Chartres, of the Virgin at Einsiedeln and Lourdes, of the fountain at La Salette, are survivals of this same conception of disease and its cure. So, too, with a multitude of sacred pools, streams, and spots of earth."<sup>3</sup>

About the time that therapeutics as a science began to shake off the shackles of religion and superstition, we notice a yet more startling innovation, *viz.*, the division of faith cure into religious and mental healing. The change undoubtedly came gradually, probably stimulated by the *Zeitgeist*, of

<sup>1</sup> T. J. Pettigrew, *Superstitions Connected with the History and Practice of Medicine and Surgery*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> A. D. White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*, II, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> A. D. White, *ibid.*, II, p. 42.

which the increased employment of drugs was another indication. The new theory may have been assisted by a different opinion regarding the king, which arose about this time. The office of king was formerly considered quasi religious, but was more and more outgrowing any idea of divine significance. Touching by the sovereign for the amelioration of king's evil, did, no doubt, effect many cures. The routes to be travelled by royal personages were usually announced beforehand, and the sufferers along the way had many days in which to cherish the expectation of healing, in itself so beneficial. Those were days of faith, and the belief in the divine right of kings was generally accepted. On this account the touch of the royal hand would have a salutary reaction, and occasion many restorations.

King Pyrrhus and the Emperor Vespasian are said to have effected cures. Francis I, of France, and other kings up to Charles X, healed by the imposition of hands. Readers of Macaulay's *History*<sup>1</sup> will remember that when William III refused, with honest good sense, to exercise the power which most of his subjects undoubtedly thought he possessed, many protests were made, and much proof was adduced concerning the "balsamic virtues of the royal hand." Eminent theologians expressed their confidence in its efficacy, and the most learned surgeons of the day certified to the rapidity and prevalence of the cures. Charles II in the course of his reign touched nearly one hundred thousand persons; and James in one of his progresses touched eight hundred persons in Chester Cathedral.<sup>2</sup> The refusal of William to continue the practice of touching brought upon him the charge of cruelty from the parents of scrofulous children,

<sup>1</sup>T. B. Macaulay, *History of England*, III, pp. 378-381.

<sup>2</sup>W. B. Carpenter, *Mental Physiology*, p. 686. W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, I, pp. 363 ff.; A. D. White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*, II, pp. 46-49.

while bigots lifted up their hands and eyes in holy horror at his impiety.

Within the last half century we have had an example of the value of a royal touch. When cholera was raging in Naples in 1865, and the people were rushing from the city by thousands, King Victor Emanuel went the rounds of the hospital in an endeavor to stimulate courage in the hearts of his people. He lingered at the bedside of the patients and spoke encouraging words to them. On a cot lay one man already marked for death. The king stepped to his side, and pressing his damp, icy hand, said, "Take courage, poor man, and try to recover soon." That evening the physicians reported to the king a diminution of the disease in the course of the day, and the man marked for death, out of danger. The king had unconsciously performed a miracle.<sup>1</sup>

It may have been through the observation of these cures which the king worked, and the decreasing belief in any religious efficacy in the royal hand, that there came the division between religious and mental healing, or we may have to credit it to the keen observation of certain scientific men of the times. Paracelsus, who lived during the first half of the sixteenth century, wrote these shrewd words, "Whether the object of your faith is real or false, you will nevertheless obtain the same effects. Thus, if I believe in St. Peter's statue as I would have believed in St. Peter himself, I shall obtain the same effects that I would have obtained from St. Peter; but that is superstition. Faith, however, produces miracles, and whether it be true or false faith, it will always produce the same wonders." We have also the following penetrating observation from Pierre Ponponazzi of Milan, an author of the same century. "We can easily conceive the marvellous effects which confidence and imagination can produce, par-

<sup>1</sup> C. L. Tuckey, *Treatment by Hypnotism and Suggestion*, p. 30.

ticularly when both qualities are reciprocal between the subjects and the person who influences them. The cures attributed to the influence of certain relics are the effect of this imagination and confidence. Quacks and philosophers know that if the bones of any skeleton were put in the place of the saints' bones, the sick would none the less experience beneficial effects, if they believed that they were near veritable relics."<sup>1</sup> This prophecy has since proved true. "When Prof. Buckland, the eminent osteologist and geologist, discovered that the relics of St. Rosalia at Palermo, which had for ages cured disease and warded off epidemics, were the bones of a goat, this fact caused not the slightest diminution in their miraculous power."

However mental healing, apart from religious influence, originated, it exists to-day, and is established firmly on scientific principles. But religious healing also survives and has many earnest devotees. As the latter has been employed for centuries and as we find it to-day, three different classes may be designated. There are those who use the formula of James, anoint with oil and pray, lay on hands, or simply employ prayer. A second class have faith in a visit and sacrifice at different shrines. Others believe in certain persons as healers. Most followers of Jesus believe, to some extent, in the efficacy of prayer, but probably most of us expect the answer by indirect means and employ a physician. We are familiar with this class, so it is not necessary to dwell longer upon it. We should say, however, that the first class, healing by prayer, should alone be classed as divine healing. The other two classes are religious, trusting in saints and healers, but not directly in Deity.

We have recorded many authentic cures, real amid a multitude of shams, which have been wrought at holy places dedicated to various saints of different cults. Throngs of

<sup>1</sup> H. Bernheim, *Suggestive Therapeutics*, p. 192 f.

pilgrims wend their way over the desert to Mecca, crowds may be seen journeying to the sacred rivers and temples of India or to the shrines of Buddhist hagiology, and not a few who have made the outward journey wearily and painfully, return with health restored. But these cures are not restricted to so-called heathen religions; the Christian faith has many shrines. One can scarcely enter a cathedral in Europe where some cure has not been performed, and in some, quantities of crutches have been left by the healed. The shrine of the Virgin in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem groans with the gifts of grateful persons who have there been helped. The miracles performed at the tomb of the Deacon Paris in the Cemetery of St. Médard have already been referred to, and the cures of the sufferers who worship the Holy Coat at Treves are well known.<sup>1</sup>

The two shrines best known and which have proved most efficacious are those of Lourdes in France, and St. Anne de Beaupré in the province of Quebec. Lourdes owes its reputed healing power to a belief in a vision of the Virgin received there during the last century.<sup>2</sup> Over 300,000 persons visit there every year, and no small portion of them return with health restored as a reward for their faith. At Lourdes and many other shrines bathing forms a part of the ceremony, and on account of the unsanitary conditions in the former place, there is some danger that the French government will cause its abandonment. Charcot, who established the Salpêtrière hospital where hypnotism was so successfully used, sent fifty or sixty patients to Lourdes yearly. He was firmly convinced of the healing power of faith. In America,

<sup>1</sup> R. F. Clarke, *The Holy Coat of Treves*, especially pp. 38-40, 98-101.

<sup>2</sup> A. T. Myers and F. W. H. Myers, "Mind Cure, Faith Cure, and the Miracles of Lourdes," *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, IX, pp. 160-409. J. B. Estrade, *Les Apparitions de Lourdes: Souvenirs intimes d'un témoin*.

thousands flock to the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupré every year. Here are to be found bones, supposed to be the wrist bones of the saint, and many sufferers are able to testify to their value in the healing of diseases.

The third class of believers in religious healing put their faith in the power of certain men, who, they think, have this divine gift. All ages have witnessed cures performed through this agency, and each century has had its great apostle of healing. For example, in the seventeenth century Great-rakes, the noted Irish soldier and healer, who felt that he had been given divine healing power, had what seemed to be remarkable success in touching for scrofula, ague, and other diseases. An exhibition before the king, however, proved a failure. In the eighteenth century Gassner, a Romanist priest, thought that most diseases were attributable to evil spirits, whose power could only be destroyed by conjuration and prayer. He practised on his parishioners with some success, and many considered his cures miraculous.

Gassner shared eighteenth-century honors with Frau Starke of Osterode, who performed many cures through stroking and touching the patients' bodies, and by so-called charming. The greatest name in religious healing in the nineteenth century was that of Prince Hohenlohe, a Romanist priest. He aroused much attention by his cures in Bavaria in 1821. Among the names prominent in later years are those of Dr. Vernon, Joh. Blumhardt, and the Zouave Jacob, not to mention the numerous healers who, like Schlatter, Schröder, Newell, or Dowie, acquire meteoric fame, stir up a newspaper commotion and sink into oblivion. Not a few revivalists have incidentally become healers. We have already seen Wesley in the rôle of an exorcist, Finney tells of healing an insane woman at Antwerp,<sup>1</sup> and George Fox cured a lame arm by command.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney written by himself*, p. 108 f.

The divorce of mental from religious healing was a slow process. As already mentioned, Paracelsus taught that the faith of the patient, not the object, was the principal factor in healing. This is the recognized position of psychology to-day, but for three centuries a theory, now known to be erroneous, held the minds of the investigators. Von Helmont taught that men possessed a power over others, especially the sick, and in 1600 Maxwell proclaimed a similar theory. A century later, in 1700, Santanelli in Italy asserted a like proposition.<sup>1</sup> Mesmer, who more than any one else drew the world's attention to mental healing, believed the same thing, and posited a magnetic fluid which passed between the operator and the subject and accomplished the wonderful results. His great success so attracted the attention of thinking men that a committee was appointed to investigate the matter, of whom our Benjamin Franklin was one. The committee reported favorably and the work continued.

An English physician by the name of Braid was really the founder of hypnotism as a science. He investigated the subject in 1841, and to him we are indebted for the name hypnotism. While hypnotism and mesmerism are identical in meaning, the use of the terms usually implies a theory: Mesmerism, that propagated by Mesmer of an influence or fluid passing from the operator to the subject; Hypnotism, that of modern psychologists that the power is not of one person over another, but that of one's mind over his own body. Hypnotism stands to-day as the most scientifically and thoroughly investigated phase of mental healing, and is much and favorably used in Europe, where men like Leibault, Bernheim, Tuckey, Wetterstrand, Moll, Forel, and others have used it with such wonderful success that it takes its proper place alongside of other methods of therapeutics, all physicians recognizing its value. Unfortunately for it as a

<sup>1</sup> A. Moll, *Hypnotism*, p. 5.

science, and for us as sufferers, it has, in this country, paid the penalty of bad companionship. Here it is principally used by entertainers and charlatans, or brought into ill repute by teaching courses which are sold and bartered about the country, as a means of acquiring a few dollars. Both hypnotic entertainments and teaching to irresponsible persons should be prohibited by law. It is no wonder that our people generally eschew it and brand it as a fraud!

Having glanced at an epitome of the history of faith cure, we shall look now at the psychological theory underlying it. Every person who observes his experience will easily recognize two relationships. The first is the power and influence of the body over the mind; the second is the power and influence of the mind over the body—they are reciprocal in their action. Of the first, which is an important fact in our lives, we have nothing further to say here; the second, however, is the basis of faith-cure. We have all doubtless paid sufficient attention to our ordinary experience to call to mind many illustrations. For example, we know of the effects of emotion upon the body, especially in the redistribution of the blood supply, blushing, flushing, or blanching, as shame, joy, or fear takes possession of us; the shiver which runs down our backs as we think of the shrill shriek of rubbing metals; the yawn which is so contagious; or the feeling of nausea which accompanies the perception of odors similar to those present when we were seasick. We hear what fear suggests or what is joyfully anticipated, we feel much that we expect to feel.

We must further recognize that this power of the mind over the body may work in a twofold manner; the body may be injured by fear, anger, imagined disease, or thinking much about a slight ailment, but in dealing with faith-cure it is the opposite side with which we have to do, *viz.*, the beneficial effects of mental states upon certain diseases. When we

consider that most diseases have a large mental factor, then it is natural to conclude that certain mental states should have a salutary influence. All functional diseases, diseases where the organ is uninjured, and where there is simply a derangement of function, are principally nervous in their character, and the proper mental influence will cure them. Such a disease as indigestion is a disorder of the functions of the digestive apparatus. Common mental states, as, *e. g.*, worry, may produce this, while the opposite mental states, joy and happiness, tend to cure it. There is a real relation between laughing and growing fat; the man with indigestion is morose and cranky; it may be that the indigestion causes the mental state, but it is just as probable that the mental state causes the indigestion.

Pain is a mental state. The bruised finger or the aching tooth does not pain, the mind feels the pain which experience has taught it to localize in different parts of the body. Now, there is no difference between having pain and thinking we have it, or having no pain and thinking we have none. If we have pain and can think we have none, we get rid of it. Persistent pain, however, is difficult to think away. Or if we can set our minds upon something different with sufficient force, the pain is not felt. The mind can readily attend to only one thing at a time, and if filled with other matters the pain is excluded. The sufferer from neuralgia experiences no pain as he responds to the fire alarm, and the toothache stops entirely as we undergo the excitement and fear of entering the dentist's office. Some people are more suggestible than others, and suggestion, whether in normal or in abnormal states, is more effective with them.

Suggestion works upon the subconsciousness. In normal states the suggestions must be made indirectly so as not to have the distraction of continued perception. Apparently that which slips by consciousness unnoticed is most effective

with the subconsciousness. Trustful expectation in any one direction acts powerfully through the subconsciousness, because it absorbs the whole mind, and thus competition is excluded. It is this which acts in faith-cure, although some abnormal conditions may also arise to assist the suggestion.

The question of whether or not there is ever divine power manifested in faith-cure, will be dealt with in our analysis of prayer.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it to say here, that divine manifestation would not be inconsistent with what has been said concerning the subconsciousness. The subconsciousness corresponds to that part of the mind which the old writers designated as the "heart," and is the religious clearing house. While we speak of the cures coming through the subconsciousness at all times, whether the power back of it is human or divine, is an entirely separate question. You will recall a distinction already made; the cures brought about by shrines and healers are not classed under divine, but under religious healing; prayer alone is the medium of divine healing.

That this confident expectation of a cure is the most potent means of bringing it about, doing that which no medical treatment can accomplish, may be affirmed as the generalized result of experiences of the most varied kind, extending through a long series of ages. It is this factor which is common to methods of the most diverse character. It is noticeable that any system of treatment, however absurd, that can be puffed into public notoriety for efficacy, any individual who by accident or design obtains a reputation for the possession of a special gift of healing, is certain to attract a multitude of sufferers among whom will be many who are capable of being really benefited by a strong assurance of relief. Thus, the practitioner with a great reputation has an advantage over his neighboring physicians, not only on account of the superior skill which he may have acquired, but

<sup>1</sup> See *Divine Healing under the Lens*, by "A Berean."

because his reputation causes this confident expectation, so beneficial in itself.

We must include under this head the therapeutic value in patent medicines. Most patent medicines contain little else, in the nature of drugs of any power for good or evil, than alcohol, the percentage of the latter ranging from ten to fifty per cent.; and yet real cures are recorded. The healing power is not in the medicine imbibed by the mouth, but in that taken in by the eyes; in other words, not the stuff in the bottle, but the stuff in the advertising matter is the real medicine. The suggestion is accentuated by the exhilaration immediately following the imbibing of alcohol. The belief in some particular medicine or physician who prescribes the medicine is an important agent in the healing. If sufficient confidence in the power of a concoction, a shrine, or a person can be aroused, genuine cures can be worked regardless of the healing properties of the dose.<sup>1</sup> Charms have as much power for healing as belief bestows on them.<sup>2</sup>

The successful physician, who must also be a keen observer, is not unmindful of this fact. He knows better, even, than we that suggestion must play an important part in any cure. When the physician enters the house, before he has given us medicine or even seen us, we feel better. We have faith in him, and any physician in whom we have not faith will find it difficult to cure us of the most simple ailments. He knows that there are but few drugs upon which he can depend for uniform results, and that frequently a result directly opposite to the customary one, is brought about because it has been suggested in some way—the expected happens. A bread pill, or some other placebo, has had astonishing results, and established the reputation of a physician, because he has sug-

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 151-189.

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, VI, p. 152. H. Wood, *The New Thought Simplified*, p. 119.

gested a desired end. Sometimes the expectation of the patient brings about results that are as humorous as happy. Numerous examples could be given, but one will suffice. A man with paralysis of the tongue put himself under the care of a physician who had recently perfected a piece of apparatus, by the use of which he promised and hoped to effect a speedy cure. Before applying the apparatus he concluded to take the man's temperature and placed the thermometer in his mouth for that purpose. It had been there but a minute, when the man, who mistook the thermometer for the new apparatus, cried out joyfully that he could once more move his tongue freely.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding that we know the large part which suggestion plays in ordinary therapeutics, we usually employ a physician, and are willing to pay for the suggestion, being confident that if it should do less good, it also does less harm than many of his drugs. It is noteworthy that many suggestionists, unjustly called swindlers, have been more successful than many scientific physicians. Perhaps all have had experience with wart charmers of which every neighborhood boasts at least one. When physicians had failed to remove warts, we went to the old man or old woman, held out our wart-covered hands, listened to an incomprehensible formula, watched him put his finger on his tongue and then on the wart. We did not know when, but the wart disappeared never to return. Suggestion, and expectancy brought about by suggestion, explain the phenomenon.

I have cited these examples to show that healing wrought through faith-cure, hypnotism, and similar means is not very different from our every-day experiences. Our thoughts tend to express themselves in action, this is the psychological basis of will. The law of faith-cure is also built upon this fact and may be expressed as follows: the body tends to adjust itself

<sup>1</sup> H. Bernheim, *Suggestive Therapeutics*, p. 197 f.

so as to be in harmony with our ideas concerning it. However the thought of cure may come into our minds, either by external or auto-suggestion, if it is firmly rooted so as to impress the subconsciousness, that part of the mind which rules the bodily organs, a tendency toward cure is at once set up and continues as long as that thought has the ascendancy. Hack Tuke quotes Johannes Müller, a physiologist, who lived during the first half of the last century, as follows: "It may be stated as a general fact that any state of body which is conceived to be approaching, and which is expected with certain confidence and certainty of the occurrence, will be very prone to ensue, as the mere result of the idea if it do not lie beyond the bounds of possibility."<sup>1</sup> This is also a fair statement of the law, but notwithstanding this shrewd observation, a quarter of a century passed before much or any use was made of it as a therapeutic agent, and even today, although the evidence is overwhelming, some people look upon it as a superstition.

<sup>1</sup> D. H. Tuke, *The Influence of the Mind upon the Body*, etc., p. 36.

## CHAPTER XVI

### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

“For there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

THERE are many forms of faith-cure extant to-day, all using suggestion in some way to effect their cures. Mind-curers and mental healers employ direct suggestions, while metaphysical healers and Christian Scientists use more indirect methods.<sup>1</sup> The last-named form of cure is selected for more detailed examination, because in its claims it is religious, its method is most indirect, and it has a following which cannot be disregarded.

In a psychological discussion we are not particularly interested in its origin, but rather in its developed state. It makes little difference whether Mrs. Mary A. M. Baker Glover Patterson Eddy originated her system as she claims, or acquired it of “Dr.” P. P. Quimby of Portland, Maine, who cured her of some chronic nervous disease and taught her his system.<sup>2</sup> He died on January 16, 1866, she announced her system in 1866. Nor are we concerned with the affirmation that the first edition of *Science and Health* exhibited marked illiteracy and many more serious errors, and that a masterly hand has since reconstructed it. As literature it is still a mass of hodge-podge. It is significant, however, that

<sup>1</sup> H. Münsterberg, *Psychology and Mysticism*, *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan., 1899.

<sup>2</sup> G. Milmine, *Mary Baker G. Eddy*, *McClure's Magazine*, 1907 and 1908.

the rise of this cult was contemporaneous with the revival of and the scientific attention to hypnotism and mental therapeutics.<sup>1</sup>

Christian Science has been the subject of much investigation and has inspired a great variety of opinions. Notice the following comprehensive summary: "Again, so-called Christian Science is forming in the United States to-day an almost equally grotesque mixture of crude pantheism, misunderstood psychological and philosophical truths, and truly Christian beliefs and conceptions."<sup>2</sup> This statement, recognizing as it does truth and error, good and evil, is worthy of the widest publication.

This sect has gathered into its fold a large number, many of whom are intellectual people. What has attracted its votaries? They may be divided into two classes, according to the motives which have inspired their acceptance of this system. There are those who, in antagonism to the gross materialism of the past, have accepted the philosophy of the system, and look at the cures only as proof of the philosophical position. Any person who consistently and tenaciously holds to subjective idealism is rather difficult to dislodge, and this task we shall have to pass over to the philosopher, as it lies outside of our present sphere.

The members of the second class seek the cure and are willing to take the philosophical dose in order to accomplish it. They neither understand nor relish this method of treatment, but if it will furnish relief they are willing to accept it. The task of approaching this class must rest with the psychologist, and we first ask what attracts them and how can we negate this attraction? The people are not attracted by the errors of the doctrine, but by the truth incorporated in it. "The remedy for the delusion is the discovery of the truth,

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 167.

not the indiscriminate condemnation of both truth and error as an unadulterated lie."<sup>1</sup> Some persons have condemned indiscriminately, and others have tried to combat Christian Science by denying the alleged cures. This is unfortunate, for the positive evidence is abundant and trustworthy, and the cures well within the scope of ordinary faith-cure. If we dispose of the cures by dogmatically denying them, we take the same position as does the Christian Scientist regarding disease, and neither ground is tenable. Christian Science is only too willing to be judged by its cures, and scoffing at these will only bring them more prominently before the public. It is also futile to endeavor to annihilate it by denunciation, or by exposing the absurdity of the philosophy upon which it rests. So long as there are practical results in the form of therapeutic effects, this class cares little for the denunciation and less for the philosophy.

As a system of therapeutics, Christian Science is not only tolerable, but, for certain ailments, commendable, if it could begin and end there; but as a religion it is preposterous. If we could have the therapeutics without the religion, all would be well, but unfortunately the latter is an important part of the therapeutics; without the aid of the religion it would be lacking in the principal factor designed to bring about the expectancy so necessary to the cure, for, as with all forms of religious healing, it points the mind to an inexhaustible supply of beneficent power. "The most deep-seated form of belief is religious faith, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that religious emotion, from the lowest fetishism to the highest Protestantism, has always been fertile soil for therapeutic suggestions." When a believer associates the Deity with his idea of cure, he is accustomed to expect it to be sudden and complete, as the result of a definite religious manifestation; this in fact often occurs.

<sup>1</sup> *Truth and Error in Christian Science, Outlook*, June 23, 1906.

Yes, for certain ailments its therapeutics is commendable, and the same can be said of other forms of faith-cure, but for certain ailments only. Like the patent medicine it makes no diagnosis, and consequently fails to distinguish between the curable and the incurable. It, therefore, prescribes the same dose for all persons, regardless of age or of chronicity, and for all complaints. It is dangerous in one further respect: it condemns all medical science and discourages all forms of cure except its own. The effect of mind on body (?) is recognized, but the complementary effect, that of body on mind, of which we are equally confident, is not admitted, for body, apart from "mortal mind," does not exist.

Of course, Christian Science cannot cure everything, and its attempt to do so must result in many failures; but there must also be many cures to counterbalance the failures, for if all the attempts ended disastrously the system would never have started and could not be continued. The reason usually given for failure is "lack of faith." This is true in functional diseases, for it means nothing else than that the patient is not a susceptible subject, *i. e.*, that he is not suggestible. In organic cases the remedy is not equal to the task set for it.

I wish to recall two statements made in the preceding chapter which have a bearing on this subject. The first is this: There is no difference between having no pain and thinking you have no pain; the mental states are exactly the same. The Christian Science healer sits down beside the patient and endeavors to instil into his mind the fact that pain does not exist, therefore he can have no pain, or as Mrs. Eddy expresses it in her *Science and Health*, the object of such treatment is "to destroy the patient's belief in his physical condition." She further advises her followers, "mentally contradict every complaint from the body." If she can succeed in getting the patient to believe in the non-existence of pain, the pain is gone. From *Science and Health* we have also

the following which may serve to elucidate the system, "All disease is the result of education, and can carry its ill effects no further than mortal mind maps out the way." A terse statement illustrating the method is found in this sentence, "Destroy fear and you end the fever."

The Christian Scientist has seized upon a fact which is well known to the medical profession, and has benefited by its practical application. It is no secret that doubt, worry, and fear are depressing, that they aggravate all diseases, and are predisposing causes of various functional disorders. On the other hand, there is an efficacy about courage, hope, and faith, which defies analysis by the physician who trusts only in drugs. A Don't-Worry Club would be a valuable adjunct to a quarantine station, for fear of a contagious disease is the most certain method of contracting it.

What the Christian Scientist affirms concerning disease is also stated regarding sin, for both physical and moral evil are classed together in a wholesale negation. "Christian Science, so-called, the sect of Mrs. Eddy, is the most radical branch of mind-cure in its dealings with evil. For it evil is simply a *lie*, and any one who mentions it is a liar. The optimistic ideal of duty forbids us to pay it the compliment even of explicit attention. Of course, . . . this is a bad speculative omission, but it is intimately linked with the practical merits of the system we are examining. Why regret a philosophy of evil, a mind-curer would ask us, if I can put you in possession of a life of good?"<sup>1</sup>

While all forms of faith-cure aim at the same result the methods differ. Both hypnotic operator and Christian Science healer seek to alleviate or remove pain and disease by impressing the mind of the sufferer, the one by truthfully recognizing the existence of the trouble and endeavoring to bring about mental states which cure it, the other by untruthfully

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 106 f.

insisting that it does not and cannot exist. Both are successful at times. The whole system of suggestive therapeutics may be divided into two classes on this basis. What we may designate as metaphysical cure denies that either matter or evil exists, and heals by inspiring the belief that the disease cannot assail the patient because he is pure spirit; the other class, faith-cure, recognizes the disease, but cures by faith in the power of Divinity, persons, objects, or suggestion.<sup>1</sup>

The other expression which I wish to recall is that suggestive therapeutics of any and every kind is efficacious for one class of diseases, *viz.*, the functional ones. Where the organ is affected, as in a honeycombed kidney or a destroyed lung, the disease is called organic, and suggestion, except in incipient cases and in an indirect way, can render no aid. Mrs. Eddy declares that she has cured such diseases "as readily as purely functional diseases," but it is in attempting to treat cases of this kind that Christian Scientists have fallen into trouble. <sup>with physicians</sup> Mrs. Eddy, in *Science and Health*, makes the following statement which is an admission of weakness and would apply as well to other parts of her system. "But it would be foolishness to venture beyond our present understanding, foolish to stop eating, until we gain more goodness and a clearer comprehension of the living God." We also have the following from the same source: "Until the advancing age admits the efficacy and the supremacy of Mind, it is better to leave the adjustment of broken bones and dislocations to the fingers of the surgeon, while you confine yourself chiefly to mental reconstruction, and the prevention of inflammation and protracted confinement." If the reports of the daily press are to be relied upon, recently another sign of retraction has come from the oracle of Concord. It is to

<sup>1</sup> A. T. Myers and F. W. H. Myers, *Mind Cure, Faith Cure, and the Miracles at Lourdes, Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, IX, p. 160 f.

the effect that organic diseases must not be treated by the healers, until the world becomes better educated to receive her revelation. This is wise, for the healers have been arrested, tried, and convicted for their failure and criminal negligence in not seeking other aid in such cases. Functional diseases they cure as other faith-curers do, organic diseases in advanced stages, never. This latest order from Mrs. Eddy is a virtual admission of incompetency in organic diseases, and puts Christian Science, by its own stated position, on a par with other forms of faith-cure.

There are not a few other systems of healing which vie with Christian Science, not in the magnitude, but in the credulity of their followers. For example, let me refer to a monthly publication called *Unity*. The copy which I have in hand is that for February, 1906. One of the leaves of this publication is of red paper, and in addition to elaborate instructions for its use given by the editor, the sheet has printed on it the following: "This sheet has been treated by the Society of Silent Unity, after the manner mentioned in Acts 19:11, 12. Disease will depart from those who repeat silently, while holding this in hand, the words printed hereon." In addition to these instructions we find these words: "Affirmation for Strength and Power. February 20th to March 20th. (Held daily at 9:00 P.M.) THE STRENGTH AND POWER OF DIVINE MIND ARE NOW ESTABLISHED IN THE MIDST OF ME; AND SHALL GO NO MORE OUT. Affirmation for Prosperity. (Held daily at 12 M.) THE RICHES OF THE LORD-CHRIST ARE NOW Poured out upon me, and I am supplied with every good thing."

Near the end of the publication are some testimonials to the value of such suggestions. I choose three of them. "While holding the Red Leaf between my hands it caused vibrations through my whole system, and rheumatic pains that I was troubled with disappeared as if by magic.--

M. T. R." "Your Red Sheet of November I used in treating my sister for appendicitis, and also for myself for sore throat. With the December one I treated myself for sore throat and bronchitis, with wonderful results in both and in all cases.—L. V. D." "Your treatments for prosperity have done us so much good, and we are feeling more prosperous, which will open the way to our receiving more. Since our treatments our chickens have laid better, the food goes further, and our whole living seems easier.—A. M. L." It is to be expected that so long as the chickens and people respond so readily to the most naive and crass forms of suggestion, there will always be found those willing to give the suggestions for a consideration.

I have presented this on account of its similarity to Christian Science,<sup>7</sup> since it shows that suggestions may be readily given through the distribution of literature, and also because it shows the efficacy of such suggestions. Of course each system claims to have the only true method. Mrs. Eddy devotes a portion of *Science and Health* to presenting a theory of hypnotism, which has been exploded for decades far more effectively than she could do it, and then proceeds to annihilate it. No one claims that Mrs. Eddy uses hypnotism, but suggestion is the key-note of both methods. Thus it is—the mind-curer pities the deceived pilgrim of Lourdes, and both despise the charms and fetishes of the African savage. Cain turns against Abel, he acknowledges no relationship.

By its optimistic attitude, Christian Science cheers and uplifts the sick, which in itself is a valuable remedial agent. In this it is very similar to the so-called New Thought, as expounded by Dresser, Wood, Trine, Fletcher, and others. Optimism and a joyful atmosphere are enjoined upon all the followers, and by the constancy of this mood, sickness is eluded, and health and happiness reign. The New Thought

publications are interesting and not unwholesome reading. Absent treatment, given by Christian and other healers, is but another form of external or auto-suggestion, and does not differ in principle from the kinds already mentioned.

Our attitude toward Christian Science should be that of admitting the cures, but recognizing the method; and the only way of combating this part of the teaching is by explanation, not by denial or scoffing. When we approach the theory of Christian Science we find a conglomeration of quasi-metaphysical affirmations together with a professed interpretation of the Scriptures. These must be dealt with by the philosopher and the theologian, so we leave the subject to them at this point.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE MIRACLES

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE devout Romanist and the follower of Mrs. Eddy probably consider the two preceding chapters iconoclastic, on account of the attempt to reduce to psychological terms the events which to them have a miraculous or metaphysical significance. To be consistent they wish to know what we are to do with the miracles of the New Testament. It is not our purpose to dodge the issue, for we are searching for truth, and “truth at any price” is our motto. Let us consider these miracles and see if they, too, fit into the psychological laws of suggestive therapeutics. To be fair we must take the accounts as we find them, and not accept those which suit our purpose and reject or change those which appear to stand outside of the laws. If one is untrustworthy simply because it does not fit our theory, the others are not to be taken simply because they do. With this understanding we will proceed. Of course, no one supposes that the gospel accounts contain wholly accurate and complete details of the miracles, since careful precision in recording facts is a somewhat recent accomplishment.

In a study of the miracles performed by Jesus and the apostles, one noticeable feature is the large number of them which have to do with the bodies of men. We have a record of thirty-four miracles performed by Jesus and fourteen by the apostles, forty-eight in all. Of these, twenty-six of

Jesus' are miracles of healing, and eight deal with other things. Of those performed by the apostles, all are concerned with human bodies. That is, of forty-eight miracles performed by Jesus and the apostles, no less than forty—eighty-three per cent. of the whole—were performed on human bodies. This may seem very natural from one standpoint, when we consider that Jesus' mission here was with people, and the tender heart of Jesus would be touched by the sufferings of those around Him, inciting Him to help them; but in the light of the cures performed through the medium of suggestion, it may be interesting to inquire, at least, concerning the possibility of the use of this method by Jesus and the apostles.

We have two questions to ask in presenting this subject in order that we may be able to determine the value of such an inquiry. The first is this: In the event of such an hypothesis being accepted, would it do away with the distinctive character and value of the miracles? If it is affirmed that the method used by Jesus and His apostles is in use to-day for healing, would the miraculous character of the miracles be annulled? If we are able partially to explain the miracles, do they cease to be miracles? Our answer to this question would undoubtedly be "No." In the first place, the essential factor in the idea of miracle is the psychological effect. Anything which causes wonder and astonishment on account of the inexplicable character of the phenomena by known facts would be a miracle. A trolley car or wireless telegraphy would have been as great a miracle in Jesus' day as stilling the tempest or raising the dead. Curing by suggestive therapeutics is a miracle to illiterate people to-day. In the second place, we cannot explain the miracles. The best-known things are inexplicable, and science has no fewer unexplained facts than religion. When we reduce any phenomena to law we do not explain them, for what is law

but the result of our habitual observation, or better, the habitual working of the divine in the world? When we are able to understand things in part, it does not mean that God is excluded from them. If Jesus used His knowledge of men, of the connection existing between mind and body, to heal them, when we read His thoughts after Him and use the knowledge which He has revealed to us, we do not in the least detract from His greatness, but draw ourselves more into harmony with it. He did not explain His method; men have dogmatized concerning it, but Jesus neither affirmed nor denied their theories.

The second question is this: In showing the relationship between the healing of Jesus and the apostles and modern healing, do we not thereby establish the possibility and probability of the historicity of the miracles? Do we not give the best apology for the miracles which it is possible to give? This question we as confidently answer in the affirmative. The scoffer or doubter has less ground on which to stand, and these miracles become demonstrated facts which cannot well be refuted.

In our study of the miracles, we shall use hypnotism as representative of suggestive therapeutics in any comparisons, for this has been most scientifically examined, and is a more constant phenomenon. Of the forty miracles performed by Jesus and the apostles on the bodies of men, all classes but three have been duplicated by hypnotism. I say "classes," not that each specific case has been duplicated. The descriptions of some of the cases are too vague to allow us to draw any positive conclusions. For instance, when the accounts speak of such cases as "the sick" and of long-standing infirmities, they are too indefinite to be used in the comparisons, although the use of hypnotism is especially efficacious in chronic and long-standing maladies.

The classes of cases which have not been duplicated by

hypnotism are, (1) The healing of Malchus' ear after Peter had struck it off. Unfortunately, this incident is not so well authenticated as most of the others, for while all four evangelists speak of the ear's being struck off, only Luke, the one whose information was least direct, speaks of the cure. But while it might not be sufficiently important in the midst of such stirring events for the others to note it, it attracts the attention of the beloved physician on account of his profession. I say that hypnotism has not duplicated this if it is meant that the ear was really struck off, and Jesus by touching it immediately restored it as it formerly was. If it means simply that the ear was cut and Jesus stopped the flow of blood, then this would not be so classed. (2) The second class is the lepers. I find no account of an attempt to effect a cure of leprosy by the means of hypnotism. (3) Then we have five cases usually classed as raising of the dead, three by Jesus and two by the apostles. Of these five, two are directly affirmed not to be dead, but notwithstanding this direct affirmation, we do not accept it. The ruler's daughter was "not dead but sleeping," and "life is still in him," said Paul of the young man who fell out of the window. Nevertheless, the other three are beyond any known laws of suggestive therapeutics.

Now, while I have said that all the other classes have been duplicated by hypnotism, some of the individual cases have not. Two in particular are beyond its limits. Hypnotism has cured the lame, but never the congenital lame grown to manhood. Hypnotism has cured the blind, but never the congenital blind. All these forty miracles are of healing with the exception of three. Three destructive miracles were performed by the apostles. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead, and Elymas was struck blind. Suggestion has had similar effects.

In our study of suggestive therapeutics, we have found two elements necessary for any cure: the first is suggestion, the

second is trustful expectation or faith. Suggestions must be given directly by the healer, or indirectly by what persons have read or heard; faith must always be on the part of the person to be healed. Let us look and see if these conditions are carried out in the New Testament miracles. Almost without exception we find suggestion made and made directly, and where no mention of it is found, we cannot help believing that it is present. Strangest of all, suggestion is made to the dead before they arise. Lazarus is commanded in a loud voice to come forth from the tomb, the daughter of the ruler and the young man of Nain are both spoken to and commanded to arise, and Dorcas is ordered by Peter to arise from the bier.

At certain times the suggestions are given more fully than at others and are very pronounced. Mark gives us one example of Jesus' which is quite striking. Jesus comes to the borders of Decapolis, and they bring unto Him one who is deaf and dumb. Jesus takes him aside from the multitude privately, in order that He may better give the suggestions without distractions. But how is this to be done? The man cannot hear so Jesus cannot talk to him, but yet He must give him suggestions. Jesus first put His fingers to His ears to signify which organs He wished to be affected; then he spat and touched his tongue to draw attention to the other infirmity. He next looked up to heaven, sighed, and said, "Ephphatha," meaning "Be opened." The man, in looking, could not help knowing what Jesus said, for no word could more easily be read from the lips. The result was a cure. We could not imagine a better method of suggestion to a deaf and dumb man.

Take, as a further example, Peter's method. As Peter and John were going into the temple they came upon a lame man at the Beautiful Gate. He asked alms of them. Peter turned around and fastened his eyes on him, and commanded

in turn that he should look at them. Here is one of the first principles of suggestion, fixation of attention by the steady gaze. The record says, "Then he gave heed unto them." Peter talks to him, "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have that give I thee." Then comes the suggestion ending with an abrupt command, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Walk!" Following up the verbal suggestion with a dramatic one, he took him by the right hand and raised him up. The man was immediately cured. Paul repeats this method very closely on the lame man at Lystra.

In one of Jesus' cures we have an example of what is not uncommon to-day, *viz.*, that the cure was gradual and the suggestions had to be repeated. Mark, who usually lays emphasis on the immediateness of the cure, gives us an account of this. At Bethsaida they bring Him a blind man. He takes him by the hand, leads him out of the village, spits on his eyes, lays His hands on him, and asks, "Seest thou aught?" And he answered and said, "I see men as trees walking." It was necessary to repeat the suggestion, so He again laid hands on him and this time the man saw clearly. An examination of the accounts of the miracles will show the element of suggestion to be very prominent.

The other element necessary in suggestive therapeutics is faith. Faith in Paul's writings always has the same object, *viz.*, Jesus Christ, but in the *usus loquendi* of Jesus it has many different objects. It may be God, or His own power to heal, or the process. It is most frequently used in connection with healing of some kind. We find this a *sine qua non* in Jesus' work. No one could be healed without it. The healing was given to them in proportion to their faith. "According to your faith be it unto you." We find that He was unable to do mighty works in Nazareth on account of their unbelief. We also find Him asking concerning their faith before He attempts a cure.

Look at three examples. When Jesus was going to the house of the ruler to heal his daughter, there was a woman who had heard of Jesus' cures and perhaps had seen them, so that she had great faith in His power. Her faith was so great that she thought even if she could touch the hem of His garment she might be healed. She touched His garment, and even before Jesus was aware of it she was healed. Her faith had made her whole. After the death of Ananias and Sapphira the people had unbounded faith in Peter. He healed many, evidently suggesting directly to them, but there were some whose faith was so great that they were healed by being carried out into the streets and laid on beds and couches, so that as Peter walked by his shadow might fall on them. Now none of us would claim that there was any virtue in Peter's shadow; the virtue was in their faith. When Paul was at Ephesus, so great was the faith of the people in him and in the power which he had to heal, that "unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the disease departed from them." No particular virtue resided in the handkerchiefs which had touched Paul's body, the virtue lay in their faith, in the power of their minds over their bodies.

These two requisites for healing in suggestive therapeutics were also necessary for healing by miracle; in fact, the resemblance of method and form is so strikingly similar, it seems that we may be justified in affirming that Jesus and the apostles used suggestive therapeutics as the *modus operandi* in at least some of their healing.

What, then, must be our conclusions from a study of the miracles of Jesus from the standpoint of modern psychological investigations? One thing is apparent, in this as in other departments of life, He was Son of Man as He proclaimed Himself to be. What makes Jesus so precious to us, is that He is so near to us. He was tempted as we are

tempted, He was weary and sought rest even as we must. He had compassion on the needy person and city as we are touched by the sight of need. He suffered as we suffer. He wept—yes, as a man He wept manly tears as we must weep, and He loved as His great heart opened to the world—yes, we, too, may love. At funeral bier or marriage feast He was the *man* Christ Jesus. As He approaches the bedside of the sick may He not also be the Son of Man? Could He not heal as we heal? Does not this bring Him nearer to us?

But if modern psychology has this to say it also has more. He is not only Son of Man. At least sixteen of the thirty-four miracles performed by Him have never been duplicated by suggestive therapeutics, and as far as we are able to see now, from their very nature they never will be. As in other parts of His life He came down to our level and worked as we work. But He ascended so far above us that His shining form is seen among the stars. We can walk a certain distance with Him in any phase of life, but the shackles of sin and the fetters of selfishness soon hinder us so that our journey ends in a longing for His goodness and power. When asked concerning His dwelling the Son of Man admits, as might the beggar or outcast of to-day, that He has not where to lay His head; the Son of God speaks of His Father's house of many mansions to which He is going. He performs such simple acts of service, He washes the disciples' feet—the weakest among us could do that; but He also forgave sin. As man He accepted the doom of Calvary and gave up the ghost as we must; as the very Christ He overcame the last enemy—death. We are always able to start with Him, but how far He goes beyond us! He healed the sick and feverish by command as men to-day may, but He also raised the dead, a feat which the wildest thinkers of modern science do not anticipate. Where the line of demarcation between His

human and divine influence on the subconsciousness of man is to be drawn, it is not easy for us to determine, but notwithstanding this, from our study we must recognize Him as Son of Man and Son of God, the God-man, Christ Jesus.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### CONVERSION

“How that might change his nature, there’s the question.”—SHAKE-SPEARE.

IN dealing with the subject of religious conversion,<sup>1</sup> its very nature compels us to treat it incompletely. However much we may believe in the divine element in conversion and in the religious life generally, it must remain an unknown quantity, and it can only be judged by the apparent effects upon the persons experiencing it. In this chapter it will be the aim to examine the effects upon the individual of all contributing influences in conversion, but no attempt will be made to analyze, describe, or explain the divine element.

The nature of our data causes us, probably, the greatest difficulty; as already noted, it is almost impossible to get accurate facts. Faulty introspection and the influence of the experiences of others are the chief troubles. The testimony of other persons, as heard in meetings, acts in a suggestive way. In a testimony meeting, it will be found that most of the experiences agree, with the exception of a very few details, and the latter are more and more eliminated as the speakers listen to each other week after week. In services held by different churches and denominations, it will be found that while the testimonies in one church are in harmony they may be very different from the concurring testimonies in another church. Giving full credit to the element of

<sup>1</sup> Much of Chap. X of my *Psychology of Alcoholism* is reproduced here.

similarity due to expectancy, we still have left a large factor due to subsequent agreement of an unconscious character.

We encounter another difficulty. The term "conversion" has been preëmpted by one form of conversion so that when we hear it we naturally think of this form only. The sudden form and the Pauline type have been taken as a standard by revivalists, and the rest of us have meekly accepted their dicta. Not only has there been a certain type, but a prescribed formula has been thrust upon us according to which every one must conform. The main parts of the formula are a sinking into the depths of agony and despair, and an instantaneous uplift and release which, on account of its spasmodic and sudden character, is considered by those who experience it as miraculous. The revivalist usually intensifies each particular step in the process, and with all his dramatic ability portrays the symptoms. The convert feels in duty bound to experience all the things which he has had outlined in an orthodox way, and if very suggestible does not have very much trouble in doing so. The unsuggestible either compromise their honesty or conclude that they are not among the elect.

Those who have tried to impose this uniform plan of salvation upon the many who would listen to them have probably been unconscious of the fact that it was simply the experience of Paul reduced to a formula, and that Paul stood alone, of all New Testament characters, in his experience.<sup>1</sup> It seems strange that the one experience of Pentecost and the single experience of Paul, neither of which the New Testament workers ever tried to duplicate, should be selected among so many methods of working and so many conversions, as the only true and God-given form of effort and

<sup>1</sup> For a psychological analysis of Paul's experience, see C. D. Royse, "The Psychology of Paul's Conversion," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, pp. 143-154.

of approach to the Infinite. Pentecost needed a defence against the charge of drunkenness, and Paul evidently did not find it easy to convince the disciples of the reality of his experience. On the other hand, notice the quiet but ever-effective method of Jesus, subject to no criticism, and the sane, normal experience of Matthew, Zaccheus, the Ethiopian, and Timothy.

Not only is instantaneous conversion not the only true type of approaching God, but it is the extreme form of one type among several. Instead of saying, with all its serious consequences, that there is only one way of approach to God, it would be more true to say that no two persons ever come in the same way, but that each case is unique. No type is clearly marked, but individual experiences show that the types run into each other. The tendency of the one-formula method is to produce a mediocre and constrained lot of Christians, all trying, with indifferent success, to conform to the same pattern. It is similar to the discipline of the Jesuits, which stifles individual characteristics and puts all into one class, which is necessarily not the first class.

Jesus did not foster the sudden method of conversion and it has never been universal since His time. The Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Episcopal denominations have never encouraged it. The catechism and confirmation have taken the place of this, sometimes, to be sure, resulting in a formal and somewhat spineless religion, but escaping the dangers of the revival method. The value of the extreme type is a modern doctrine and a product of the revival, the Methodists and the New England Congregationalists being the ones who developed it. Both the revival and the exclusive sudden conversion have been incidents merely in the great religious life of the world, incidents of value for the time, but passing now into oblivion, and giving place to the more normal and valuable processes.

It is not, mark you, that conversion is out of date, but simply that one form is passing. Conversion is a normal human experience—"a natural, normal, universal, and necessary process of adolescence." This is best seen in the thousands of Christian homes throughout the land, where from infancy children are reared in the knowledge of that which is best, and with the expectation of always living a life of righteousness in which their powers shall be exerted in the advancement of the Kingdom of God. In the days of adolescent adjustment there is then some ground on which to build.

Further, it is difficult to consider conversion alone for it is but a part of a process. It is a life rather than an isolated experience which should be the unit. It is, therefore, not the so-called miraculous, yet really abnormal, experience which should be the test of conversion, but the Christ-like conduct which is the fruit of our lives. The important thing about Paul's conversion was not the bright light, nor the words heard, nor the blindness, nor any other of the incidental concomitants, but the conversion itself; and it was the change from the bigoted persecutor to the broad-minded preacher which betokened the divine hand in it rather than any abnormal phenomena which accompanied it.

In addition to the fallacy of endeavoring to give a description of a single uniform type instead of a history of different conversions in which we recognize the difference as well as the similarity, there has been a tendency so to emphasize some one element in the process that that has been taken for the whole. In this endeavor to simplify matters they have been still further complicated. The simplest mental process is so complicated that we cannot hope to describe all the factors, that is true; our effort should be, however, to give as full description as possible in order that the full significance of the process should be realized. One factor can never represent all—the whole mind functions in the simplest act.

It is worthy of note, as a matter of comparison, that sudden conversion may be of other than religious forms, and while being religious may be in the opposite direction. James<sup>1</sup> gives three cases of unreligious conversion: one from prodigality to miserliness, one from intense love to hatred, and one from worry and anger to carefreeness and good nature. He also cites three cases of "counter conversion," *i. e.*, conversion from righteousness to infidelity. Starbuck<sup>2</sup> gives a number of examples of unreligious conversion.

Instead of designating these types sudden and gradual, we may speak of them from some other standpoint than that of the time involved. Starbuck<sup>3</sup> characterizes them as "Escape from sin" and "Spiritual Illumination." One may readily see how the element of time would be necessarily connected with the difference in the process; the former would be sudden and violent, the latter would be mentally gradual. Another classification by the same author follows in general the same line. It is that of self-surrender and volition; the former conforms to the sudden type and the latter to the gradual.

Before we attempt an analysis of the process or processes it might seem imperative to have a definition of conversion. Attention is again called to the fact that conversion is not a complete process in itself, but forms a part of a process of which the total religious experience is the whole. It should be noted that those parts which seem at first to be sudden and instantaneous are but the fructification of a longer or shorter development, most probably of a subconscious nature. This process of conversion is variously defined and explained, as may be seen from the following quotations:

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 176-181.

<sup>2</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *Psychology of Religion*, pp. 137-144.

<sup>3</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *Psychology of Religion*, pp. 85 ff. •

“Conversion is in its essence a change of intention.”<sup>1</sup>

“The regenerate life is a changed life; . . . it is a change marked by the consciousness of the person’s own needs, and that the Christ life can satisfy them.”<sup>2</sup>

“. . . At last the rationalistic fetters fall off, and the suppressed hypnotic centres explode with immense satisfaction. This is the most important key to the psychology of ‘conversion.’”<sup>3</sup>

“The essence of religion is a striving toward being, not toward knowing.” In Christianity “the goal of religious life becomes regeneration, by which unification of motives—*i. e.*, union with God, when objectively considered—is achieved.”<sup>4</sup>

“The explanation of sudden conversion is no doubt to be sought in some overpowering impression upon the mind that supplies a new and energetic motive to the will, thereby initiating a new line of conduct. . . . Such changes occasionally happen, but not without terrific struggles, which prove how hard it is to set up the volition of a day against the bent of years.”<sup>5</sup>

“Conversion is suddenly forsaking the lower for the higher self. In terms of the neural basis of consciousness, it is the inhibition of lower channels of nervous discharge through the establishment of higher connections and identification of the ego with the new activities. In theological terminology it is Christ coming into the heart and the old life being blotted out—the human life being swallowed up in the life of God.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> A. H. Daniels, “The New Life,” *American Journal of Psychology*, VI, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> H. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, p. 292.

<sup>4</sup> J. H. Leuba, “A Study in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena,” *American Journal of Psychology*, VII, pp. 313 and 318.

<sup>5</sup> A. Bain, *Emotions and Will*, p. 453.

<sup>6</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 156 f.

“To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities.”

“Now, there may be great oscillations in the emotional interest, and the hot places may shift before one. . . . Then we have the wavering and divided self. . . . Or the focus of excitement and heat, the point of view from which the aim is taken, may come to lie permanently within a certain system; and then, if the change be a religious one, we call it *conversion*, especially if the change be by crisis or sudden.”<sup>1</sup>

Many more quotations might be given to show the great difference in the definitions and explanations given by different men, or by the same man at different times. It is not claimed that any one is wrong, for the variety of expression shows what has already been stated, that religion applies to the whole man. The definition of religious conversion depends upon the standpoint from which it is viewed, the activity of mind concerning which one is speaking at the time, the mental activity thought to be chiefly concerned, the particular type of conversion with which the speaker is familiar, or the interpretation of the facts by the individual.

It is because it does concern the whole man, and not one faculty, that there is such a diversity of definition and explanation. Further, some in their definitions might entirely eliminate the human element, and speak of it in theological rather than psychological terms, as a divine act. So in order to get a correct definition of conversion we might take the substance of all definitions, and then probably it would not be too comprehensive. The idea of unity, so prominent with

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 189 and 196.

some, has this advantage: it comprehends the whole man; but complete unity seems to be rather the ideal, ripened experience than the common experience of converts.

It may be well for us at this time to examine some of the factors of conversion as experienced more or less commonly by different persons. The reader should take particular notice of the fact that no single case or definite type is being described, but only different factors which may or may not enter into the individual case. Whether or not we shall meet any one of them in any particular case is a matter which depends upon the temperament of the individual, and the forces which have been at work in him.

One factor very common in cases of the abrupt type is that of conviction or a profound sense of sin antedating the crisis, from which the new life spontaneously shines forth as a natural reaction. The older form of the presentation of the Gospel, *i. e.*, the revival form, was that of the magnification of the guilt of sin, and the terrible results to the sinner. Salvation came as the rescue from sin rather than as the door to the abundant life. Whether this is the direct result of the manner of presenting the Gospel, or something inherent in conversion itself, it is difficult to say; but it will be interesting to compare the conversions of the future when the opposite form of the Gospel is more especially presented, to see if this will not correspondingly change the nature of conversion from a struggling away from sin to a striving toward righteousness. Starbuck has the following to say concerning the sense of sin:

“There are many shades of experience in this preconversion state. An attempt at a classification of them gave these not very different groups: Conviction for sin proper, struggle after the new life; prayer, calling on God; sense of estrangement from God; doubts and questionings; tendency to resist conviction; depression and sadness; restlessness,

anxiety, and uncertainty; helplessness and humility; earnestness and seriousness; and various bodily affections. The result of the analysis of these different shades of experience coincides with the common designation of this preconversion state in making the *central fact in all the sense of sin, while the other conditions are various manifestations of this, as determined, first, by differences in temperament, and second, by whether the ideal life or the sinful life is vivid in consciousness. . . . We may safely say that we have to look for the cause underlying the sense of sin, in part, in certain temperamental and organic conditions, and not to consider it simply as a spiritual fact.*<sup>1</sup>

This last statement is especially true of adolescent conversions which form, as we know, the larger number.<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Edwards, however, defends this state, taking a theological rather than a psychological standpoint. "Surely it cannot be unreasonable," he says, "that before God delivers us from a state of sin and liability to everlasting woe, he should give us some considerable sense of the evil from which he delivers us, in order that we may know and feel the importance of salvation, and be enabled to appreciate the value of what God is pleased to do for us."<sup>3</sup>

In Hall's account of the sense of sin in his description of adolescent conversion<sup>4</sup> he finds four fruits of the sense of sin, *viz.*, pain, guilt, craving for just punishment, and confession. Of course, we must keep in mind that these do not follow in every case, but may. Added to these, but less frequent, is a sense of hereditary corruption when we feel that we are the victims of ancestral vice. This sense of sin naturally leads

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, pp. 58 and 71.

<sup>2</sup> The discussion of the relation of conversion to the age of the individual will be considered in the following chapter.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 229.

<sup>4</sup> G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, II, pp. 305-314.

to asceticism and its various forms of self-torture. Leuba<sup>1</sup> gives the term "Sense of sin" a too comprehensive scope when he says, "The sense of sin. . . is at times little more than a feeling of physical misery, the anguish of the sickened flesh. In such cases the expressions 'regret' and 'desire for relief' should properly take the place of 'remorse' and 'repentance,' which designate experiences modified by specific intellectual considerations ignored by the persons we speak of." If this is really the case, if this is really what we mean, let us say it. Why call it sense of sin if it is not? Let us exclude these from this category and recognize that some physical concomitants accompany or precede conversion, but because they do so we are not bound to call them sense of "sin." We should not gratuitously bring the term "sin" into the discussion simply because we are dealing with a religious subject.

Following the sense of sin and the presentation of the ideal of a better life, a struggle between the higher and lower parts of the nature may ensue which is known as "the divided self." It is the endeavor of the individual to make this new ideal his own, perhaps contrary to his habit of life for years, with a knowledge of the struggle which it may entail, and with associations and companions largely on the side of the former life.

In this state, the struggle, misery, agony, and uncertainty, common in some cases, is felt, together with worry and anger, or despair and fear. The individual knows not where he will eventually settle, and some powers outside of him seem to be contending for possession of him. By some this condition, rather than the sense of sin stage, is called conviction. This may last for days or weeks or only for a moment; it may appear with varying degrees of intensity, and is modi-

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, "A Study in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena," *American Journal of Psychology*, VII, p. 330.

fied when the climax of the process of conversion takes place, although it is probably never eliminated from the Christian life. Coe tells us when dealing with the religion of a mature mind, that "Competition is going on for the mastery of life. You may call it, in theological terms, a struggle between Satan and the Spirit of God; or you may call it, in biological language, an effort to adjust ourselves to environment against unsocialized remnants of the apè and tiger nature. In any case the contest is a fact that each one of us knows for himself, irrespective of catechism, and of all theories, whether biological or theological."<sup>1</sup>

We are, of course, reminded of the testimony of Paul, who, when he would do good, found evil present with him. This however, refers to a post-conversion experience, but is evidently of the same nature, if in a less degree, as the pre-conversion divided self. It is evident that the division of the self is never entirely healed, and unity afterward accomplished in the process of conversion is only partial. In a subconscious way, if not otherwise, we should naturally expect that the association of years would crop up occasionally. But this preconversion divided self, caused as it is by the forces in one's environment which tend to disrupt the unity of consciousness, consists of the contrast between the present condition and the fulfilment of ideals of conduct. James lays emphasis on the fact that this division is a matter of mental constitution, the extreme examples of which are found in psychopathic temperaments.<sup>2</sup> The subconscious factors are more or less prominent in cases of this kind.

This is the period of doubt through which most adolescents pass, prior to the conversion climax. These doubts differ in severity, sometimes, in extreme cases, driving the doubters

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Chap. VIII.

to suicide. These may be fought out in secret or displayed openly, but they come usually in adolescence although they may not end in conversion. A further discussion of doubt will be taken up in another place. The explanation of the divided self is probably to be found in the different systems of associations which may be mutually exclusive.

In the conversion process, the natural consequent of the divided self is what has been termed self-surrender. The struggle has continued until the ego seems to be almost rent asunder in some cases; one or the other of the contesting factors must give way, and finally the old self, the lower desires, gives up the battle and sometimes instantaneously, sometimes gradually, the misery, worry, and despair are changed to happiness, trust, and confidence: the unsettled, divided self becomes stable and united. This is the turning point in the process. It sometimes seems to be immediately due to physical causes, at least quite largely. The struggle becomes so great and therefore so wearying, that the brain refuses to respond, bringing about temporarily a state of apathy and, in exceptional cases, coma. It may be called a surrender on both sides, inasmuch that neither one shows signs of activity; but when activity again takes place or, in cases of coma, when consciousness appears, the side of the good is dominant. Notice that the break-down does not always take place, but it may, and more frequently does in cases of sudden conversion.

From the physiological standpoint the exhaustion is caused by the turning of energy into new channels, and breaking up the associations with the old. If we could speak in so crass a way concerning the processes of which we know little or nothing, we might say that the exhaustion is caused by the effort to connect the associations of this new cellular system, which is the basis of the ideal, with those which form the basis of the vital forces; or shall we say that it is exhausting

to turn the total vital energy into new courses? The same process is experienced in the breaking of any habit, but in a limited degree, for while the habit may touch a small part of the mental life, religion embraces the whole man.

What has been said regarding the physical is but an analogy drawn from the psychical, from the state of exhaustion and the evident endeavor to transfer the ego to the side of the forces of the good. With the help of additional motives, advanced either by friends or by the self, consciously or sub-consciously, the transfer is made, and when once made the evil forces retreat; "resist the devil and he will flee from you." With the weakening and the expulsion of the evil forces, there comes the unity of the ideals, feelings, and volitions, in fact, of the whole life, which is a characteristic feeling in the conversion process. Professor James speaks of the conversion climax as follows:

"Let us hereafter, in speaking of the hot places in a man's consciousness, the group of ideas to which he devotes himself, and from which he works, call it *the habitual centre of his personal energy*. It makes a great difference to a man whether one set of his ideas, or another, be the centre of his energy; and it makes a great difference as regards any set of ideas which he may possess, whether they become central or remain peripheral in him. To say that a man is 'converted' means, in these terms, that religious ideas, previously peripheral in his consciousness, now take a central place, and that religious aims form the habitual centre of his energy. . . . Now, if you ask of psychology just *how* the excitement shifts in a man's mental system, and *why* aims that were peripheral become at a certain moment central, psychology has to reply that although she can give a general description of what happens, she is unable in a given case to account accurately for all the single forces at work. Neither an outside observer nor the Subject who undergoes the process

can explain fully how particular experiences are able to change one's centre of energy so decisively, or why they so often have to bide their hour to do so."<sup>1</sup>

The struggle and victory may be toward an end which is distinctly defined, or it may be very confused, but it is against the old and for the new very clearly; and what we call self-surrender of the old, may be as well named the acceptance of the new; it depends on the standpoint from which we view it. It may be further expressed or defined by saying that the desire or affection for the new life, or for God, or for Jesus, is so overpowering as to drive out all baser motives or ideas. Luther and Wesley would say, "Believe you are saved and you are." Believing you are saved is one form of self-surrender.

In this type of conversion, in contrast with the volitional type, the will seems to play little part except in its own abeyance. A continued active exercise of the will seems to be a continuation of the divided self state. If this is given up, if there is a relaxation—a letting-go—the subconscious forces are allowed to exert an influence, and that new centre of energy which has been subconsciously developing takes the chief place in consciousness. When once this system becomes central it usually retains its new position, and controls the life. The state of exhaustion, or even coma, spoken of as a climax of the divided self state provides the needed relaxation, the opportunity for the appearance of the subconscious forces. What are these subconscious forces and whence comes the power? Is it simply subconscious activity? Some would opine this to be the case. Is it divine power? Some would consider this to be the more correct way of stating the case. Here we are leaving the domain of fact and entering that of theory. It is noticeable, however, that the latter would not be inconsistent with the theory which I

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 196.

have espoused, that if God works directly upon man He works through the subconsciousness.

The result of self-surrender, or a part of the process, is the unification of the mind in contrast to the former divided self. This unification comes through the victory of the one side and the despotic rule of the dominant forces. Around these forces the life moves and hence comes the harmony. The individual now comes to live a life of affection for and harmony with that which was formerly but a vague ideal: he identifies himself with recognized good which is his highest standard. This is brought about, as are similar changes, by the dominance of an opposite group of associated ideas. The contrast between this and the old life has become definite, and everything should be done to transfer the personality to the new centres decisively and finally. "It [the process of unification] may come gradually or it may occur abruptly; it may come through altered feelings or through altered powers of action; or it may come through new intellectual insights, or through experiences which we shall later have to designate as 'mystical.' However it come, it brings a characteristic sort of relief; and never such extreme relief as when it is cast into the religious mould."<sup>1</sup> This self-surrender, or religious victory, or sense of unity is frequently shown first by a desire to proclaim the change which has been experienced, in what is called confession or testimony. The sense of newness, shortly to be described, may account for the almost irresistible impulse to proclaim it.

Logically following self-surrender is faith. This is a condition of mind shown by its attitude toward all truth consistent with its lately formed determination to accept the new life. This condition is one of receptivity toward the good. While logically these can be separated, in reality it is difficult, indeed impossible, to draw the line between them,

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 175.

for they are both factors of a process, and these factors are so interwoven as to be inseparable. Faith could be defined as the acceptance of certain elements of the Christian life, as a belief in salvation, as believing that *you* are saved; but is not this the very point in self-surrender, accepting the new, believing in one's own salvation? If they do not coincide, the distinction might be made thus: self-surrender is the beginning of a process of which faith is the continuance. Both self-surrender and faith have a large affective element.

The change effected by this whole process is great, whether it has come gradually or suddenly, regardless of what mental element may seem to dominate, or what is the immediate antecedent of the change. Relieved of a great burden, as some express it, there is a feeling of peace and happiness in the unity achieved. Although psychologically the process of conversion does not stand alone, it is by far the most common of its class, and perhaps on account of this seems more closely related to normal processes. In every-day life we find mental experiences analogous to each factor of the conversion experience, and sometimes to the whole process. While there may be at times abnormal elements in conversion, it conforms more closely to the experiences of every-day life than one at first supposes; and why not? Are we not being converted more or less every day? Do we not break old habits, and receive new revelations of truth that change us daily, making us different persons indeed to-day from what we were yesterday? Here again the difference should be emphasized—religious conversion in contradistinction from other experiences comprehends the whole mental life.

The result of conversion, or perhaps we could better say, the final part of the process, differs with different individuals. One experience which is very common is the feeling of newness, and properly so when we consider the change involved. The convert lives in a new world because he

sees everything from a new point of view. Everything appears beautiful, and the world calls forth exclamations of admiration. The convert suddenly becomes an optimist of the most pronounced type; he wonders why he did not see the good in every person and thing before, and a smile is upon his face because he sees the beautiful significance of all things. This newness brings him joy and freedom, partly because he feels justified as if his sins were forgiven, and he has come into harmony with God and the world. It is the joy and freedom of the prisoner released from his bonds. He may appear overjoyful, ultra-confident, and superoptimistic, but he is sure that he is normal, and wonders why others fail to experience as much joy as he. He feels confident that it will never decrease, that he will always be equally happy. In psychic troubles depression precedes all exaltation, and this newness evidently comes as a reaction from the previous depressed state which we have called sense of sin.

The feelings, no doubt, fluctuate from time to time, and become much calmer, but the attitude toward the new life and the old remains constant. Religion thus acts in a double way on the feelings—it does arouse them, but it also aids to calm them; they may become much excited, but there are also in religion the motives for control. Leuba compares the experience of newness to that felt by “the youth who has sung for the first time his love-tale to his lady and receives the assurance of requited love, the afflicted one who has walked through a dark passage and suddenly comes to the light,” and this is undoubtedly true; to reiterate, conversion is not unlike the experiences of every-day life. Mr. Leuba also suggests as an explanation of this phenomenon, changes in the physiological processes. He makes as a conjecture (and no one can do more than conjecture) the following:

“We might rest content with the explanation that we have

to do with an emotional delusion in which the affective state colours external sense impressions. . . . But we can perhaps make another suggestion, in this wise: The conversion crisis may be supposed to have for physiological counterpart a redistribution of energy involving general modifications of the association paths; or the alteration of rhythms, changing the nervous regimen. It is natural enough to admit that to a psychic turmoil so intense as that of conversion, corresponds a no less considerable physiological commotion setting up a new arrangement of the motor mechanism."<sup>1</sup>

Numerous changes follow or accompany this feeling of newness. There is the sense of perceiving new truths. Things which have been hidden from the individual are now made plain. There is liable to be, however, an astonishing credulity at times largely on account of the uncritical condition of the convert, and the unity and simplicity of the whole mental life. The limitation of mentality causes the acceptance of almost anything that is suggested, particularly along the line of religion, and the more exaggerated it is the more acceptable it is with some. Later and calmer moments reveal the almost hypnotic credulity of some new converts.

Persons who may be the embodiment of selfishness show a broadening of the horizon most plainly in this particular, and come into close sympathy with the world outside. The convert feels himself to be a part of a wider life for which he must work, and for which he feels a great attachment. He is capable of remarkable self-sacrifice which may show itself in connection with the greater freedom, spoken of above, and may really be a large factor in bringing it about.

Coupled with this, and what may seem at first to be a contradictory principle, is an awakening of self. The self-consciousness is magnified, and the convert feels his impor-

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, *A Study in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena*, *American Journal of Psychology*, VII.

tance. This does not take the form of being the centre of selfish activities, but of the advancement of the world along the road of righteousness. Manhood asserts itself; he is no longer held in bondage; he is master not servant, he is ruler not serf. One may easily see that the form of the awakening of self does not minister to selfishness, but rather annihilates it. The lack of selfishness is noticed in the changed attitude toward family and friends. All the altruistic feelings and impulses are reinforced, the natural affections are stirred, and the duty to the state as well as that to the individual is recognized.

A characteristic of the new life, we might say a part also of the conversion process, is a revival of cheerfulness, courage, and hope. This is closely connected with the feeling of newness. Just what form these post-crisis feelings will take depends on the temperament of the individual. The moral failures of the past are turned into successes and the future is bright and promising. The coward of yesterday is the hero of to-day, he fears neither men nor demons; he is strong in his newly found love and friendships, and unbroken in his determination and hope. These aspirations give him confidence in himself and he knows he can accomplish what before he thought impossible. He expects to do much good, and the expectancy with which he starts out is the harbinger of the result. This confidence which he has in himself is largely due to the anticipation of help from God, which help, according to his testimony, is duly provided. He expects to be guided in a manner which shall lead him away from temptation, and to be given strength to overcome sinful impulses; this he finds realized in his life. To say that this is suggestion is probably true, but to say that it is suggestion only, is doing violence to the united testimony of thousands whose evidence is as valuable as any in the land.

One of the chief consequences of conversion, and what un-

doubtedly seems the most miraculous one, is the complete annulling of the lower temptations. The fact is marvellous, but none the less true, as may be shown by references to many cases. In many incidents the temptation which has been the strongest and threatened to wreck the life, has been entirely eliminated and never appeared again. Three reasons may be given why conversion is such a potent factor in overcoming the grossest and most tenacious sins. In the first place and most important, it stimulates a real desire for reform. This is the *sine qua non* for overcoming any sin. This desire to be helped may well be classed as a part of conversion, but the part that is antecedent. In preaching and all religious teaching, motives for reform are prominent contents, and are very appropriate to those suffering from gross temptations. "Doubtless when there has been waywardness, and one has grown habitually sinful, the most efficacious way of rescue is to picture the fate of continuance in sin, to throw the person back on himself, to lead him to see the blackness of sin as contrasted with the beauty of holiness, and make the break unavoidable, sharp, and final."<sup>1</sup>

The second reason why conversion is so efficacious in overcoming temptation and sin is that after conversion the subjective and objective associations are changed. The convert has an entirely new set of friends and acquaintances, who have proved their friendship for him, and with them he spends every spare moment; their words and lives are a constant source of encouragement and strength to him. His leisure is spent either at church or some other religious gathering, in an endeavor to assist some one in the Christian life, or in some philanthropic work. All external associations have a tendency to assist rather than to hinder him. Add to this the power of subjective associations. His mind is no longer occupied with the thoughts of sin, but the events of

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 88.

the new experience fill his thoughts, and his work in and for the church leaves him no time to long for the "flesh pots of Egypt." Associations objective and subjective are a constant assistance.

The third reason is that religious conversion not only destroys the desire for sin, but it provides an emotional substitute. We must recognize that certain forms of sinful indulgence, alcoholic intoxication for instance, provide a pleasure which is intense in its nature. This is true of the pleasures of all the so-called lower passions, because of their being confined to one kind of expression which never varies; in addition to this the pleasure occupies but a small portion of the life. As far as intensity is concerned, religion or any other form of the higher pleasures cannot, except under abnormal conditions, hope to vie with the lower ones. Wherein, then, does the religious life excel? Not in intensity, that is sure; but in extensity, this being true of the higher pleasures generally. There is no condition of life in which the religious pleasures cannot be realized, for religious conversion embraces not one set of passions, but the whole man. Body and soul respond, the variation of expression is endless, and all associations of the mind lead to the spiritual life. The idea of a religious faculty or sense having been abolished, it should be recognized that there is no experience so comprehensive in its scope as that of religion. Here we see that the "expulsive power of a new affection,"<sup>1</sup> especially of a religious character, has its virtue in the fact that even if deficient in intensity as compared with the lower passions, it ministers to the whole man, and thus excels any other pleasure in extensity.

In cases of sudden conversion the will has a real part, although at times it may be small. The volitional effort in the direction of the good influences all the other mental faculties,

<sup>1</sup> See Thomas Chalmers' sermon on this subject.

and gives direction to the turn which the whole self is to take; consciously, as well as subconsciously, its work is valuable and shows in every part of the process. While some investigators, Ribot for example, give the will little or no part in the process, and liken conversion to a fixed idea or irresistible impulse, it certainly has a real work to do. Irresistible impulse and conversion are undoubtedly allied phenomena in some respects, but there is more conscious purpose and definite will displayed in conversion, and in the general processes there seems to be a well-defined line of demarcation. Subconscious processes are truly at work, but occasionally they rise into conscious will, which puts into action new forces tending to harmonize and readjust the old mental life. The will has its effect upon the subconscious process which, in turn, affects the will. The psychology of conversion cannot be understood without a recognition of the reciprocal action of these two factors. The conscious and subconscious factors rarely act separately in conversion, if they ever do.

In the volitional type of conversion, the will is far more prominent, as the designation would imply. These cases are fought out rather than surrendered, and are therefore more gradual than the surrender type. There may be a combination of the two when the effort has been the cause of the subsequent awakening which has come to fructification subconsciously and suddenly. At any rate, while the extremes of the two types are easily distinguished and classified, they tend to become indistinguishable in the milder cases. In addition to this we must recognize that it is not the presence of one factor and the absence of the other which are the standard of division into the two types, but it is a matter of the percentage of each which is the basis of classification, for in the volitional cases there is some surrender, and surrender cases are not devoid of volition.

While we recognize these two main types, to neither of which a person completely conforms, we must also realize that some few persons are unable to fit into the conversion scheme at all on account of temperament, and either go through life without such experience, or else perhaps, through some sudden and unaccountable revulsion of temperament, come into the condition late in life, where it becomes a possibility. The important question from the standpoint of Christianity is not the method by which the result was brought about, but the character of the result attained. Some have reached their religious ideals through prosaic intellectual processes, as when one searched for intellectual consistency; others have found it through a clarification of the feelings. Whatever mental factors may be in use, the key-note is the union of the mind in its change, and growth from a life of self to one of service. Connected with the inquiry as to what was attained is the related question as to how long it lasts. The volitional type is undoubtedly more permanent, but the lasting quality of the self-surrender type depends on the circumstances connected with it, those cases resulting from the sensational revival being, as a rule, far less permanent. It is noticeable that the idea of instantaneous conversion and that of final perseverance are paradoxical, but we recognize, of course, that conversion is but the beginning of the change which the final perseverance must consummate. The germ of permanence should be in the conversion, else it is undoubtedly a failure.

There seems to be not the least doubt that the subconsciousness is an important factor in the process of conversion. To say this is only to state a fact which confirms one of our main contentions, *viz.*, that religion deals with the whole man; but to say that conversion has to deal with the subconscious only is to misrepresent the facts. With like stimuli it is known that persons react differently on account

of the difference in the operation of their mental processes—in their temperaments, as we say. Persons who have sudden conversions have them rather than the gradual ones, not because it just happens that way, but because they are so constituted that religious influences react in that way. If we know the person psychologically we can prophesy quite correctly the type of his conversion, whether it be sudden or gradual, quiet or excited; this is simply saying that of conversion we may know scientific facts which admit of classification. The divine element is not eliminated because we can do this; this has no bearing on the subject, for whether the power which causes conversion is autonomous or divine, it conforms to one type when it passes through one variety of mould. It is rather an argument for the divine element that it is orderly.

Professor Coe has made the most exhaustive examination of this subject of which I know. He gives three sets of factors favorable to the attainment of a striking, and therefore of a sudden, religious transformation. They are as follows: a certain temperament, expectation, and a tendency to automatisms and passive suggestibility. Given these three known quantities, the unknown, the type of conversion, can be predicted. In the cases which were thoroughly examined, those who experienced a great transformation, almost without exception, expected to change. Of these, 70 per cent. were of such a temperament that sensibility predominated, 12 per cent. had intellect in the ascendancy, and 18 per cent. will. Further, of these, 82 per cent. were of sanguine or melancholic temperament. We therefore see from these investigations that the temperament favorable to sudden or striking conversions is sanguine or melancholic, with sensibility predominating. The majority of these had exhibited some automatic phenomena, as, *e. g.*, hallucinations, and these correspond almost exactly with

the "passives" in hypnotic experiments. Of course, the number of cases examined was small, and necessarily so, on account of the thoroughness of the examination; and although there were too few to warrant us in making too sweeping a generalization, they correspond so closely with what we should naturally expect, that it must have considerable weight.<sup>1</sup>

The expectation factor is magnified when we consider that those who experience a striking conversion usually are found in churches where this is preached. For example, Wesley found that of his 652 followers in London every one had experienced a sudden and more or less striking change. Some other churches in London might have reported that of the same number of members not one had experienced this sudden change. The difference would be in the divergent proclamations of the method of approach to God. The automatic phenomena may be of innumerable varieties, some of which we considered when studying revivals. One of the most frequent forms of sensory automatisms is called by the name of photism—an hallucinatory luminous phenomenon. This may take the form of a blinding flash, a brilliant, widely diffused light, or some luminous figure. The experiences of Paul, Constantine, and Finney are examples of this.<sup>2</sup>

With the convert who has come into life in a sudden and abrupt way, the subconscious element in the process is undoubtedly large. This is shown by the comparative scarcity or absence of the intellectual and volitional element *at the time of the climax*, and the inability of the convert to give his reasons for the change, the very little self-direction at the time, and the abruptness of the decision with few or no motives. Of what this process, this development, in the sub-

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 109-150.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 251 ff.

conscious area is, and its cause, we are entirely ignorant, and our guesses will depend upon our point of view. If there is a divine element in conversion it must come largely through the subconsciousness, and especially is this true in cases of sudden conversion. This being so, we must recognize a similarity between these cases and hypnotism, whether we wish to or not; in fact, some persons in relating their conversion experiences necessarily couple with them an hypnotic element, as *e. g.*, "It seems to me now hypnotic."<sup>1</sup>

There has been a great objection to this relationship among some religious people; not because they were in a position to confute the statement, but because they considered it detrimental to Christianity, on account of the ill-repute of hypnotism. On the other hand, because some persons, not particularly jealous for the good name of Christianity, have seen a relation between conversion and hypnotism, they have identified the two. The position which appeals to me is the mean; I recognize both the similarity and the difference. True, we see the almost total similarity in some revivals where methods are employed which a trained hypnotist might eschew; but it is unfair to class all conversions as revival conversions, or all revival conversions as of this objectionable stamp. It is not the use but the abuse of the suggestive element in revivals which is objectionable. The same thing can be said of many other forces that are at times abused. For instance, there is a certain authority which religion can justly claim on account of its nature; the use of this is justifiable, but oh! what abuses have been wrought in its name. Mr. Granger says concerning hypnotism and conversion:

"We are now prepared to take up a topic referred to before—conversion by hypnotic suggestion. The reader will perhaps remember that in other kinds of conversion there

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 51.

was a more or less prolonged period of preparation for the change, as the soul came to harmony of intellectual judgment, or to peace after stress. As against these modes, instantaneous conversion seems explicable by saying that the mind is occupied by a suggestion when it is in a suggestible state—when, that is, it is subject to neurasthenia. It is fortunate, of course, that the same nervous weakness which lays a man open to control by passing impulses should now and then subject him to a good impulse; but this weakness is not a normal state, and there is something inexpressibly repulsive in the idea that the religious life should necessarily begin in this way. Jesus did not so view conversion.”<sup>1</sup>

I do not feel the same repulsion concerning the matter which Mr. Granger apparently does. If, as some would have it, the hypnotic or suggestive element were eliminated, religion would lose thereby. We do not recognize the part which the subconsciousness plays in our every-day life, or we should see that to eliminate this would be to confine religion to a lesser part of man's nature, instead of its holding its present important position of affecting the whole man, conscious and subconscious. If this is a weakness, as Mr. Granger says, it is a weakness which he shares with the rest of mankind, for no one is free from it; and however much it may be deprecated, its importance in the mental processes is profound.

If it is true that when God works directly in man He works through the subconsciousness, these subconscious factors should be lauded rather than deprecated. Further, the wisdom of having these subconscious factors so prominent in conversion is apparent, because of the greater stability of the change thereby. Were it simply in the mental and not deeply rooted in the physical, the passing change of circumstances would bring about a corresponding change in

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 117.

the desires, and what promised to become a permanent change, would be temporary only. Here is to be found the distinction between the purely hypnotic pseudo-conversion, and the real conversion. When the subject awakes he wonders what it all meant, and laughs at the part he played in the revival; or else it may last for a week or a month and then fade away. But the true conversion takes a permanent hold of the whole man. Nor can I agree with Mr. Granger that Jesus did not recognize, or at least use, the subconscious elements in both conversion and the cures performed by Him.

Early in this chapter it was said that little could be definitely stated concerning the divine element in conversion, since by its nature it could not be scientifically analyzed. But because we cannot analyze it, it does not follow that it is unreasonable to believe in it. We can do no better at this point than to present two brief quotations from Professor James.

“To plead the organic causation of the religious state of mind, then, in refutation of its claim to possess superior spiritual value, is quite illogical and arbitrary, unless one have already worked out in advance some psycho-physical theory connecting spiritual values in general with determinate sorts of physiological change. Otherwise none of our thoughts and feelings, not even our scientific doctrines, nor even our *dis*-beliefs, could retain any value as revelations of the truth, for every one of them without exception flows from the state of their possessor's body at the time.”

“Psychology and religion are both in perfect harmony up to this point, since both admit that there are forces seemingly outside of the conscious individual that bring redemption to his life. Nevertheless psychology, defining these forces as ‘subconscious,’ and speaking of their effect as due to ‘incubation’ or ‘cerebration,’ implies that they do not

transcend the individual's personality; and herein she diverges from Christian theology, which insists that they are direct supernatural operations of the Deity."<sup>1</sup>

The mistake is frequently made of holding that, if we have explained the way in which the mind operates in conversion, we have thereby eliminated the supernatural—or rather we should say, the divine element. As well might we say when we have described a law of nature, we have proved therefore that nature requires no power to operate the elements which conform to this law, simply because we know how it is operated; or that when we know how the machine works, it therefore needs no power to operate it. Pfeleiderer, from the standpoint of philosophy, speaks very decidedly as follows:

“This wonderful change is not arbitrarily brought about by man himself, but experienced as a thing that has happened to him; it appears to him as the operation of a higher power, as the gift of undeserved divine favor or *grace*. And is this not in truth the case? Careful thought, in fact, can do nothing but confirm what the believer holds as a truth requiring no proof.”<sup>2</sup>

To the person experiencing conversion it seems as though some power, quite different from any ordinary experience, came into the life. But is this so? The testimony of the converted person, even admitting that it is not always the best, ought to be worth more than the opinion of one who is unfamiliar with religious experience and simply theorizes concerning it. In most cases the feeling is that this is an external power, a testimony of experience directly opposed to the psychological theory, as we may call it. Again recognizing the objection of so many persons being unable to read aright their psychical experiences, yet there is no testimony to the contrary, and the experience of those who witness con-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 14 and 211.

<sup>2</sup> O. Pfeleiderer, *The Philosophy of Religion*, IV, p. 128.

cerning it is more valuable than the theories of others. Those who claim that conversion is a direct act will find it admissible from the psychological standpoint, especially if they hold to the theory that God works directly on man through the subconsciousness.

## CHAPTER XIX

### AGE

“A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age.”  
—SHAKESPEARE.

IN discovering that children are not little men or women, we have found that religion cannot be presented to them in the same way that it can to adults, and produce the best results. The juvenile type of Christianity must, therefore, differ from the adult and adolescent types. What this difference shall be is determined by the difference between the mind of the child and that of the adolescent or adult. We can no longer respond to a demand for the same type of religion for all ages, nor is the difference to be simply that the child religion is to be an incomplete and imperfect phase of that which is to occupy the mind when he matures; but it must be the natural expression of the child's mind according to its way of functioning. We have every reason to think that the religious impulse develops as naturally in the child life as the social impulse, and that careful nurture is the most important factor in dealing with children if we wish to aid in a decision for righteousness and church membership at an early age—probably in early adolescence. Our aid should be not so much to inform as to guide, for growth rather than learning is required in early childhood.

If the past has taught us nothing else it has furnished us with some “horrible examples,” and shown us very plainly what not to do. A few of these may be negatively instructive. Rev. Carlton Hurd, a stalwart New England divine who

lived about a century ago, has given us a spiritual biography of his daughter, Marion Lyle Hurd, who was supplied with an orthodox and plenary religious experience at a tender age.

“Marion died at the age of four years. When she was eight months old her parents read to her from leaflets for Sabbath-schools. They explained to her when she was a year and a half old, in answer to questions from her, the origin and use of the Bible. They noted that when she had reached the age of two she was ‘seriously exercised with religious things.’ At that time she would sometimes kneel down and would say:

“‘Mother, I am going to pray. What shall I say to God?’

“‘Ask God to make you good and give you a new heart.’

“‘What is a new heart, mother?’

“‘This was familiarly explained,’ writes her father, ‘and at the same time she was particularly informed of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, and the steps God had taken to save sinners. We endeavored to impress upon her mind that she was a sinner and needed forgiveness, and God would forgive her sins and give her a new heart through Jesus Christ.’ That from this time ‘she chiefly devoted her few remaining days to the acquisition of religious knowledge,’ her father finds to be a ‘consoling reflection.’ He adds, with conscientious caution, ‘If she was truly converted, we cannot tell when the change took place.’ Her parents hoped, however, after she had died two years later, that she had ‘entered the city of our God.’ Though they had no means of perceiving the approach of the disease of the brain which occasioned her death, they realized that the sensitiveness and activity of her mind warned them ‘to lead Marion with the gentlest hand, to make her way as quiet and even as possible.’ In this third year the books which were read to her included Parley’s *Geography* and *Astronomy*, Gal-  
laudet’s *Child’s Book of the Soul*, and *Daily Food for Chris-*

tians. In her fourth year her books, which she read to herself, were, besides the Bible, *Child's Book on Repentance*, *Life of Moses*, *Family Hymns*, *Union Hymns*, *Daily Food*, *Lessons for Sabbath-Schools*, *Henry Milnor*, *Watts's Divine Songs*, *Nathan W. Dickerman*, *Memoir of John Mooney Mead*, *Todd's Lectures to Children*, and *Pilgrim's Progress*. As these titles indicate she was 'particularly fond of reading the biography of good little children.' Of all her books, however, Bunyan's masterpiece seems to have been the most instructive. Her knowledge of the allegory was tested by questions. She knew why Christian went through the river while Ignorance was ferried over. She knew what was meant by the Slough of Despond and the losing of the Burden. 'When we come to Christ,' said she, 'we' (not Christians, or people, or you, but we) 'lose our sins.' And she sought from her father a certificate to enter the City. 'We cannot doubt,' comments her father, 'Marion understood much of what was intended to be taught in that book, which Phillip says, in his life of John Bunyan, contains the essence of all theology. Certainly she was familiar with every step of the pathway of holiness trod by Christian, from the city of Destruction through the river of death to the Celestial City.' And later, he adds that she evinced 'a familiar acquaintance with all parts of that allegory and its doctrines.' Though he makes clear in his letter that 'it is not the piety of the full-grown and mature Christian that we are to look for in a child,' he makes equally clear that in all essential particulars her piety was complete. It included even a regard for the significance of eternal reward and penalty. From Doddridge's *Expositor*, both by examining the pictures and reading 'the sacred text,' under the direction of her father, she derived many ideas of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and the general resurrection at the end of the world. 'Marion,' continues the narrative, 'after closely

inspecting the countenances given in those pictures, both to the just and unjust, in the resurrection would say:

“‘Oh! how the wicked look when they rise from the dead!’ adding in a serious and solemn manner,

“‘There is a dreadful hell,  
And everlasting pains,  
Where sinners must with devils dwell,  
In darkness, fire, and chains.’

“Indeed, from the earlier months, life after death, ‘the happiness of the good and the misery of the wicked,’ were topics of ‘frequent and delightful conversation with her parents.’

“In her last hours she expressed her assurance that she would be saved, and her last audible words were, ‘I am not afraid to die.’ Thus ended this brief life of four years and twenty-six days.”<sup>1</sup>

When some of Jonathan Edwards’ ministerial contemporaries expostulated with him about throwing children into paroxysms of fear with talk about hell fire and eternal damnation, he thought them weak. “But if those who complain so loudly of this,” he remarks, “really believe, what is the general profession of the country, *viz.*, that all are by nature the children of wrath and heirs of hell; and that every one who has not been born again, whether he be young or old, is exposed, every moment, to eternal destruction, under the wrath of Almighty God; I say, if they really believe this, then such a complaint and cry as this betrays a great deal of weakness and inconsideration. As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet, if they are out of Christ, they are not so in God’s sight, but are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers, and are in a most miserable condition, as well as grown persons.”

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Abbot, “On the Training of Parents,” *The Outlook*, LXXXVIII, p. 547 f.

The following is an account of how a French priest, Curate of Notre-Dame-du-Mont, prepared children for confirmation and first communion. "On the last day of a 'retreat' he would lock the doors of the church in which the children were assembled and forbid even the sexton to walk about. The church was then darkened. A pall, stretched out before the sanctuary, bore a crucifix and two holy candles. In this artfully prepared place he would preach a sixty minutes' discourse on Christ's Passion, describing with minute realism every detail of the crucifixion, the thorns penetrating into the flesh, the blood trickling down the face, the moral anguish of the loving Savior. Before he was half through the sermon, sobs would break out and spread among the terrified children. In this state they were sent to confession."<sup>1</sup>

In a collection of hymns for children, published in 1852, we find the following:

"Little children stop and think!  
Turn away from ruin's brink!"

Another hymn in this collection, entitled "Motives to Early Piety," gives some idea of the former religious teaching of children. It is as follows:

"Almighty God, thy piercing eye  
Strikes through the shades of night,  
And our most secret actions lie  
All open to thy sight.

"There's not a sin that we commit,  
Or idle word we say,  
But in thy dreadful book 'tis writ,  
Against the judgment day.

<sup>1</sup> These last two quotations are from J. H. Leuba, "Fear and Awe in Religion," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 6 f.

“And must the crimes that I have done  
Be read and published there?  
Be all exposed before the sun,  
While men and angels hear?”

“Lord, at thy foot ashamed I lie,  
Upward I dare not look,  
Pardon my sins before I die,  
And blot them from thy book!”<sup>1</sup>

I wish it were possible to say that trying to scare children into accepting adult religion ended with Jonathan Edwards, or even a half century ago, but unhappily this is not so. The so-called doctrine of “original sin” has been a sweet morsel in the mouths of many pastors and most revivalists. No child is too young to be a willing servant of the devil, and conversion of the adult type is the only cure, according to these soul physicians. Notice the following:

“I may just mention, that as this talk was going on, there was a little boy in the corner of the room, so little a fellow that he had just emerged from the condition of petticoats, and had not reached the dignity of a jacket; his whole costume being in one piece from his neck to his heels. He was standing in the corner of the room and sobbing very hard. The only idea that came into my mind was that the little fellow was sleepy, and that he wanted to go home, as it was now about ten o'clock. I said to one of the girls that he was wearied, and that some one had better take him home. She said, ‘Oh, no, sir; he is not wearied, he is greetin’ about his sins.’ I went to the little fellow, and I spoke to him; however, he was really past speaking to. He was in a state of great distress, whatever was the cause. I said to one of the girls, ‘Perhaps you could speak to him better than I could’; and she replied, ‘Well, yes, sir; I will speak to him, but he

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 314 f.

does not belong to this place.' I said, 'Indeed!' 'No, puir fellow; he has walked all the way frae Prestonpans to-night.' Now this was a dark, wintry night, and yet this little creature had walked, by himself, about four miles, to get to the Meeting. I asked about him the last time I was out. The little girl told me that she believed he was going on in the right way."

"A few days ago I found a little boy, about eight years of age, in one of these seats at the children's inquiry meeting, sobbing aloud. Said I,

"What's the matter, my dear little fellow?"

"Oh, dear! I'm lost! I'm lost! and I can't find Jesus! Oh! my wicked heart! How can I get a new heart? I have been so wicked! I have never loved Jesus at all! I thought I loved Him, but now I know I never did. Will He take me?' . . .

"I have no doubt some of the parents here to-day scarcely believe that their children are at enmity with the gracious Saviour; perhaps they have never found out by experience that the Bible is true, when it says, 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.' I pray that they may learn, as many of you have learnt, that it is a very wicked thing not to love that dear Jesus who 'first loved us.' Here is a letter from a little boy whom I found, in a children's inquiry meeting in Brooklyn, weeping and asking how he could get a new heart. He says, '*I thought I loved Jesus, but I found I was a great sinner.*'"<sup>1</sup>

One source of fallacy is the fact that primitive Christianity consisted in adult conversion, and the supposition was that the *modus operandi* was the same in old and young. Jesus put adults and children into two distinct classes, and em-

<sup>1</sup> E. P. Hammond, *The Conversion of Children*, pp. 9 and 76 f.; many similar cases might be quoted from this and a companion book by the same author, *Early Conversion*.

phatically said that adults were so different that they would have to become as children to be converted. We are coming to Jesus' position again now through the sciences of pedagogy and psychology. We recognize that young children are neither good nor bad, and that activity is not sin. With proper training, the natural development is toward righteousness. If religion is an instinct peculiar to man, which, on account of an inward power, develops progressively, then the child grows into a religious being as he does into a social being. All normal religious development, however, is dependent upon a normal physical and psychical development. When children, through training, are permitted to develop naturally, the only conversion possible is that from God to the devil; people who want their children converted are either condemning their training or else asking for a conversion to evil. "Total depravity" and "original sin" are relics of the dark ages before we knew God, yet how tenaciously we cling to them! It is so much easier to blame God for our children's deformed characters than it is to acknowledge our incorrect training.

The trouble is that parents and teachers do not yet know what to expect from children in respect to religion. They try to teach what they hope will produce paroxysms of repentance, cataclysmal conversion, precocious prayer-meeting talk, and cant prayer—anything which will be an imitation of adult religion. Look at Paul's words which are equally true of child individuals or races. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not able to bear it; nay, nor even now are ye able." Milk not meat; it matters not how attractively we may be able to prepare the latter, it is meat just the same, and indigestion and injury inevitably follow.

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child,

I thought as a child." If this is true of all children they must be treated according to childish characteristics. Training in the good life which shall later be consummated, cultivating the roots in order that in the natural process of growth the flower may be more beautiful and the fruit more perfect, is the secret of the religious education of childhood—or any other childhood education for that matter. If we would not try to give children their theology ready made, but let them make their own, much trouble would be saved them both now and later. The Bible as literature, not dogma, could not help being exceedingly attractive to children, and no doubt of the beautiful stories which the Bible holds for them would be suggested or entertained, any more than for the great classics in which they delight and which they so readily accept.

Roughly speaking, life may be divided into three periods, *viz.*, childhood under twelve years of age, adolescence from twelve to twenty-four, and adult over twenty-four. For each period the presentation and material of religion must be different. Each period has its own method of thought and reaction. Let us first look at the religion of childhood. Of course, we must recognize that what follows is supposed to be general, but that in real life we find no "children in general" or "average children." No child will conform exactly to the description, and if he did the description would be faulty. Each child is a separate problem. Faculties develop unevenly, some slowly, some quickly, some prematurely, some late.

Childhood may be divided into four equal periods of three years each. In fact, this is the division in our Sunday Schools to-day. In the first period, that of infancy, little definite religious training is possible, but the danger is that parents may begin their training too late. Some habits, not definitely religious, but which have a strong religious bear-

ing later, may be instilled, such as that of obedience. The first six years of life is the period of greatest physical activity, during which a child learns as many new things as he does during all the remainder of his life. He is a bundle of instincts and impulses, chief of which are restlessness, curiosity, imitation, credulity, love, fear, and wonder. His ideas are concrete, naive, and usually, visual—he gets his knowledge through his senses almost entirely.

While all things concerning him are important, his credulity and concreteness may be especially noticed. He does not discriminate, he is not critical, everything is accepted by him as true; this trait is also carried largely through the next period. Every truth is based on the word of parents or Sunday-school teachers, and everything he sees or hears is accepted. The questioning spirit which is the breaking up of this credulity starts shortly after eight with most children, but does not reign until nearly the tenth year. The inability to handle mental experiences in an abstract way is also characteristic of the following period, so that these two traits may be handled together for both periods.

Perhaps the best comprehension of these can be gathered from the ideas of God which are held by children from three to nine years of age. Let me present a few examples out of many available. "We mustn't make faces at the Heaven-Man. He will spank us; won't he?" "God lives up in Heaven and takes care of us all the time, especially at night." "God can see everything you do and everything you say, even if you are inside a house." "I fancied God to be an enlarged father. He was tall and massive, with a benignant face, long whiskers, and long white hair, and wore a hat usually of straw." "A great policeman peering around to see what I was at, and would punish me for misdeeds." John Fiske's experience may be taken as typical. He says, "I remember distinctly the conception which I had formed

when five years of age. I imagined a narrow office just over the zenith, with a tall standing-desk running lengthwise, upon which lay several open ledgers bound in coarse leather. There was no roof over this office, and the walls rose scarcely five feet from the floor, so that a person standing at the desk could look out upon the whole world. There were two persons at the desk, and one of them—a tall, slender man, of aquiline features, wearing spectacles, with a pen in his hand and another behind his ear—was God. The other, whose appearance I do not distinctly recall, was an attendant angel. Both were diligently watching the deeds of men and recording them in the ledgers. To my infant mind this picture was not grotesque, but ineffably solemn, and the fact that all my words and acts were thus written down, to confront me at the day of judgment, seemed naturally a matter of grave concern.”<sup>1</sup> The same credulity and concreteness might be shown by presenting children’s words portraying their ideas of the devil, immortality, heaven, hell, angels, etc.

From six to nine the imagination is very vivid and prominent and should then be made use of; this is also a good time to cultivate the emotions, as *e. g.*, a love for parents, God, and truth. All good actions may then be crystallized into habits.

From nine to twelve, sometimes called Prepubescence, considerable takes place in the individual. The intellect develops rapidly and there is an enlargement of capacity, knowledge, thinking, and planning. It is at this age that misdeeds may properly be called sins. The ability of a child is then usually underestimated. Memory is then active, in fact, this is the most receptive period. The child questions things; the age of uncritical credulity is past, and a liking for reality appears, in contrast to the former imaginative

<sup>1</sup> J. Fiske, *The Idea of God*, p. 116.

period. It is at this period that exact statements are often eschewed, and what is said is prefaced by, "I think," "It is my opinion," "They say," etc. This may be due to a morbid conscientiousness, the person being afraid that he might tell a lie. Facts and the relation of things take his attention. He demands justice and has a great respect for law; he is also acquisitive, and rivalry is strong at this age.

I have, very incompletely, enumerated the chief characteristics of the different divisions of childhood, and now wish to make a few general deductions concerning childhood in general. Many religious tenets are taken for granted. There is no question about the being of God, but simply an effort to conceive of Him. Prayer and other religious duties are carried on without a knowledge of their full significance, but the value of these habits to the future religious life cannot be overestimated. Notwithstanding the anthropomorphic, concrete, materialistic, and credulous attitude of mind exhibited in children, it is profitable to teach them religion, and especially so if we recognize the kind which is most acceptable to them, and which may be a foundation upon which the later life may be built. Not only children but adults find it difficult to escape anthropomorphism, yet we do not deny the latter religion.

A religion fitted to each form of development not only assists the individual to pass from one stage of growth to the next, but gives a basis for the next stage to grow upon. Care must be taken, however, not to make statements which will afterward have to be denied, even if they do seem to fit into a particular stage of development, or if they have moral objects in view. This will inevitably lead to doubt. A boy was reproved by his grandmother for neglecting to say his prayers the night before, and she concluded by saying, "God won't take care of you if you don't." To which the boy replied, "Well, He did." Doubt may also be inspired

by making statements about God which are contrary to the child's growing conceptions of justice and goodness.

In a study of the different stages of religious development of the individual, one finds two interesting comparisons. The first is that *in general* the development of the child religion corresponds with that of the race. We have the analogy of the physical. That the body in embryo passes through the various stages of development through which the lower forms of physical life evolved, is but an axiom of embryology. The same general rule seems to hold good for the religious development of childhood, if not for the general childhood mental development. The second comparison is equally interesting. The chronological order of the books of our Bible corresponds also with the childhood development. This would naturally follow from the former comparison. Notice, if you will, that the earlier books are somewhat mythological, then come the historical, then the imaginative literature of the poets and prophets; the ethics of the New Testament are next in order, and finally the doctrinal ideas as found in the New Testament epistles. This comparison, of course, takes us further than childhood, and is rather an epitome of the whole individual religious life. In the main, though, the development is from the concrete, tangible, and visible, to the abstract, intangible, and invisible.<sup>1</sup>

The term Adolescence has a rather indefinite meaning,

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed study of the religion of childhood consult E. Barnes, "Theological Life of a California Child," *Pedagogical Seminary*, II; H. W. Brown, "Thoughts and Reasonings of Children," *Pedagogical Seminary*, II; G. S. Hall, "The Contents of Children's Minds," *Pedagogical Seminary*, I; J. Sully, *Studies of Childhood*; M. W. Shinn, "Some Comments on Babies," *Overland Monthly*, 2d Series, XXIII; J. R. Street, "The Religion of Childhood," *Homiletic Review*, LV; J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 200-212, as well as an increasingly large literature devoted to Sunday-school pedagogy.

but is used to designate a period of the life of every individual generally bounded by the years twelve and twenty-five. It starts with the beginning of puberty and ends with settled young manhood and womanhood. It was formerly considered a physical phenomenon, but the mental characteristics of adolescence are far more startling and equally important to the individual and the race. The body and mind develop contemporaneously and reciprocally; the idea held by many that this is a purely physical change which causes a corresponding mental upheaval, is incorrect. In females, adolescence begins one or two years earlier than in males and ends sooner. In general, adolescence may be bounded in females by the years eleven and twenty-one, and in males by twelve or thirteen and twenty-five. This is general only, and individuals differ greatly. There is also a marked difference in races, as much as two or three years in the average of both boys and girls between the extremes.

Adolescence has been divided into three periods, first, 11-15 in females, 12-16 in males; second, 15-17 in females, 16-18 in males; third, 17-21 in females, 18-24 in males. These three stages may be termed early or ferment stage, middle or crisis stage, and later or reconstruction stage. These are more or less arbitrary divisions. Some affirm that physical adolescence begins before the mental, and others that the opposite is true; we shall probably not make much mistake in thinking of them as contemporaneous.

So much has been written in late years and so careful has the description of the adolescent period been, that to give even a brief *résumé* of the mental characteristics of the different stages would consume more space than could be allowed. This is especially true since the literature of adolescence is so easy of access. We will content ourselves with endeavoring to outline the religious significance of this age.

The adolescent period is the time of the greatest upheaval and change in life; in every respect it is a second birth. Owing to this marked change in every department of life, it is the natural time for the spiritual second birth. Experience has shown that what we affirm theoretically is true practically. This new meaning and mystery of life in adolescence tend to bring in a new and distinct epoch in religious experience. There is a real departure from the little, dependent, irresponsible animal self, into the larger, independent responsible, outreaching, and upreaching moral life of manhood and womanhood.

With boys, this is more apt to be associated with doubt; with girls, with times of storm and stress. With boys the crisis is more liable to come when alone, with girls in a church service; but however it appears, come it will. One great service which Starbuck has rendered to us is in showing us the close parallel between the conversion of young people brought up among evangelical surroundings, and the spontaneous growth into a larger religious experience which is a normal phase of adolescence in every class of human beings, Christian or pagan. They come about the same time and with similar symptoms. The age is somewhere between thirteen and seventeen, differing slightly with males and females, the females developing younger.<sup>1</sup> Spontaneous awakenings come entirely independent of revival or special external pressure, and may be just as sudden and accompanied by just as strange phenomena as conversions. The conclusion seems inevitable that conversion is a normal adolescent phenomenon, a part of or result of the passage from childhood to maturity—a part of the new birth of the self.

<sup>1</sup> Those interested in a statistical inquiry regarding the age of conversion may consult G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 45; E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 33; G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, II, pp. 288-291.

But we must not infer that every one is to experience conversion, even with religious influences surrounding him. Childhood training and temperament may be such that a crisis is avoided, or even with new religious impulses a decision for righteousness may not be made. Adolescence is the normal time for conversion, if that is necessary; but with some individuals through arrested development or incorrect development it is misplaced, and it or spontaneous awakening does not come, regardless of the occasion, until later in life. Starbuck<sup>1</sup> gives one case as late as fifty-five. On the other hand, it is as useless as it is foolish to try to prevent a change in religious ideas from those of childhood, but the adolescent may be very suggestible regarding the form which the change will take and the manner in which it will come.

Religion of all forms has taken advantage of adolescence, and by judicious management has used it for the decisive time for the individual.<sup>2</sup> This is true of all branches of Christianity also, for while evangelistic churches have laid emphasis on adolescence as the age of conversion, the ritualistic churches have emphasized this time for confirmation and first communion. Coe calls attention to the fact that there is a second time of awakening following conversion, called by the individuals by some such name as sanctification or perfect consecration, which may make itself felt at thirteen, more strongly at seventeen, and reaches a maximum at twenty, after which it rapidly declines.<sup>3</sup>

Religious awakenings of adolescence may come in all

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> See A. H. Daniels, "The New Life," *American Journal of Psychology*, VI, pp. 61, *et. seq.*

<sup>3</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 46; compare E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, pp. 205 ff.

sorts of ways. Far from there being any rule, we had better say that no two persons' experiences are the same. Very frequently they are undoubtedly the result of subconscious forces. Notice the following: "At fourteen I became a Christian. I can give no cause of the change. I then seemed to realize for the first time all the truths that had been presented before." "One young lady relates that, at the age of fourteen while she was walking in a neighbour's garden, suddenly the thought came to her that she had passed from death unto life. There were no especial emotional manifestations, yet this event she has always looked upon as a decisive one." It may be that the ordinary church services assume new meaning and importance, or that a word in a sermon or an experience of years before suddenly becomes the key-note of a vital and vivid experience.

At other times (seasons of storm and stress are a natural part of adolescence) conversion is preceded by a sense of sin similar to that already described in the preceding chapter, including helplessness, depression, anxieties, fears, and doubts, sometimes accompanied by bodily affections. Even without conversion these phenomena may be present; the whole process may be experienced and only the conversion factor be lacking. In connection with seasons of stress the characteristic mental differences of sex will probably come to the surface.

From twelve to fifteen, during early adolescence, is the most critical age, the critical spirit culminating at about fourteen. This is followed by diminishing critical activity, especially on religious questions. The criticism is based on a very high standard; nothing but absolute truth will satisfy the adolescent. There can be no compromise, and no argument can effect a compromise. Nothing less than absolutely right conduct can be right at all; what others call prudence, he calls disloyalty to principle. In his frequent

arguments he gives no quarter, and every thing must be four-square, or condemnation is inevitable. He has lofty ideals and high ambitions, and he deals in superlatives only. After two or three years, about the period of middle adolescence, the critical spirit is quiescent; about the beginning of later adolescence it again appears, but not in so intense a form.

Connected with this critical attitude, contemporaneous with it, and as a result of it, comes doubt. Doubt is constitutional, must be looked for and dealt with, not as a crime but more as a disease. Shepherding care is needed at no other time so much as during doubting seasons. Patience and sympathetic explanation must be given. This doubt is born of an attempt at rational explanation; when a correct adjustment of relations is made, doubt vanishes. With the greatest care it is probable that it cannot be entirely eliminated, as a certain amount during adolescence seems to be normal. Over two-thirds of Starbuck's respondents experienced a season of doubt, and Hall reports from the examination of over seven hundred cases of young men religiously reared in Protestant colleges, that there were very few who had not wrestled with serious doubts, some so serious indeed as to drive the doubters to suicide.

While doubt is a part of adolescent phenomena, yet it is occasioned by a rebellion against authority—an independent attitude toward all things; by a re-examination of the bases of beliefs; and by the height of critical standards. The doubts may continue to the end of adolescence, but should be dissipated before this time. At any rate, they seldom last beyond thirty. Some accept a basis of authority, being weary of the struggle, others find a refuge in argument or reasoning, while still others lose their doubts almost imperceptibly by the quiet, unobtrusive development of some experience or belief.

There is some difference of opinion as to the need of experiencing this doubting, stormy period. That it is present with us now all agree, but Coe, for instance, opines that while the ground is ripe for it in the peculiar nervous conditions of adolescence, the seeds which produce it are the modern conditions of life, which put such a burden on the adolescent, and the religious training of the home and the church. Whatever the cause, we know that it complicates the religious conditions, for the adolescent must make his own religion; dogmatic statements, even of the least objectionable kind, are subjected to a keen criticism, and all the more so because of the dogmatism. The best one can do is to skilfully suggest, and the adolescent rejects or admits at his pleasure. He is liable to want more information than he can comprehend, and is, therefore, satisfied with much less than he asked for.

The adolescent's criticism never ends with doctrines and companions, but his strict sense of justice causes him to be as severe on himself as on any one, yes, at times, more severe. A most exacting and unreasonable conscientiousness is developed, and is merciless in its demands.<sup>1</sup> Afraid of telling a lie he safeguards every sentence, every act is measured by some rule which he applies in the most absurd fashion; foolish vows are made and extravagant actions are performed to conform to the vows. Self-sacrifice in an unostentatious way may rival that of the Middle Ages. At times the conscience becomes hyperæsthetic and morbid, although the dividing line between the normal and abnormal is not easy to trace in adolescence. Here, a girl would not take a pin without asking; or another must say "Thank you" for every flower of a large bunch which was placed in her hand one by one; or a young man must pull up every

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 67-103, deals very intelligently with adolescent difficulties.

weed, or get off the binder and procure every missed stock of grain.

The doubt may appear in regard to the individual's life work, as *e. g.*, between being a missionary and a business man, both, however, with the idea of personal consecration uppermost; or in regard to one's personal religious status. In this latter case, fear of having committed the unpardonable sin is uppermost, as it is in most morbid religious fears, but innocent and insignificant things are magnified into heinous sins, and doubts about being a Christian are experienced. The connection between sex and Christianity in adolescence will be reserved for discussion in a future chapter, but a word regarding ill temper may be fitting. Most irritability of temper is the result of nerve fatigue, whether in child or adult. Instead of allowing this to be an additional source of self-condemnation, the true state of affairs should be explained and means taken to alleviate it. Sympathetic instruction should take the place of scolding.

For Christianity adolescence is a critical and important period; in fact, Christianity has been characterized as an adolescent religion. "What we need is a religion which will keep us young, which will keep us active and free from sentimentality and morbidity in middle life, and which will keep us interested in life and its ethical problems into old age. And it seems to be the peculiar mission of the religion of Jesus to keep people adolescents in spirit all their life. In this, to my mind, lies the superiority of the religion of Jesus from a psychological point of view."<sup>1</sup>

Although there is a sharp break in some respects from the childhood experiences, yet the adolescent reconstruction depends on the childhood training. As in childhood, so the adolescent should be induced to give free scope to his re-

<sup>1</sup> J. du Buy, "Stages of Religious Development," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, p. 23.

ligious instincts, and develop along natural lines. While sympathy, suggestion, and training are undoubtedly helpful, each individual is a distinct problem, and must be allowed to take original lines of growth.<sup>1</sup>

If childhood and adolescence have been passed satisfactorily from a religious point of view, adult religion comes to be a period of reconstruction and development along the lines of those accepted in later adolescence. The early lessons of childhood are not without influence all through life, and with many people they are very important. Some believe, because they have always believed, others believe because it is too difficult for them to think for themselves, and still others take religious doctrines for granted because their friends do. This credulity of adult life is different from that of childhood because the former is tinged with rationality. A smaller class take the authority of experts as a basis for their beliefs, but still sift it through reason, and a few take the trouble to find a basis for their belief by argument and rational thinking. Still others espouse doctrines which are comfortable and pleasant, those which they "will to believe," and a larger number have mystical experiences of a more or less vivid character which establish belief in a far larger number of doctrines than are touched by the experience. For example, a person may have a feeling or sense of the presence of God; this does not only confirm his belief in the being of God, but confirms his belief in all other orthodox doctrines. The adult belief may be progressive, developing from a primitive credulity to independent thought. Post adolescent conversions are not so

<sup>1</sup> For further information on the adolescent problem, especially as it concerns religion, see G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, I and II; G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 29-103; E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*; J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 212-230, and innumerable works on Sunday School Pedagogy.

harmful as the childhood ones, and usually are the only source of hope. On the other hand, they are more difficult to initiate, more rarely effective, and more fraught with hindrances and obstacles.

## CHAPTER XX

### SEX

“A woman impudent and mannish grown  
Is not more loathed than an effeminate man.”—SHAKESPEARE.

It requires neither trained powers of observation nor profound psychological perspicacity to discover a difference between man and woman. We recognize a feminine type (to which no woman completely corresponds), and a masculine type (to which no man completely corresponds); *i. e.*, we expect certain habits of mind, certain reactions, and certain modes of thought in every woman for no other reason than simply that she is a woman; the same is true concerning men. These are probably modified by general education and individual training, but the underlying tendencies remain more or less constant. To say that there is a greater divergence between extremes in women on the one hand, and extremes in men on the other, and between different races, than between the two sexes, does not in the least mitigate against the main contention. Neither are we to be led astray by a dispute concerning the comparative superiority. We cannot say that one is higher than the other, for we have no standard by which to gauge them; we can only say that each sex is superior in its own way, and that the two are complementary.

It is most natural to suppose that, if there is a psychological difference between the sexes, it would manifest itself in religious reactions, and such we find to be the case. We can clearly differentiate two types of Christianity, the dividing

line being that of the sexes. In a recent interesting but far from convincing volume,<sup>1</sup> the thesis is stated and defended that the ultimate difference between the sexes is that women have no souls, the soul being a masculine characteristic. If we accept this it would be foolish to speak of feminine religion or morality, and this, in fact, that author holds. On the other hand, it is not uncommon to hear persons make the statement that women are far more religious than men, even to the extent of giving to women a monopoly of religion. The facts seem to be at variance with both theories, and we will proceed with the assumption that both sexes are religious and both equally so. I trust that the data presented may be convincing on both points.

The task which first lies before us is to present the psychological peculiarities of the two sexes, which seem most important to us from the standpoint of religion. It may be well to note in the beginning that primitive men and women presented fewer divergencies, both physically and psychologically, than later, and also that at the present time while the physical differences are becoming modified by outdoor exercise and a more sensible idea of life on the part of women, the greatest change seems to be in a growing psychological similarity. The extremes meet, and in the times between we find the greatest dissimilarity. The characteristics have been summed up as follows:

“Man is fitted for feats of strength and bursts of energy; woman has more stability and endurance. While woman remains nearer to the infantile type, man approaches more to the senile. The extreme variational tendency of man expresses itself in a larger percentage of genius, insanity, and idiocy; woman remains more nearly normal.”<sup>2</sup>

“If one may speak of types of mind and not of individuals,

<sup>1</sup> O. Weininger, *Sex and Character*.

<sup>2</sup> W. I. Thomas, *Sex and Society*, p. 51.

it is within the truth to say that woman is a creature of intuition, of mystical emotion, rather than of intellect and rational inhibition.”<sup>1</sup>

“That men should have greater cerebral variability and, therefore, more originality, while women have greater stability and, therefore, more ‘common sense,’ are facts both consistent with the general theory of sex and verifiable in common experience. The woman, conserving the effects of past variations, has what may be called the greater integrating intelligence; the man, introducing new variations, is stronger in differentiation. The feminine passivity is expressed in greater patience, more open-mindedness, greater appreciation of subtle details, and consequently what we call more rapid intuition. The masculine activity leads to a greater power of maximum effort, of scientific insight, or cerebral experiment with impressions, and is associated with an unobservant and impatient disregard of minute details, but with a stronger grasp of generalities. Man thinks more, woman feels more. He discovers more, but remembers less; she is more receptive, and less forgetful.”<sup>2</sup>

To approach the subject more in detail, we find that undoubtedly women are intellectually inferior to men. The foremost places in every department of science, literature, and art have been occupied by men, and the number of women who have shown in any form the very highest order of genius is infinitesimally small. Even in music and painting, for which they seem especially adapted, they have failed to obtain the first positions. “Women are intellectually more desultory and volatile than men, they are more occupied with particular instances than with general principles; they judge rather by intuitive perceptions than by deliberative reasoning or past experience. They are, however, usually

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 293.

<sup>2</sup> Geddes and Thompson, *The Evolution of Sex.*, p. 271.

superior to men in nimbleness and rapidity of thought, and in the gift of tact or the power of seizing speedily and faithfully the finer inflexions of feeling, and they have, therefore, often obtained very great eminence in conversation, as letter-writers, as actresses, and as novelists."<sup>1</sup> Women, being inferior in judgment, accept opinions of others more readily, men wish to reason out the matter; as a check to this, women are naturally very conservative, sometimes to the point of obstinacy. They have greater acquisitiveness, but less power of creative thought than men.

In the volitional element men also appear superior. While woman excels in the fortitude with which she bears burdens, especially of long duration, she is less aggressive and independent, less firm, decisive, and determined. He wants to fight, she wins by tact and love. He has tenacity of purpose to overcome obstacles and embark on new enterprises, she, being more timid, confines her efforts to well-known work, which, however, she develops more persistently. The active and the heroic attract him; in the passive and the prosaic she finds her work.

In the realm of emotions it is the man who is inferior. This is true, even allowing a considerable discount for emotional excesses. To women and the influences which they exert must be attributed the tender strains of life. Women are affectionate, sympathetic, compassionate. Altruism, long-suffering, and self-denial follow in the train. Although they are patient and long-suffering under pain, disappointment, and adversity, they are, as a rule, more liable than men to be fickle and to show indecision of character. In men the emotions are more under control. The æsthetic emotions are more often present in women, and "feminine 'taste' is proverbially good in regard to the smaller matters of every-day life, although it becomes, as a rule, untrust-

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, p. 358.

worthy in proportion to the necessity for intellectual judgment.”<sup>1</sup>

Coupled with this emotional element is a great tendency to suggestibility, or, as Ellis calls it, “affectability.” Women respond to all forms of stimuli more readily than do men, and in the religious epidemics we noticed the large proportion of women involved. Even in spite of herself, woman responds to influences from without, and thereby more easily than man adapts herself to new conditions. This is the basis of the tact which is so characteristic of woman. Example and influence are more potent with her. This is what is meant by saying that crowds are always feminine. Latin crowds especially so.<sup>2</sup> The crowd is very emotional and particularly suggestible, as we have already seen in dealing with the subject of contagious phenomena.

Now what do these things mean to religion, what effect do they have on masculine and feminine Christianity? Very much as we shall see. Starbuck in his investigations found the sexual differences quite striking.<sup>3</sup> The age of conversion varies with the sex, the feminine being nearly two years earlier. The average duration of conviction was twenty-four weeks among females and sixty-nine weeks among males; there were six times as many females as males converted in regular church services, and twice as many males as females converted at home; both of these facts show the tendency of males to think things out. As a further indication of the prominence of intellectual factors in males he found fear, brooding, and morbid sensitiveness prominent among women at times of storm and stress, while the prominent elements among men were anxiety over doubt, and

<sup>1</sup> G. J. Romanes, *Mental Differences between Men and Women, Nineteenth Century*, XXI, p. 658.

<sup>2</sup> G. Le Bon, *The Crowd*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*.

friction with surroundings. Doubt came to men more often on account of educational influences, and to women as a natural growth. "Adolescence is for women primarily a period of storm and stress, while for men it is in the highest sense a period of doubt." "The volitional element seems to be greater among males, while females are more liable to remain in helplessness and uncertainty. The difference seems to indicate that feeling plays a larger part in the religious life of females, while males are controlled more by intellection and volition."

Intense emotions are more prevalent with males; women are more imaginative, men want something tangible. There are more unconscious elements present in females in conversion, and here males respond best to subjective forces, and females to objective influences, such as imitation and social pressure. This means, of course, that women are more suggestible or "affectable." We see that these data, obtained from investigations in religion, and especially with conversion, correspond very closely with the general description presented above.

Coe, in similar investigations, found religious experiences coinciding with those of Starbuck. He says<sup>1</sup> that we might expect that women "brought up under continuous religious incitement and suggestion would exhibit greater continuity of religious feeling and less tendency to pass through religious crises. . . . With men, religion tends more to focus itself into intense crises. Women yield sooner and show more placid progress, while men pass through more definite periods of awakening." Religion with women is "something all pervasive and easily taken for granted." "Men are more likely . . . to resist certain religious tendencies up to the point of explosion." Among those who sought striking transformations, more women than men succeeded in obtain-

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 237 ff.

ing them. The women report satisfactory feelings among conversion experiences, and the men forgiveness and matters dealing with right and wrong. "With women, religion is more like the intuitive tact that helps them so much in all the relations of life; with men, it requires the clumsier instruments of deliberation."

Women are superior morally; men commit far more crimes. Women being more self-sacrificing, lead in both impulsive and deliberative virtue. Women are more tender, compassionate and chaste. They are less liable to intemperance and brutality, but more prone to the petty forms of vanity, jealousy, spitefulness, and ambition, and they are inferior to men in active courage. In the ethics of the intellect women are below men. They do not love truth as such, but what they call "the truth," and hate any who differ with them. There is little impartiality or doubt in women. They are generous in acts, but not in opinions nor judgments. Men are just, women merciful; men excel in energy, self-reliance, perseverance, and magnanimity; women in humility, gentleness, modesty, and endurance. Realizing imagination causing pity and love, and dwelling on the unseen, are better in women; they also have more vivid religious realizations. The sympathies of women are more intense but less wide; woman's imagination individualizes more, her affections are for leaders rather than for causes. In benevolence, women excel in charity, which alleviates individual suffering, rather than in philanthropy, which deals with large masses and prevents instead of allays calamity.<sup>1</sup>

A passage in a letter by Rev. John H. Noyes, the founder and leader of the Oneida Creek Colony, reveals his idea of the difference between sects which have the sexual emotions prominent in their scheme, according to the masculine or feminine leadership.

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, pp. 359 ff.

“One dominant peculiarity of the Shakers, as also of the Bundling Perfectionists, which determined their style of socialism, was, in my opinion, the *Leadership of Women*. Man of himself would never have invented Shakerism, and it would have been very difficult to have made him a medium of inspiration for the development of such a system. It is not in his line. But it is exactly adapted to the proclivities of woman in a state of independence or ascendancy over man. Love between the sexes has two stages: the courting stage and the wedded stage. Women are fond of the first stage. Men are fond of the second. Women like to talk about love; but men want the love itself. Among the Perfectionists the women led the way in the bundling with purposes as chaste as those of the Shakers. For a time they had their way; but in time the men had their way.”<sup>1</sup>

If there exist this difference between masculine and feminine reactions to religion, it is natural for us to ask why this should be. Some late writers consider that the education and environment of sex explain all.

“The point to be emphasized as the outcome of this study is that, according to our present light, the psychological differences of sex seem to be largely due, not to difference in average capacity, nor to difference in type of mental activity, but to differences in the social influences brought to bear on the developing individual from early infancy to adult years. The question of the future development of the intellectual life of women is one of social necessities and ideals rather than the inborn psychological characteristics of sex.”<sup>2</sup> Miss Thompson is not alone, but is followed by others with slightly different views.

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Dixon, *Spiritual Wives*, II, p. 180 f.

<sup>2</sup> H. B. Thompson, *Psychological Norms in Men and Women*, p. 182; see also E. Densmore, *Sex Equality*; and T. C. Shaw, “The Special Psychology of Women,” *The Lancet*, May 2, 1908, who strongly advocate this position.

“Even the most serious women of the present day stand, in any work they undertake, in precisely the same relation to men that the amateur stands to the professional in games.” “Scientific pursuits and the allied intellectual occupations are a game which women have entered late, and the lack of practice is frequently mistaken for lack of natural ability.” “At present we seem justified in inferring that the differences in mental expression between the higher and lower races and between men and women are no greater than they should be in view of the existing differences in opportunity. Indeed, when we take into consideration the superior cunning as well as the superior endurance of women, we may even raise the question whether their capacity for intellectual work is not under equal conditions greater than in men. Cunning is the analogue of constructive thought. . . . Endurance is also a factor of prime importance in intellectual performance, for here as in business life ‘it is doggedness as does it.’”<sup>1</sup>

This view apparently over-emphasizes an element which for a time was overlooked. It seems hardly possible that education and development can explain all the differences. Some who have recognized both factors have seemed to come nearer to the truth, while those who recognize simply the organic cause err in the other extreme. Spencer states it in this way: “Just as certainly as they (women) have physical differences which are related to the respective parts they play in the maintenance of the race, so certainly have they psychical differences similarly related to their respective shares in the rearing and protection of offspring.” The double cause is noted in the following. “A distinction must be made between the incidental qualities of her nature due to her environment, . . . and those more fundamental qualities due in history to her wife’s relationship and mother’s

<sup>1</sup> W. I. Thomas, *Sex and Society*, pp. 306, 307, 312, and 313.

heart. . . . The physical differences between the sexes comprise many secondary characteristics which are tokens of varying mental life."<sup>1</sup> We recognize the same position in the following: "Of all the pricks against which it is hard to kick, the hardest are those which are presented by Nature in the form of facts. Therefore, we may begin by wholly disregarding those short-sighted enthusiasts who seek to overcome the natural and fundamental distinctions of sex. No amount of female education can ever do this, nor is it desirable that it should."<sup>2</sup>

As an indication of the change which has come in the mentality of woman lately, especially through her new position in society, notice this: "She will never be man. Woman she will always be, and love will be her sceptre and home will be her throne. But the time will come when she will be less impulsively emotional, less highly suggestible, than she is now."<sup>3</sup>

"The affectability of women exposes them, as I have had occasion to point out, to very diabolical manifestations. It is also the source of very much of what is most angelic in women—their impulses of tenderness, their compassion, their moods of divine childhood. Poets have racked their brains to express and to account for this mixture of heaven and hell. We see that the key is really a very simple one: both the heaven and hell of women are but aspects of the same physiological affectability. Seeing this, we may see, too, that those worthy persons who are anxious to cut off the devil's tail might find, if they succeeded, that they had also shorn the angel of her wings. The emotionality of

<sup>1</sup> C. D. Case, *The Masculine in Religion*, p. 33 f. This little book will be found very valuable in a study of the subject of the relation of the sexes in religion.

<sup>2</sup> G. J. Romanes, *Mental Differences between Men and Women*, *Nineteenth Century*, XXI, p. 667.

<sup>3</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 293.

woman within certain limits must decrease; there are those who will find consolation in the gradual character of that decrease.”<sup>1</sup>

While there has been undoubtedly a change in the minds of women during the last half-century, and while we may expect a further change by which the sexes will draw closer together, we still find fundamental differences between them which similar education and environment can never eliminate. This is well. The sexes are not antagonistic, but complementary; and the culmination which some apparently hope for, the masculine conquest of the feminine, would be a loss which all should deplore. More compassion in man and more control in woman would be a condition to be desired, but this will never make a woman out of a man, nor a man out of a woman. The sexual differences among all mammals are not only physical but mental as well, and this state exists apart from arbitrary schemes of education; it is only to be expected, therefore, that a natural difference should exist among the sexes in the human species.

It has been remarked that the chief characteristics of Greek art were masculine, and as art was but an expression of the moral and religious, the same may be predicated of Greek and other Pagan religions. The admired virtues were distinctively masculine: courage, self-assertion, magnanimity, and patriotism; chastity, modesty, and charity, the feminine virtues, were, with the exception of conjugal fidelity, much undervalued. The illustrious women of antiquity owe their fame to masculine qualities, which they were able to achieve, rather than to the feminine virtues which they developed. In the Spartan mother and the mother of the Gracchi we admire the masculine repression of grief, and in Portia and Arria the majestic masculine courage;

<sup>1</sup> H. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, p. 315.

feminine virtues were unnamed—they were not worthy of record. The charge is made that “the change from the heroic to the saintly ideal, from the ideal of Paganism to the ideal of Christianity, was a change from a type which was essentially male to one which was essentially feminine.”<sup>1</sup>

It is pointed out that Stoicism was the system which was most emphatically masculine, while Christianity, in which humility, meekness, gentleness, patience, trust, and love predominate, is essentially feminine. Even in these days, when there is the tendency toward the surrender of women to the masculine ideal, the charge is reiterated and it behooves us to ask if it is true. Is Christianity feminine? I believe that, in general, it is. In our churches women predominate in the membership in the relation of about thirteen to seven, and in attendance at church services even greater than that; and if the ideals of Christianity which are usually held, and the sermons which are most often preached, are examined, it will readily be seen that they are distinctly feminine.<sup>2</sup> It is charged by some men that we worship weakness rather than strength; this is not so. We worship feminine strength rather than masculine. “The namby-pamby, goody-goody conception of goodness is simply an exaggeration, amounting to caricature, of the gentler virtues in which women excel.”

If this is the situation to-day, we must look for causes, and the proper place to begin, is with the founder, Jesus. Was Jesus a feminine man? Are the virtues which He espoused, and the doctrines which He taught, distinctively feminine? I believe we must answer “No,” to both of these questions. If His character and doctrines are examined, apart from the traditions of the church and the interpretations of the past, it will be found that He ministered

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, pp. 361 ff.

<sup>2</sup> C. D. Case, *The Masculine in Religion*, pp. 22-32; G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 247 f.

to both the masculine and feminine natures, as would be necessary for any one who was to be the Savior and ideal of both sexes. He was not so compassionate that He could be called weak, and not so just that He could be called cruel. We find a most splendid balance.<sup>1</sup>

So prevalent does the idea seem to be that Jesus was effeminate, and so exclusively are the feminine virtues emphasized in His church to-day, that it is not necessary to mention this side. The manliness of Christ is the matter in dispute. Case concludes, from the answers to a *questionnaire* which he distributed, that there are four phases of Christ's life that are attractive to men when properly presented, *viz.*, the human as the counterpart to the divine Christ, the personal as opposed to the theological Christ, the modern Christ versus the ancient Christ, and the masculine Christ as opposed to the feminine. It is the last point which particularly interests us here. But is there a masculine Christ? If we follow the interpretation of the Roman Church, which most do, we should answer in the negative. Roman Catholic art pictures Him as most effeminate, and He is always described as the passive sufferer, with hyper-developed emotions. Let us see. He was a sufferer, but not a passive one. In no way can we see the resolution, the strength, and persistence of will as by viewing His life in connection with the suffering. "He steadfastly set His face toward Jerusalem." He conquered notwithstanding the suffering. Yes, He conquered by and through the suffering. He was not the docile, buffeted fool, but using the very means by which others sought to destroy Him, He became the victor and hero. See Him as He stands, the only calm one in Pilate's hall; see Him as He waits for the mob to lay hands on Him, the

<sup>1</sup> See T. Hughes, *Manliness of Jesus*; R. E. Speer, *The Man Christ Jesus*; for brief analyses, see C. D. Case, *The Masculine in Religion*, chap. X; G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 256-260.

only one among enemies or friends not manifesting fear; see Him as with scourge He cleanses the temple, and see if there was a weak, passive individual there. In circumstances where weak men would have quailed, He stood, by the very power of the strength of His will, and overcame.

Neither was the doctrine which He presented of a passive character. On the contrary, in contrast to Judaism He presented the active phase of life. His commands were, "Thou Shalt," Judaism said, "Thou shalt not"; and here we see the essential difference between the active and passive natures. His instructions in specific incidents point not to the effeminate life, but to the strong, active, perhaps even harsh duty, especially when He was dealing with men. He did not encourage the rich young man in the life of luxury and ease, but prescribed for him the most drastic remedy, an act capable of testing the masculine qualities.

Now, what is true of the will we can predicate of the intellect. Were not His thoughts profound, touching the very depths of human nature? Some of the principles which He enunciated are being exploited to-day as new discoveries. Was not His plan one worthy of the highest commendation? True, it was despised at the time, but it has stood the test of nearly two millenniums and is more admired to-day than ever before. Do not His tilts with His enemies who were schooled in the greatest intellectuality of their times show His keen analysis and brilliant acumen? He taught with authority, because the people recognized His intellectual greatness, He was sagacious and sane. He was the essence of originality and refused simply to copy what tradition presented to Him.

Marvellous in self-control, in temptation, and when taunted; splendid in the moral courage which He showed when compromise seemed the part of policy, and strong as a leader and commander of men, He stands before us supremely

manly. In saying this it is but just that we should mention His emotional nature. Tender He was, kind, loving, self-sacrificing, sympathetic, and compassionate—all of these. He presents to us that strength of will and intellect characteristic of man, and that strength and quality of the emotional nature characteristic of woman. To follow Him it is not necessary for men to become effeminate, nor for women to play the man. One becomes not less a man nor less a woman by being Christ-like. No peculiar temperament must be cultivated, no eccentricity assumed, no extraordinary conduct developed, in order to be Christ's disciple; but each may follow in his own way, providing he act naturally.

The all-sidedness of His personality and the comprehensiveness of His doctrine attract all men, however different they may be. "To be strong and yet tender, brave and yet kind, to combine in the same breast the temper of a hero with the sympathy of a maiden—this is to transform the ape and the tiger into what we know ought to constitute the man."<sup>1</sup> This description must lead us to Jesus as the true ideal of manliness.

Down through the ages there has been a strange mixture of the masculine and feminine in Christianity. The offices of the church have always been held by men, and even today there is a prejudice against women preachers. The cruelty manifested at times and the organized military deflection of the church during the crusades were undoubtedly masculine. On the other hand, monasticism and the epidemics of the more emotional and transitory character were feminine. The worship of the Virgin Mary, "The Mother of God," and the artistic and dogmatic elements introduced into the church, were also feminine. The unbalanced attachment to the person of Christ rather than to His great

<sup>1</sup> G. J. Romanes, *Mental Differences between Men and Women, Nineteenth Century*, XXI, p. 661.

doctrines is another feminine trait. In the Middle Ages religion was feminine because the great mass of men took part in the practical things of life, while women indulged in religion, and the great trouble was that one was set over against the other.

In the religious upheaval following the Reformation, it is undoubtedly true that the Roman Catholic Church followed the feminine type of Christianity, while Protestantism followed more closely the masculine type. In addition to retaining the Virgin worship, Catholicism by music, painting, impressive architecture, and solemn pageantry fostered modes of feeling and imagination rather than of thought and will, and by the assertion of supreme authority attracted women whose part is to lean rather than to stand. On the other hand, Protestantism, by asserting the dignity and duty of private judgment and impressing the sense of individual responsibility, furnished a religion for men of which Puritanism was the most masculine form.

Catholicism softens the character, while Protestantism strengthens it, and the danger is that they may degenerate into weakness or hardness. Loyalty and humility flourish best among Roman Catholics, for these are essentially feminine virtues; the masculine virtues of liberty and self-assertion are found more generally among Protestants. It was a mistake that Protestantism, in endeavoring to root out the evil of Catholicism, did not reform rather than destroy the conventual system which produced in some cases a splendid type of woman. We are to-day endeavoring to restore its semblance by different female orders, but we have lost four hundred years of efficient service.<sup>1</sup> While Protestantism rejected the worship of the Virgin, it still retains her characteristics in her Son, and holds the passive virtues in disproportionate esteem. It is well to note that the develop-

*the  
Romanist  
has  
made  
both  
of feminine*

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, pp. 368 ff.

ment of Christianity toward the feminine type has done a good service in elevating woman, and this is no small service to civilization and advancement.

However true it may be that Protestantism emphasizes more than Catholicism the masculine type of Christianity, we must still admit, I think, that our churches are one-sided and that the feminine continues to be over-emphasized. If this is the case, we should expect to find, what we actually do find, an alienation of strong men from the church, many of whom take the traditional view of the church, because they are not acquainted with the more masculine type of Christianity, which is being presented from some pulpits to-day. Women are not more religious than men, but they have had their wants supplied, while men who have hungered and thirsted after righteousness, have been handed something indigestible.

In our more modern system of living some additional reasons may be given why the feminine type is fostered. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." The mothers have been the religious teachers in the homes and in the Sunday Schools, and the female type of Christianity has been taught boys and girls alike, and only this type has been presented. Our new views on pedagogy are remedying this in the Sunday Schools, at least. The revival method has been an important factor in continuing the predominance of women in the churches. "Woman is easily swayed by emotion. Her mental constitution is fertile soil for external suggestion by a speaker or by the example of a friend. And it is not at all wonderful that the drawing of the gospel net should reveal so frequently an excess of the feminine among the multitude of fishes."<sup>1</sup> Those churches which use the revival method most extensively in procuring new members, have found this state-

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 293 f.

ment to be true. On the other hand, some churches which shun revivals, have catered to women by the artistic quality of the service and the passive quality of duty; the result has therefore not been far different.

“Does not the worship of material luxury and wealth, which constitutes so large a portion of the ‘spirit’ of the age, make somewhat for effeminacy and unmanliness? Is not the exclusively sympathetic and facetious way in which most children are brought up to-day—so different from the education of a hundred years ago, especially in evangelical circles—in danger, in spite of its many advantages, of developing a certain trashiness of fibre? Are there not hereabouts some points of application for a renovated and revised ascetic discipline?”

“Many of you would recognize such dangers, but would point to athletics, militarism, and individual and national enterprise and adventure as the remedies. These contemporary ideals are quite as remarkable for the energy with which they make for heroic standards of life, as contemporary religion is remarkable for the way in which it neglects them. War and adventure assuredly keep all who engage in them from treating themselves too tenderly.”<sup>1</sup>

One may see that the first influence which Professor James names, is far more influential in the church than the latter, especially as war and some forms of athletics are not recognized by the church with much fervor. Virility, however, will manifest itself, and must make itself felt in Christianity as in other departments of life, especially when the MAN Jesus is better known.

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 365.

## CHAPTER XXI

### INTELLECT

“’Tis the mind that makes the body rich.”—SHAKESPEARE.

RELIGION is so comprehensive that we find persons approaching it from very many different standpoints, and not infrequently the view which a person obtains of religious truth seems to him to be the only sane one. Consequently, we find persons not only viewing religion through their intellectual spectacles, but defining religion as an intellectual affair. For example, Martineau, Romanes, d’Alviella, Hegel, Harnack, and others present definitions which make the intellect the prime factor as some in their explanations consider other mental activities fundamental. Reason is not the whole of religion but it is one factor—an important factor.

It would be as erroneous to endeavor to depreciate this function as it would be to put all the burden upon it. Both of these one-sided standpoints have been taken by different investigators. Glanvill said, “There is not anything I know, which hath done more mischief to Religion than the disparaging of Reason.” This is probably true, but it would be equally true if we substitute either “Emotion” or “Will” in the place of “Reason.” The same thing would also be true if we substitute “undue exaltation” for “disparaging” in any one of three suggested sentences. In other words, the symmetrical functioning of the various factors of mind is necessary for a healthy religious life.

In pathological cases it is not that some faculty is too

strong, but that a balance is lacking; it matters not how strong the different factors are so long as one is not excessive. It is noticeable that in most abnormal cases the balance is imperfect on account of a deficiency of intellect. The lack in the emotions or even in the will does not appear to be followed by the disastrous results that intellectual deficiency causes. Strong emotions and weak intellect are a most undesirable combination. This, however, is not infrequently seen in saintship. St. Gertrude and Margaret Mary Alacoque were faithful examples of this condition, while St. Teresa appeared to possess a strong intellect except in so far as her judgment of ideals was concerned. Fanaticism is usually associated with strong emotions and will, but with a weak intellect, or at least with a narrow intellectual outlook.

As a rule, the mystics have disparaged the intellect, and where reason was extolled an extraordinary interpretation was given. St. John of the Cross, for example, considered the sacrifice of the reason as part of the crucifixion of the old man. On the other hand, Whichcote, Smith, and other Latitudinarians extolled reason, and through it tried to establish a basis for the union of all Christians. Wordsworth, too, gives the reason an exalted place. These, however, are the exceptions and not the rule, for many follow William Law in his position as a declared enemy of the use of reason in religion.

If it were desirable, which it is not, to emphasize any one intellectual factor or to eliminate any, it would be impossible to do so, for all the mental activities are so intertwined and related that we cannot isolate any. It may be well, then, for us to inquire the relation of the others to the intellect. If we may say that simply because a man is intellectual he is not religious, we may say that he cannot be religious without being intellectual in some sense. There is a universal faith in reason underlying all religions, for human experience,

whether it be religious or otherwise, must undertake to understand itself; the rationality of any religion will finally determine its place and standing, and the only claim which any religion has to be worthy of universal acceptance is an appeal to the court of human reason as a judge of the content of the truth held by it.

We may say that some persons are religious and yet are not very intellectual; that may be so. Intellectuality, like will, is a matter of development, and simply because a man is a man, he is not necessarily, therefore, as intellectual as other men; this is no more true than to say that he has the same amount of will because he is human. A man may be religious without possessing an abundance of intellectuality, but he cannot be religious in the highest or most symmetrical way if he is lacking in this particular. Religion is not an intellectual affair entirely, but it must be reasonable nevertheless; even if some things are inexplicable, they are not thereby *irrational*. The reasonableness of Christianity is its only claim upon the attention of man, and this appeal is becoming stronger rather than weaker.

Religion must not disparage reason—the church which endeavors to crush out criticism and inquiry, is removing the props from under it. The debt which the church owes reason for past services is incalculable, but even more in the future reason will be required.

“Religion must indeed be a thing of the heart; but in order to elevate it from the region of subjective caprice and waywardness, and to distinguish between that which is true and false in religion, we must appeal to an objective standard. That which enters the heart must first be discerned by the intelligence to be *true*. It must be seen as having in its own nature a *right* to dominate feeling, and as constituting the principle by which feeling must be judged. In estimating the religious character of individuals, nations,

or races, the first question is, not how they feel, but what they think and believe—not whether their religion is one which manifests itself in emotions, more or less vehement and enthusiastic, but what are the *conceptions* of God and divine things by which these emotions are called forth. Feeling is necessary in religion, but it is by the *content* or intelligent basis of a religion, and not by feeling, that its character and work are to be determined.”<sup>1</sup>

Reason is the final arbiter; if we are to obey the injunction to “try every spirit,” how are we to do it except by the reason? The question of how we may justify the exalted claims of reason as the supreme judge in all matters, and therefore in religion, is a valid one, but one which would take us too far afield into the theoretical aspects, and also necessarily into the philosophical side of epistemology, to be within our scope here.

Emotion may be—is—one source of religion, but reason is nevertheless a source in the race and in the individual, and, if we can read the signs of the times, promises to be more and more important in the days to come. While the growing importance of reason is apparent, I can hardly agree with Ribot when he says that “religion tends to turn to religious philosophy”; the roots of the emotional nature are too deep-seated to be eradicated—the emotions will simply be guided and controlled. If there is a tendency to-day, it seems to be in the direction of conduct, *i. e.*, the volitional side of religion. Inge says, “The life of the spirit perhaps begins with mere feeling, and perhaps will be consummated in mere feeling, but during its struggles to enter into its full inheritance, it gathers up into itself the activities of all the faculties, which act harmoniously together in proportion as the organism to which they belong is in a healthy state.”<sup>2</sup> The only

<sup>1</sup> J. Caird, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 174 and 186, quoted by W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 331.

criticism I have of this is a doubt of the consummation of life in feeling.

Not only can religion use intellectual processes, but we may say that all of man's reasoning powers are normally committed to the service of religion. The intellect cannot be disregarded as a source. If we should admit the probable beginning of religion in primitive feeling, it would inevitably follow that no more than the first step could be taken without the definite use of intellect in connection with the feeling. Both religion and science, in a search for origins, would come upon intellectual curiosity very near the bottom.<sup>1</sup> Whatever may be the object of religious faith, reason must aid in the construction of it, and it is apparent that only the human intellect and imagination are equal to the task of framing a conception of God. In any religious or other matter, the intellect clarifies and systematizes and declares what is worthy of admiration, and it is noticeable that even those who lay special emphasis on feeling in religion recognize the dependence of feeling upon the intellect for its development.<sup>2</sup> Some have had a distinct sense of the presence of God while engaged in intellectual pursuits, as in the study of science, and even during intellectual doubt;<sup>3</sup> others have approached God only by a search for intellectual consistency.

"The Reformers taught that while the natural understanding is competent to judge of the external evidence of Revelations—to perceive, for example, the force of the argument from miracles—yet, for a spiritual discernment of the contents of Scripture, and for an inward, living perception and conviction of the reality of the gospel there unfolded, the testimony of the Holy Ghost, imparted directly to the heart, is requisite. Luther, in severe and extravagant terms, assails

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, pp. 273, 298 ff., and 320.

<sup>2</sup> C. C. Everett, *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 235.

the pretensions of reason to judge in the sphere of divine truth; but his assault is really directed against reason as darkened by sin and swayed by an unwarrantable bias. Yet, possibly a reminiscence of Occam's teaching on the contradictions of faith and science may have had its influence. The Socinians, who acknowledged no such blinding influence of moral evil, magnified the capacity of reason in its relation to religious inquiry. They not only insisted that nothing contrary to reason could be accepted; they were prone to attribute to a false interpretation scripture doctrines, like the Trinity, which seemed to their minds inconsistent with reason."<sup>1</sup>

We no longer hear of the warfare of science and religion to-day; science is resting more fully on the postulates of religion, and religion is becoming more scientific. This is inevitable as we get a clearer and more distinct understanding of the nature of both. There is less of a disposition to discredit the services of reason in our churches to-day, and a marked sympathy with the use of the intellect in religion is apparent. This is shown, among other ways, by a less frequent use of the antithesis of intellectuality and devotionism than was formerly the case, and even the most emotional are recognizing the use of reason in devotion, and of devotion in the religious use of the reason. Tennyson's words can now be voiced,

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell."

Professor Leuba says, "the will, born blind, generates the intellect in order to have a guide. It is the intellect which interprets and organizes the chaos in which the will finds itself on awakening. In religion, for instance, the intellect spurred to its task by certain needs, creates divinities.

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 440.

There would be no theology if there were no religious needs and purposes. The creative freedom of the intellect is, of course, checked from several sides, chiefly perhaps by the logical claims made by the external world.”<sup>1</sup>

Some have demanded that religion should abandon the intellectual pursuits of deduction and metaphysics and take up induction and criticism; *a priori* conclusions are deprecated and the scientific extolled. There is also a demand for perpetual health and a never-ending natural life in place of sickness and death, but in neither case is there any immediate prospect of a fulfilment of the demand. True, religion may adopt a scientific method, but it cannot be freed from metaphysical assumptions any more than science can. However much we may wish it, religion can never eschew metaphysics, because it is always a theory of reality. This, it is true, is outside our realm of investigation, but is, nevertheless, vital to a correct understanding of the intellectual sphere.

In some recent psychological studies<sup>2</sup> belief is analyzed and divided into three classes. Belief is defined as “the mental attitude of assent to the reality of a given object.” The three divisions are, (1) Primitive Credulity; (2) Intellectual Belief; (3) Emotional Belief. The religion of primitive peoples and of children is that of the first class. Here also should be placed the Christianity of the Middle Ages, notwithstanding the exceptions among a few independent thinkers of that time. The Middle Ages represent the religion ruled by the authority of tradition, and hence must be classed as Primitive Credulity. The religion which rests upon the authority of experts is classed under the second

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, “The Field and Problems of the Psychology of Religion,” *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*.

head—Intellectual Belief. Pratt believes that Primitive Credulity is an experience of the past and is no longer to be reckoned with. Intellectual Belief comes only after doubt, and its conclusions are founded on a rational basis.

The eighteenth century was the age of Rationalism—the age of the religion of the understanding, of which John Locke was the champion. However much men might differ in their conclusions, they agreed that they could only be reached through arguments. Religious faith must be based on reason, and that alone. Out of seventy-seven answers to Pratt's *questionnaire*, twenty-two would be classed as Intellectual Belief, because they rested on the authority of experts. As Primitive Credulity is dead, so is Intellectual Belief dying, and the fate of Christianity rests in the hands of Emotional Belief.

This latter class is in turn divided into two parts. Those whose faith springs from a demand or desire—a will to believe, and those whose faith is controlled by a touch of mysticism, as *e. g.*, those who experience the presence of God, or confuse æsthetic with religious emotions. Of Pratt's seventy-seven answers, forty belong to this class, and sixteen others contain accounts of mystical experiences, although they are not classed here. Another definition of belief is added: not only is belief intellectual assent, but another kind is defined as emotional conviction or reality feeling—the latter being the most common, as it includes the third class. This belief of demand or feeling is vital rather than theoretical, and must be experienced to be known. Much emphasis is laid upon subconscious influences in this form of belief, where the ideas which dominate become more real and vivid through marginal or subconscious feeling.

This is a brief résumé of Professor Pratt's position, and is subject to the following criticisms. In the endeavor to establish his thesis it is over-emphasized—which, by the way,

is a sin so common as to be usually considered no subject for criticism. The value of the intellectual processes he acknowledges in parentheses, but they are undoubtedly undervalued. The greatest fault, and this because it is so misleading, is the name he applies to the last division; it is a misnomer. While he lays undue emphasis on the emotional factor in belief, he also acknowledges that it is a vital, comprehensive experience. What he crowds into the first division of Emotional Belief might, with equal justice, be considered under the rubric of will. In fact, it seems that the voluntary rather than the emotional is playing the leading rôle in religion to-day, and in belief as in other departments. The pragmatic tendency he places under the head of emotionalism, but is it not conative? It appeals to the active, practical affairs of life. But admitting, as he does, the undoubted value and presence of the intellect and the will in the Emotional Belief, even if the Emotions are emphasized, a more comprehensive name might have been chosen, and a more balanced presentation given, which would have allowed us all to agree with him. Belief can never be wholly or principally an emotional characteristic, and I do not believe that the present age is gravitating in that direction. It is largely emphasizing the intellect, and especially the will.

One great difficulty in our discussion of reason, as in many other departments of thought, is in the varying definitions of the word. This is true, whether the word is understood in the popular or psychological and philosophical way. Take, for example, the various ways in which Kant used this term in his critical treatises. This has been a fault, not only of Kant, but of men before and since his time. The difficulty may be that man has never fully succeeded in understanding his own rational nature, and that one-sided or partial views have existed among different men or in the

same man at different times. The word "reason" may, for instance, refer to the logical process of thought, or to that *which determines for us* what appears to be reasonable or unreasonable. Until we get a more exact terminology, we must expect to be misunderstood and ambiguous.

The nature of belief depends, not entirely upon the intellectual processes as such, but upon the nature of the objects of belief.<sup>1</sup> Intellectual assent it may be, but in certain cases it is more. This something more is probably the presence of the emotional and volitional elements, and depends not altogether on how we grasp the object, but on how the object appeals to us. True belief in anything implies that we shall respond actively to all that this belief involves. In some cases mere intellectual assent may be all that is implied in a belief, in other cases it must touch the foundations of our life. Notice the gradations in the following propositions. I believe that the earth is round or flat. I make a simple intellectual assent to this, it demands no response or action on my part except this assent. I believe that honesty is the best policy; that requires more response, the will must become active in carrying out the implications of this belief. I believe that I am a child of God, this permeates every department of life—it comprehends the whole man, intellectual, emotional, and volitional. No mere intellectual assent will suffice, and it requires a response in my every act of life. This is where much ambiguity has been generated. A belief in Jesus Christ does not mean a mere intellectual assent to His having lived in Palestine nearly two millenniums ago, but means the acceptance of His doctrines to-day. Spiritual truths are always more comprehensive than ordinary facts of life, and consequently belief in religious tenets and in scientific and historical facts may mean very different things, although the one word be-

<sup>1</sup> H. W. Clark, *The Philosophy of Christian Experience*, pp. 165-173.

belief is used in both. Of course, to have real belief, its contents must harmonize with our life as a whole, or we must make our lives harmonize with it—it must take in the whole man. This unification of life is the great province of Christianity, it unifies life under one supreme ideal.

Let us now turn to two factors of the intellectual life which are wont to hold a foremost place in religious life—doubt and faith.

Intellectual doubt in religious matters is not uncommon, but may be designated, I believe, as particularly an adolescent phenomenon. This is the age of remorseless criticism, which inevitably lands the individual into doubt of everything that does not satisfy his most exacting standards. During this time the youth demands facts to settle all questions which he may ask—and they are legion—and failing this, is thrown into doubt. He demands far more than he is able to assimilate, and in matters of religion the most he can get is not satisfying. The answers to most of his questions can only be given by the somewhat slow process of experience, and perhaps the most that can be done is to try to guide him and request him to keep his mind open. The activity of experience may satisfy him better than the most exact logical syllogisms. In some cases the doubts may be so serious as to develop into worry or melancholia, but in such cases there are likely to be some physical complications.

In Starbuck's investigations he found that doubts began at about eleven or twelve years, but reached their highest point in females at fifteen or sixteen and in males at eighteen. With both it is later than the period of greatest physical growth and of conversion, but corresponds to that of asserted mental and emotional activity. He also found that educational influences were the most prolific occasion for doubt, furnishing twenty-three per cent. in females, and seventy-three per cent. in males, and that the object of doubt

most frequently centred around conventional theological doctrines, as *e. g.*, authority and inspiration of the Bible, divinity of Christ or existence of God. His conclusion is that "adolescence is for women primarily a period of storm and stress, while for men it is in the highest sense a period of doubt."<sup>1</sup>

We must recognize, however, that doubt is not confined to the adolescent period, even although it may seem to be most active then. Some would characterize the present time as an age of doubt, but if so it is doubt in its best form. It would be more nearly correct to designate it as an age of inquiry; to-day, in our search for truth, we are re-examining every tenet. The iron hand of authority has less weight and is less feared than formerly, and men are thinking for themselves as never before. They feel a personal responsibility for their beliefs, which they cannot shift to ecclesiastical authorities or any one else, however willing they may be to accept it. The creeds which fitted our fathers are as incongruous as would be their clothes; we are taking them for what they are worth. No value is destroyed or depreciated, but the outgrown is laid aside, and we accept that which can be of use to us. Critical inquiry there is to-day and perhaps some less valuable form of doubt, but it is simply a quicker and more energetic method of winnowing, characteristic of our times.

Moses<sup>2</sup> has divided cases of doubt into four classes, according to the result which followed: (1) Those which led to new beliefs or the revelation of new truths. (2) Those resulting in a return to old truths. (3) Those causing either indifference or hostility to religion. (4) Those which never ceased, but continued as a never-ending turmoil. The di-

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 58-67; E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, pp. 232-243.

<sup>2</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, pp. 193-207.

visions might have been made from other standpoints, but this scheme has the virtue of distinguishing the cases where doubt is of value from those where doubt ends disastrously. Doubt is thus not an unmixed evil, nor an inevitable source of good. The emphasis is usually placed on the destructive element in it; perhaps we might tarry for a moment to indicate some of its good features. Doubt stimulates investigation, thereby freeing religion from past errors and passing on to new intellectual victories. Mixed as it usually is with a certain amount of faith, it maintains a balance which assists in a symmetrical and harmonious development; this is especially true in adolescence. Beliefs never become so really ours as when, receiving them not on the authority of others but after a period of doubt, we decide on their truthfulness. Truth usually carries its authority with it, and a careful search stimulated by doubt not unusually betrays its stamp of genuineness. Potentially, if not actually,

“There lies more faith in honest doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

The exaltation of faith by Jesus and the New Testament writers has necessarily made it an important factor in religion. Its importance as a practical element has been somewhat minimized by the lack of exact definitions and the consequent multitudinous interpretations both theoretical and practical. It has been opposed to or connected with almost all mental activities by different theologians and in different ages. The exact chronological position of faith has also been the cause of much discussion.

“Augustine laid down the maxim that ‘faith precedes knowledge’; that is, a living experience of the gospel is requisite for insight into its meaning. . . . The priority of faith to religious science is at the basis of the scholastic philosophy of religion. ‘I believe in order that I may

understand,' is adopted as a ruling maxim by Anselm. 'He who has not believed,' he tells us, 'has not experienced, and he who has not experienced will not understand.' The heart anticipates the analytic work of the understanding. There is an inward certitude, founded on love to the contents of the gospel, and this love is the light of the soul. 'The merit of faith,' says Hugo of St. Victor, 'consists in the fact that our conviction is determined by the affections, when no adequate knowledge is yet present. By faith we render ourselves worthy of knowledge, as perfect knowledge is the final reward of faith in the life eternal.' As to the capacity of reason, Duns Scotus distinguishes between its power to discover truth for itself, and its power to recognize and accept truth when it is communicated. Aquinas divides religious truths into two classes; Such as are above reason, like the doctrine of the Trinity, and such as are accessible to reason, like the doctrine of the being of one God." <sup>1</sup>

Among the recent attempts to solve the difficulty Leuba<sup>2</sup> has divided the experiences into two classes, under the captions of Faith-state and Faith-belief. Faith-state involves the whole man, similar to the emotions, and Faith-belief is the effect of this upon the intellectual life. "Faith-state is a particular emotion (probably identical with asexual love), specifically distinct from other emotions or sentiments, but entirely like them in what is distinctive in that class of experience. From the point of view of development, Faith may appear as an *inner adaptation*, by which is established a living sense of relationship, nay, a union, between the individual and ideal powers. By this inner adaptation man

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 140 and 219.

<sup>2</sup> J. H. Leuba, "Faith," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, pp. 65-82; "Studies in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena," *American Journal of Psychology*, VII, pp. 337-364.

enters, to some extent, into possession of the virtues he conceives to adhere in the object of his faith and which he needs in order to satisfy his higher cravings." "The core of the Faith-state is a particular attitude and an increased efficiency of the will in consequence of which an ideal of life becomes realizable. It is a constructive response to a need; a specific emotion of the sthenic type, subserving, as emotions do, a particular end."

It has long been recognized that belief, in the technical sense, could never be reduced to a simple assent, as Faraday and his sect maintained; but that faith must be vital and active, springing from the depths of the nature and controlling external actions and conduct. It is this conception which justifies the above distinction, recognizing that faith is something more than belief, but less than knowledge, and having in it a motive power which incites to action. Far from the intellectual being the only factor in faith, in what is designated as faith-state there may be a minimum of intellectual content, and then the state is largely emotional, akin to love. The idea of faith as an intellectual makeshift, to be substituted when knowledge fails us, is to be deprecated. In this way faith has been placed in antithesis to knowledge; religion has extolled faith as being an intellectual process of value where knowledge could not reach, while science has put forth the intellectual claims of knowledge as more certain than faith. Faith, however, is still more comprehensive and contains in addition an important volitional element. Were it not for this, the Christian demand for faith would be without excuse. He who follows the commands of Christ, and uses his time and talents *faithfully*, is a man of faith. A certain state, then, which comprehends all our mental factors, seems to be more descriptive of faith than any one element, and shows further how the different terms, love, faith, and doing, are but different view points of the same

life-embracing condition. Any one of these carried to its logical conclusion, includes all the rest.<sup>1</sup>

We must not, however, eliminate the intellectual element, and thereby take a view as extreme as that which sees nothing but intellect in faith. In the intellectual realm, faith is more nearly related to belief than to cognition. The Object of religion, God, on account of characteristics as an Ideal, is more properly spoken of as an object of rational faith than as an object of knowledge. Faith, here, is not equivalent to mere belief, much less credulity, but is more comprehensive and authoritative than either. This does not mean that faith may at any time be irrational and be of much service to religion; rational faith is the ideal which is or should be set before Christians. If this is true, then dogma must follow. If the content of our faith is rationally defensible, some authoritative formulation is inevitable, however much this may need to be changed as new facts are revealed, and however much error may creep into religion thereby.

Faith carries with it two convictions concerning its object; first, it is convinced of its reality—something corresponding in reality to that in which it believes; second, the trustworthiness of the object as one in which it can place confidence. In Christianity this is best manifested in the filial attitude. The true sons of God believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. When this state is reached, then dogma is imperative. Faith may become a kind of self-knowledge, when it reveals the relation in which the self stands to its ideal; then judgments of worth are not the least of its value. Faith in the perfection of God and His rule is the final triumph of righteousness, and is only achieved when the truths of revelation are coupled with the loftiest religious experience.

<sup>1</sup> B. B. Warfield, Art. "Faith," *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*, I, pp. 827 ff.

## CHAPTER XXII

### KNOWLEDGE

“Give me the ocular proof;—  
Make me see 't; or at least, so prove it,  
That the probation bear no hinge, no loop,  
To hang a doubt on.” —SHAKESPEARE.

IN the previous chapter we have discussed Belief and Faith and now come to consider knowledge. What is the distinction to be drawn between these three? In some minds it may be clear, but with a large majority of people a great vagueness exists. So lax have been the definitions that what one would define as belief or faith another would consider knowledge. One writer presents a series, “according to the measure of assurance, or the nature and cogency of the grounds,” as follows: “knowledge, belief, faith, opinion, assumption, postulate, and finally, whim, prejudice, and superstition.”<sup>1</sup> Whether this series would be accepted by any one or not depends upon the definition and examples of each member of the series, and on these probably few would agree. These different factors would be in agreement in that all would be held for true by those experiencing them, but there would be a difference in the attitude of mind toward them or in the nature of the grounds on which they were held. As these different forms shade off into one another, it is quite impossible to draw any hard and fast lines, and, in fact, it will be found that many writers so confound knowledge and belief, or that different writers use these

<sup>1</sup> B. P. Bowne, *Theory of Thought and Knowledge*, p. 367.

terms so constantly for the same experience, that it will be especially difficult to separate these two. In the case of knowledge the conviction has more certainty and there must also be some correlate in reality.

The demand to know is fundamental to our natures, but the attempt to supply this demand is fraught with many difficulties. In our present study we shall find it quite impossible to separate philosophy from our psychological discussion. From the psychological point of view, the objective validity of an act of knowledge has no part in our discussion at all. We, as psychologists, are confined in our investigations to the phenomena of consciousness as such, and an hallucination or an illusion is as valid a psychological factor for investigation as the most certain product of cognition. Whether a thing is externally true or false is not our concern psychologically. We are privileged to examine the activities of mind involved in an act of knowledge, but we can never reach a completed act through psychology; knowledge must always involve metaphysics because it contains an assumption of reality and reaches out and grasps the transcendent. Psychology considers all cognitions of whatever kind as merely subjective phenomena, and but leads up to the philosophical inquiry concerning the validity of such cognitions. For psychology, cognition is simply a process in my consciousness; philosophy is curious to know if anything really exists which corresponds to this cognition.

While we may seem to have defined and separated the work of psychology and philosophy in respect to knowledge, we shall find that practically this division is not so easy, for in every problem the two fields overlap. In our psychological examination it is difficult to reach any practical religious conclusions without taking into account some philosophical implications or assumptions, and even with all help from

every source our task will not be easy. Professor James well says: "Now the *relation of knowing* is the most mysterious thing in the world. . . . Knowledge becomes for him [the psychologist] an ultimate relation that must be admitted, whether it be explained or not, just like difference or resemblance, which no one seeks to explain."<sup>1</sup> This is true of all knowledge, and just as true of religious as of other kinds.

There has been a disposition to consider religious knowledge of a lower order than some other kinds—scientific knowledge, for instance—if, indeed, we could claim any real knowledge for religious experience at all. Some have not regretted this supposed condition, for it left, as they thought, more room for the exercise of faith. Now, both science and religion assume that reality can be known, and one should have no more doubt of the one than of the other. The only absolutely indisputable knowledge which the individual can possess, is that reached by self-consciousness, in the here and now existence of the individual experiencing it. This is the ultimate of ultimates. But are we to confine ourselves to this? This, it is true, is the pinnacle of knowledge and the place from which we must start, but to accept nothing which does not carry with it the same certainty would sentence us to the most irretrievable solipsism.

We must recognize degrees of knowledge, and that the knowing experience of every man's consciousness must be our standard, rather than the conviction of self-existence. Perhaps we may say that not a large number of our convictions can lay claim to knowledge, but that most of them must be classed under the rubric of beliefs. The difficulty in the past has been that in religion we have tried to depend on pure reason. Whether religion is the object or not, the use of pure reason can do no better than to land us in solip-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *Principles of Psychology*, I, p. 216.

sism; the negative epistemological attitude toward religion has also helped in this direction. Three things we must recognize if we are to obtain a correct viewpoint of knowledge: the cognitive process uses the whole mind, and a description and explanation of cognition lays tribute to no less than the whole of psychology; we must take the positive attitude and doubt nothing for which we have not a reason; knowledge is knowledge regardless of the object known.

The epistemological problems in religion are of considerable importance, for we must depend on epistemology to guard us against incorrect conclusions on the one hand, and scepticism on the other. The nature and value of the evidence must be the problem of psychology and philosophy in our examination of religious cognition. To discuss the matter in all its aspects we should concern ourselves with "the nature and limits of religious knowledge, the extent and validity of the grounds on which religious faith or belief reposes, and the origin and trustworthiness of those standards of truth of fact and of conception which influence so powerfully the religious experience."<sup>1</sup> Can a man really attain a cognition of God? The only way in which he could have an indubitable knowledge of Him would be by identifying God with himself, but he may have a knowledge of God as sure as other forms of knowledge, with the exception, of course, of that of his present existence. The nature of the proof of this knowledge we will take up later. Can my individual religious experience be justified as knowledge, having a correlate in reality and being of worth? The answer to this question must also be deferred until we consider more fully the nature of evidencé. The mere statement of these and similar questions, however, shows how dependent is religion upon epistemological assumptions and explanations.

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 23.

We must not forget that not only is religious knowledge the same as other kinds, but that religion grows in essentially the same way as all other kinds of human knowledge. In primitive times "the germs of knowledge are given in obscure and unintelligible forms of feeling, in the half-blind play of fantasy and imagination, and in the doing of deeds whose motives are not recognized and whose import is by no means clearly conceived. This is the stage in the evolution of religious knowledge where mythology plays so important and controlling a part."<sup>1</sup> This stage of human development, in any sphere, is always slow, and the growth of knowledge is not rapid; but the important part to be noted is that in the history of the race knowledge is a development, and the same thing may be predicated regarding the history of the individual. In its most simple form, Christianity makes a demand upon us which amounts to a knowledge of the world's fundamentals. To respond to this, a lukewarm faith will not answer, but an indisputable and unshakeable conviction alone fulfils the demand. Can we have it? Is it not asking too much of epistemology? Is it reasonable?

It has already been stated that the process of knowledge, for knowledge is a process rather than mere states of consciousness, makes use of the whole mind. Knowledge is usually considered an intellectual process (and hence the position of this chapter); but while it is that, it is not that only. It is neither intellect nor feeling nor will, but all combined; it is an affair of all the mental processes. In addition to this, cognition implicates the transcendent, for the facts of consciousness are not themselves intelligible without the assumption of extra-mental reality on which consciousness depends. In view of these facts, it may be profitable for us to endeavor to designate the part taken in cognition by the

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 427.

intellect, feelings, and will, so far as we are able to separate them.

In the reaction against the position that knowledge was a purely intellectual process, there has been a tendency to minimize the rôle of the intellect. Feeling has been correspondingly over-emphasized, and hence an ill-balanced psychology of knowledge, different but not much superior to the former one-sided view, has sprung up. It is well to note at the beginning of our analysis or criticism that we are limited in our work by the faculty we are endeavoring to analyze or criticize. There is no superhuman knowledge, no unconscious knowledge, no knowledge other than just what all men have by which we can measure or criticize our knowledge, and with this and this only we must go forward.

We must both believe and think in order to know; thinking and cognition are inseparable. It is the function of thinking to lead us up to a judgment based on recognized grounds. A judgment is a *sine qua non* of all knowledge, although the grounds of the judgment come from all sources; when thinking brings us to this judgment, then we have cognition. The grounds upon which so-called science reposes, and the logical processes leading up from these grounds to its conclusions, are by some supposed to be alone worthy to be called cognition. Any statement of this kind must define cognition in such a narrow way as to include this alone, and posit a standard for grounds which would eliminate knowledge entirely from some lives, if not entirely from the lives of all men, if carried to its logical conclusions. Whether the knowledge be that of science or of religion it is the same thing. Knowledge is not of different kinds, but the judgment of sufficient reason is founded on different grounds. Nor do we gain much by calling one experience knowledge, another belief, and another faith; for none of these, with the exception al-

ready noted of the present existence of the thinker, can claim any more than a higher or lower degree of probability regarding the real existence of their objects. The knowledge of one man is not so rational nor so certain as the belief or faith of another.

Much of the growth of the particular sciences and of religious faith has consisted in finding out that not a little of that which was thought to be assuredly known was not even worthy of belief, and that many of the insights of faith have been anticipations of future assured knowledge. This does not mean that we can place no reliance upon knowledge, and that we are floundering around in a sea of uncertainty, but that we must put more rather than less confidence in the reason, for knowledge implies that there exist certain universal standards of a rational order, upon which we can and must rely. In our endeavor to know we must constantly judge of the meaning of things, *i. e.*, we must interpret, and no knowledge can exist without this interpretation, whether it be of things, or of selves, or of God; and the more we are able to interpret the more knowledge we really have. Of course, we can never interpret fully, for in those things which we think we know best there is always a suggestion of more beyond and below which we do not know. But in this interpretation the intellect is used, in addition to the judgment of the meaning, in the comprehension of the relation of this object to other things, for a unity of all knowledge is implied, and unless we can bring an object into this unity it cannot be known; and unless the self can be brought into this unity it cannot know things.

Solipsism and agnosticism may be acceptable in satisfying our intellectual demands for an account of the genesis and development of other experiences, but both or either are utterly insufficient to satisfy the demands in the ethical or religious sphere. It is in these interpretations and relating

judgments that the intellect is of especial value in religion and morals, and in its criticism which keeps religion from errors. Reason must try the beliefs, it must see that they have rational, or at least not irrational, grounds. It must recognize the validity of these grounds, it must systematize. Knowledge must be both rationalized and systematized in order to be called by that name; it is self-evident in the nature of reason, except it be immediately given in experience, when it is not irrational nor free from the intellectual element. We are not depending on argument to-day for the basis of our religious knowledge; the historic arguments for the being of God have been relegated to the philosophical museums, notwithstanding the fact that some of them possess value. We are depending now on the mind as a whole rather than upon a fraction—the intellect—for our grounds of faith, or belief, or knowledge.

As a factor in knowledge the feelings have lately come into prominence. There has been much in the past to justify the suspicion of appeals to feeling, for the appeals to feeling have usually hidden irrationality. The feeling to which we appeal to-day is that which is in harmony with reason. No longer do we make the claim that ignorance and lack of reason are the mother of devotion; no longer do we endeavor to "remove knowledge to make room for faith"; now we go to the other extreme and define knowledge and belief and faith in terms of emotion only, as, *e. g.*, belief is a "sort of feeling more allied to the emotions than to anything else," and belief is "the 'emotion' of conviction." True it is that a distinctive characteristic is found in feeling. When we say "I feel sure," what do we mean but "I know"? This feeling sure is fundamental, but is, let us again remind ourselves, not irrational, and as such is symptomatic of knowledge.

Even apart from this there is no such thing as a perfectly

cold belief in which no feeling enters, but in every finished act of knowledge feelings of various kinds act indirectly by modifying the processes of ideation themselves; they also accompany the ideational and conative processes. Not only are they a part of every act of knowledge, but they carry their credentials with them, and when emotion accompanies any conception it is thereby strongly affirmed. Feeling may at times be more reliable than thought, and some truths may be reached most readily by this means.

Beside the feeling of certainty there is another characteristic feeling of cognition; this is the reality feeling. I am not sure that I have this properly classed as a feeling, for it has other elements in it and is called by others "Belief in reality" or "Metaphysical belief," but if belief has an emotional definition, we are still correct in this classification. It seems, however, that the reality experience comes as a matter of feeling rather than of intellection, and is of such importance that we cannot experience knowledge without it. The explanation of this belief or feeling must be left to philosophy rather than to psychology, together with the many other problems which arise from and with it.

Logical feelings are regulative. Not only do these feelings accompany the logical processes, but they regulate and influence them. Our feelings notify us of the correctness or fallacy of the logical processes. Often we feel the grating of the fallacy before we are able to point it out, or we recognize with some degree of pleasure the correct logical conclusion. We feel logical principles, and judgment in this as well as in other cases may be but an expression of feeling. The roots of our belief may lie in the sub-logical realm of emotion and interest, and our conviction will vary as the tides of feeling rise and fall.

When a belief is thus sustained by a feeling it will decline with a lapse of feeling. The cooling of emotional fervor

causes the occasional lapses seen in religious belief. The emotional stimulus being lacking, the imagination fails to rise to the needed point of vividness and the mind loses its hold on reality. The certitude in religious affairs is designated as follows: "The reason of the belief is undoubtedly the bodily commotion which the exciting idea sets up. 'Nothing which I can feel like *that* can be false.' All our religious and supernatural beliefs are of this order. The surest warrant for immortality is the yearning of our bowels for our dear ones: for God, the sinking sense it gives us to imagine no such Providence or help."<sup>1</sup> Some would go still further in making feeling a direct source of external knowledge, especially in religion.<sup>2</sup> The pendulum may have swung too far, but we do know that moral, religious, and æsthetic judgments rest more on feeling than on intellection.

Some of the mystics, however, hold the more extreme view. Inge designated the value and limits of "the inner light" as follows: "The inner light can only testify to spiritual truths. It always speaks in the present tense; it cannot guarantee any historical event, past or future. It cannot guarantee either the Gospel history or a future judgment. It can tell us that Christ is risen, and that He is alive for evermore, but not that He rose again the third day. It can tell us that the gate of everlasting life is open, but not that the dead shall be raised incorruptible. We have other faculties for investigating the evidence for past events; the inner light cannot certify them immediately, though it can give a powerful support to the external evidence." We should, however, quote further so that this writer should not be misunderstood. "Now the study of primitive religions does seem to me to prove the danger of resting religion and morality on unreason-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *Principles of Psychology*, II, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> E. D. Starbuck, "The Feelings and their Place in Religion," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, pp. 168-186.

ing obedience to a supposed revelation; but that is not my position. . . . A theology based on mere feeling is (as Hegel said) as much contrary to revealed religion as to rational knowledge. The fact that God is present to our feeling is no proof that He exists; our feelings include imaginations which have no reality corresponding to them. No, it is not feeling, but the *heart* or *reason* (whichever term we prefer), which speaks with authority. By the heart or reason I mean the whole personality acting in concord, an abiding mood of thinking, willing, and feeling.”<sup>1</sup>

There are some whose temperament is such that their only source of religious knowledge, *i. e.*, only source of indubitable conviction, is the feelings, and with all of us this must be true to a greater or less degree. On account of the comprehensiveness of the states of religion it alters itself with the affective life, as well as on account of the deeper experiences being inexpressible in words; the subconscious elements, which by some are included in the affective class, and which form an important if not easily defined factor, also ally religious knowledge to the feeling element. Religious feeling should never be an end as some fanatics have made it in the past, but as with some of the primary religious feelings already mentioned, it should furnish a form of criterion which must be satisfied if we are to have religious knowledge. We have feeling at the two extremes of knowledge; on the one hand, a certain amount of emotional excitement is unfavorable to knowledge, and on the other hand, that highest form of knowledge, self-consciousness, is dependent upon feeling. Feeling is valuable; there can be no knowledge without it; but feeling in itself is not enough. Feeling and intellect blend in cognition. Things are known to be what they are because they are both felt and judged to be so.

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 326 and 330 f.

But we must go a step further. Religion is a life, and neither an intellectual nor emotional system. If this is so, there must be an element of will in religious knowledge—in fact in all knowledge. When we know a thing we are ready to act. The practical life is at once a source of belief and the test of its validity. We find the best grounds for the grand universal beliefs in their very universality and necessity. The things which have an intimate and continuous connection with my life are the things of whose reality I have an indubitable conviction—a knowledge. The fact that man is will as well as intellect and feeling, makes knowledge what it is. Will, rather than the understanding, declares the case closed, and it is the practical necessity of doing something that compels the conclusion. At bottom, knowledge or a conviction, means the willingness to proceed to act according to the conclusion. It is this practical, living, comprehensive view of religious knowledge which saves it from the excessive coolness of a merely logical or strictly scientific view on the one side, or the excessive heat of a purely emotional view on the other, and causes these two to blend in practical application to real life.

The grounds for religious knowledge are found neither in an institution nor a book, but in a life or experience. "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see" comes to us from the depths of practical life and is indubitable. The experience of coming into opposition with other wills, and of coming in contact with things which do not conform to my will in a practical way, gives me to a great extent my knowledge of reality. Action, experience, is the key to self-knowledge as well as to the knowledge of other selves and things. Voluntary attention, that key to all knowledge, implicates the will whenever it is exercised. By our willing and experiencing reactions from will we procure our knowledge to a great extent of things and other selves.

Pragmatic we are, and pragmatic we must be in order to know.

We have gone a long way around to endeavor to answer one question, *viz.*, Can we have religious knowledge? The answer is already apparent. Only those whose idea of knowledge is that it is an affair of the intellect alone could deny it, and in taking this position they do not save scientific knowledge for themselves as they attempt to do, but debar all knowledge. We may have more than opinions concerning religions, we may have knowledge as surely as we can of any other subject; and while not all reports of religion are to be trusted without examination, any more than all supposed scientific reports are to be received in this way, yet there are some which readily find acceptance because they stand the practical test, and this is the test which science tries to use. Prof. Ladd well says, "Cognition cannot be considered apart from life. Whatever kind of value knowledge has, and whatever degree is attainable in any particular kind of value, knowledge is also always means to an end that lies above itself."<sup>1</sup>

Taking this teleological view of knowledge, and recognizing that it looks up to the ideal of life which has supreme worth, æsthetical, ethical and religious elements cannot be excluded from a full treatment of knowledge. Even Kant, who marshalled religious and ethical knowledge out of the front door with such a forbidding manner, received them in the back door under the name of faith, and guaranteed them with all the certainty of rational conviction. Those things which we know with the greatest certainty are not those which we can demonstrate by a mathematical formula or by a logical syllogism, because they are a product of the whole mind and not simply of the intellect. Religious elements come under this class. If other forms of knowledge

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Knowledge*, p. 232.

could be obtained without the use of the whole mind this would not be true of religious knowledge, for since religion is mentally comprehensive, so, in order to have religious cognition, the whole mind—the life of man—must be used.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Anyone familiar with Professor Ladd's works will recognize the great debt I am under to them for material in this chapter. To study the problem of knowledge Professor Ladd's works must be consulted first, last and all the time, for they give us by far the most comprehensive treatise in English, if not in any tongue. See G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Knowledge* (entire); *Theory of Reality*, chapters XV–XX; *Psychology, Descriptive and Explanatory*, chapters XX–XXII; beside numerous references in *Philosophy of Religion*, I and II, and *Philosophy of Mind*.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### IMAGINATION

“Tell me where is fancy bred,  
Or in the heart or in the head?  
How begot, how nourished?”

—SHAKESPEARE.

ANY reference to the use of the imagination in religious experiences is usually intended to imply that the experience is proportionally degraded or unreliable, according to the extent to which the imagination is employed. When one person wishes to discredit the religious statements of another, and says, “You imagined that,” nothing further is considered necessary for condemnation. On the contrary, the imagination is one of the most valuable mental allies which religion has, and without it religion would not only be impoverished, but could not possibly be experienced by man as we now know him.

In saying this we are not discrediting religion in the least. The statement might just as well be made of science as of religion. In fact, there is no form of knowledge possible without the aid of both the reproductive and the creative imagination. The great general, the successful statesman, and the trustworthy historian are powerless without the plenary use of the imagination, and contrary to general belief no other forms of knowledge make more severe demands upon it than modern chemistry, physics, and other sciences. Listen to these words from one of the greatest of modern scientists: “*Ask your imagination* if it will accept a vibrating

multiple proportion—a numerical ratio in a state of oscillation? I do not think that it will. You cannot crown the edifice with this abstraction. *The scientific imagination which is here authoritative*, demands, as the origin and cause of a series of ether waves, a particle of vibrating matter quite as definite, though it may be excessively minute, as that which gives origin to a musical sound.”<sup>1</sup>

Not only is it true that modern scientific theories like those of atoms, molecules, and ions, put a great strain on the imagination, but the possibility of their continuing to be accepted for as long a time as the products of the imagination in religious realms will be is very small. The flights of the Psalmist’s imagination are still current in religious thinking and experience, but where is the science of his time? It might almost be stated, judging from the past, that the reliability of the religious and scientific imagination is in the proportion of millenniums<sup>(2)</sup> to decades.

In science, religion, or art the same imagination is employed; it is governed by the same laws, aided by the same reason, and inspired by similar emotions. There are some minor differences. Science endeavors to begin with the use of the perceptive faculties, tries to start with sensuous fact. Both religion and art separate the imagination from the matter-of-fact point of view, and claim that the spiritual eye distinguishes that which is of real value. Percepts simply inspire the soul to penetrate to the real facts which are not experienced by the senses, to which science trusts.

“The distinction between poetry and science, or myth and science, or religious myth and religious truth, is not, indeed, the same as the distinction between the work of pure fancy and the work of pure intellect.” Purity ceased when faculty psychology declined. “Poetry and myth both have their

<sup>1</sup> J. Tyndall, *Fragments of Science*, p. 423. The italics are mine. See his whole address on the *Scientific Use of the Imagination*.

place in the development of the intellectual as well as of the artistic life of man." In the last analysis the difference between the imaginative and the scientifically intellectual is a shifting one, and depends on the way they fit into the totality of human experience.<sup>1</sup>

The product of the imagination is found in two forms, and probably the confusion of these has brought whatever disparagement is connected with it. Psychologically there is little or no difference between the two, but the value of the results causes us to make a division, although they are both prominent in religion. The less reasonable and more ethereal form, usually called "fancy," must be distinguished from the logical and solid work of the imagination, and it is with the latter that we are more particularly concerned in our present study. Ruskin draws some sharp distinctions between fancy and the imagination peculiarly adapted, as we would suppose, to art, but not foreign to use in religion. He says, "Fancy has to do with the outsides of things, and is content therewith. She can never *feel*, but is one of the most purely and simply intellectual of the faculties. She cannot be made serious: no edge-tool, but she will play with: whereas the imagination is in all things the reverse. She cannot but be serious; she sees too far, too darkly, too solemnly, too earnestly, ever to smile. . . . There is reciprocal action between the intensity of moral feeling and the power of imagination. Hence the powers of the imagination may always be tested by accompanying tenderness of emotion. . . . Imagination is quiet, fancy restless; fancy details, imagination suggests. . . . All egotism is destructive of imagination whose play and power depend altogether on our being able to forget ourselves. . . . Imagination has no respect for sayings or opinions: it is independent."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 318.

<sup>2</sup> J. Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, II, chap. III.

Connected and usually associated with the intellect on one side, the closest relative of imagination is the memory, from which it is not clearly distinguished by some writers. The principal difference between the two is that the objects of memory are attached to certain times and places and must always be considered in relation to these, while imagination is absolved from such limitations. This allows the imagination to create a very wide variety of objects of which it has had no experience, and yet which are not antithetical to experience. For after all it is the *self* which imagines, and it does not, cannot, imagine that which is at variance with the other aspects of self, the intellect, emotions, and will. So the product of imagination is particularly valuable and has a basis in reality, in the explanation it presents for real experiences, while not having been really experienced itself.

Perhaps in no other conscious factor do we so clearly see the working of the subconscious as in the creative imagination. Judgment is subconsciously given to the product, and the result is something which is new and yet which is not antagonistic to the reason. As is so well illustrated in genius, although the product comes to consciousness ready made and without conscious effort having been expended, it shows the effect of mental work and poise. Sometimes the person may sit by almost as a spectator and wonder what is coming next, so completely does the subconsciousness rather than the consciousness seem to produce the images.

Many of the mystics exalt imagination, and make it the chief religious factor. Wordsworth, for example, says that it is at once "more than reason" and "reason in her most exalted mood." St. Teresa, on the contrary, does not give the supreme credit to the imagination. She says, in a passage already quoted, "Like imperfect sleep which instead of giving more strength to the head, doth but leave it the more exhausted, the result of mere operations of the imagina-

tion is but to weaken the soul. Instead of nourishment and energy she reaps only lassitude and disgust: whereas a genuinely heavenly vision yields to her a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches, and an admirable reward of bodily strength."

A faculty so varied in its use would naturally be detrimental at times as well as useful. Fanatics are usually very imaginative and have, in connection with this, emotions which are allied to hope and presumption more closely than to fear and despondency. They therefore think that they are especially favored of God, and that the vagaries of their imaginations are the truths of the Almighty. While imagination cannot be divorced from emotion, it must be especially allied with reason to be of the most eminent service to religion. Jonathan Edwards seems to recognize the injury which might come from a passionate and unreasonable imagination. He says, "The imagination seems to be that wherein are formed all those delusions of Satan which carry away those who are under the influence of false religion and counterfeit graces and affections. There is the devil's grand lurking place, the very nest of unholy and delusive spirits."

We have some splendid examples of this in the "Great Awakening" with which Edwards was connected, and in many revivals since that time. In 1742, after Whitefield's visit to Scotland, where he held revival meetings which were attended by physical phenomena not uncommon to the times, a discussion arose mainly centering around the imagination. The defenders of Whitefield and of the revival preached and wrote apologies. They said, "We cannot think upon anything invisible without some degree of imagination; the images of spiritual things must be represented by our fancy; we can have no thought of God or Christ without some degree of imagination, and imaginary ideas of

Christ, as man, are consistent with true faith." The opposition was headed by Rev. Ralph Erskine who preached on the subject and finally wrote a book entitled, "Faith no Fancy; or a Treatise of Mental Images." This must not be confused with another of his writings, "Fancy no Faith, a Seasonable Admonition." Erskine's declaration was that many of the then current delusions concerning the religion of Christ were produced by Satan through a false inspiration of the imagination. This was substantially Edwards' view, but the latter also taught that in some the false impressions on the imagination react on their affections, with the result that the delusions of the imagination are raised to the vividness of divine authoritative truth. Edwards also concurs with Erskine as to Satan's agency in times of awakenings.<sup>1</sup>

While it is well to be warned concerning a contingent evil, we are as much concerned with the use of the imagination and its value to religious life and progress. Connected with the intellect, its employment is not only valuable but necessary to religion.

"Religion, however, stands in special need of this process of separation and purification for the work which it calls upon the creative imagination to perform; and the chief reasons for this need are the following two. Its primary beliefs are essentially of the *in-visible*, the *non-sensible*, the somehow *super-human*, the Self that is *other* than my self. Moreover, the practical and emotional interests to which the work of the religious imagination is committed are so immediate and pressing as the more easily to override the considerations upon which the scientific development of man lays such peculiar emphasis. . . . The religious development of mankind is dependent upon the harmonious activity of imagination and intellect in providing an Object [of religious belief] which shall both accord with scientific development,

<sup>1</sup> G. W. Hervey, *The Imagination in Revivals*.

and shall also keep pace with the improvement of the ethical and æsthetical feelings, and with the growing practical and social needs of the race.”<sup>1</sup>

There has been a general under-estimation of the exalted work which the creative imagination has been called upon to do. Some, however have recognized it. Bushnell and Drummond taught that imagination was the sole arbiter of faith because religious truths could only be set forth in figures of speech; figures of speech make great demands on the imagination. “Christ,” said Bushnell, “is God’s last metaphor!” Bushnell goes on to define imagination as “the power that distinguishes truth in their images and seizes hold of images for the expression of truths.” A person devoid, to any extent, of imaginative ability cannot appropriate religion, and it is such a person who usually makes such a bungle of reading the Old Testament. The Old Testament taken literally and not allowing for Hebrew figures of speech is filled with snares, inconsistencies, and untruths; but read, as it was written, with a knowledge of eastern imagery, it conveys grand and eternal truths to us.

The spheres of reason and imagination are different, although they may be complementary. Questions which reason finds contradictory are accepted by the imagination, because the latter cannot imagine the opposite. We cannot, for example, imagine anything else than that God should be sovereign and that man should be free. The reason and imagination may combine in other doctrines. It is impossible to imagine atheism, for neither the imagination nor reason are satisfied with the image. Neither can we imagine the universe without a purpose or end, but the imagination rests in the personality of God. We might continue to show that our religious knowledge is considerably influenced by the

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 319 f.

imagination. The apostle says that we walk by faith, not by sight; here faith is used in the sense of imagination not of trust. The writer of the Hebrews defines faith in the language of imagination as the "assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen," and the whole of this eleventh chapter illustrates this definition and shows how we are able to see "Him who is invisible."<sup>1</sup>

The pictorial representation of the object of religious faith has always had a wide influence in Christianity, and its form is an index to the value of religion. For example, the picture of the Virgin and Holy Child has had a potent influence for good in Roman Catholic Europe, notwithstanding the fact that there has been associated with it and similar works of art a counter and degrading influence. But it is the work of creating the ideas of invisible and spiritual powers which has proven to be the great task of the imagination in connection with the intellect. Man alone is able to do this, and in primitive races the confusion of the elements of these ideas has made it difficult at times to distinguish between magic and religion. In primitive religions, the imagination localized its ideals in the sticks and stones, giving imagined attributes to the things which were visible and tangible, these attributes coinciding with the invisible and intangible experiences of self-consciousness. Thus we have what is known as nature worship.<sup>2</sup>

In the highest development of man's religious experience, imagination creates for us the ideal of a Divine Being, which, while not contrary to reason or experience, is not confined to the totality of experience or visible existence. God is created in demand for an ideal, and also to explain experience. It is in the matter of ideals and the relation of ideals to conduct

<sup>1</sup> For the development of these points see the very suggestive book, E. H. Johnson, *The Religious Use of the Imagination*.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 368.

that imagination stands supreme. Character is regulated by ideals. The idea which we hold before us is externalized in conduct, for our ideas tend always to express themselves. With the ideal before us imagination becomes strong to overcome evil and crystallize the good. For instance, if one imagines Christ, His way of doing things, His thoughts, His words, he becomes a copy of Christ, for what he has in mind is the Christlike life. Thus the ideals and doctrines which are imagined are the ones which live in our lives; the unimagined ones die. These ideals, above all else, are both sources and stimuli of man's religious life and development. Whether in primitive man or in the example of the highest development of the race all the philosophical conceptions are dependent on the imagination, and the difference between the two is not in the imagination but in the training and development of the two classes. The product of the imagination must be tested therefore by the experience of the race judged from a scientific standpoint.

Johnson concludes his treatise with the following words:

"This aim has been to show that the imagination has always been sufficiently at the service of religion to account for the persistence among Christians of certain elevated beliefs, but not sufficiently to provide for an average of piety and virtue proportionate to the elevation of those beliefs. As to the beliefs the significant facts are: first, that in each instance these characteristically Christian beliefs strike the imagination. Secondly, ideas which imagination keeps in full view enjoy in this way quite exclusively the advantage, or incur the disadvantage, of being put to the test of experience. Thirdly, having been so tried and attested by all the Christian centuries, these salient, imaginable, and characteristically Christian ideas are for substance steadily held by the church with all the depth and tenacity of conviction

which experience alone can afford. . . . The conclusion of this whole contention is that the essentials of Christian truth are always apprehensible; imagination catches them and never lets them go.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Johnson, *The Religious Use of the Imagination*, pp. 217-220.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### INSPIRATION

“O, for a muse of fire, that would ascend  
The brightest heaven of invention.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

IN all stages of man's religious development it has been believed that in some way the gods have made themselves known to men, have revealed their wills, and have influenced their devotees. The followers of every religion believe that somehow their tenets are a distinct revelation. The religion which depends on any scriptures, considers them but a record of revelations which have been vouchsafed to their representatives, and in the more primitive cults revelations continually take place through favored individuals. The belief in revelation, which is thus so common to man, is born of the need for such a belief. It is necessary to explain certain religious problems and to furnish certain assumptions. Religion must have some authority and this must come through revelation. Certain events cannot be explained without certain causes which revelation furnishes, and the only knowledge we can have of future life, here and hereafter, comes through revelation. Without some such beliefs religion would not be possible.

If the Deity reveals Himself to man, then man discovers God, and the statement of the fact may be made from either standpoint without changing the real meaning. What we know theologically as God's revealing Himself, we may know psychologically as man's receiving a revelation, for

without man's receiving there can be no revelation, at least none of which we know. The very nature of religion makes it possible for the Infinite to reveal Himself through finite beings, and through finite beings only. The co-operation of man is, therefore, required, and the character of man, singly or in groups, conditions the character of the revelation. Thus, the psychological development of the race at any time, and the peculiar historical and physical conditions with which it is surrounded, circumscribe and limit the revelation which may be received in any era.

The founders of religions, however, are considered special and supreme mediums of revelation, and the message which comes through them is not always looked upon as conditioned by the times in which they lived to the same extent as other revelations. Next in importance to the revelation which is given through the founders, is the message of the teachers of religion, the prophets, and the leaders of reform movements. These few men in an age or in the history of a religion lead the others, and it is to them that we owe the growth of religious thought and conceptions. In accounting for the fact we find the doctrines of Inspiration and of Revelation inseparably bound together. The concept of revelation is undoubtedly primary, but that of inspiration is a necessary correlate. "Inspiration is the subjective or inward influence upon the whole mental life, which makes possible the revelation." <sup>1</sup>

Among primitive people demoniac possession, witchcraft, ecstasy, epilepsy, and other abnormal phenomena were constantly associated with inspiration. However different possession and inspiration may be theologically, they mean much the same thing when viewed from a psychological standpoint. The inspiration of the early Hebrew prophets conforms rather more closely to our idea of possession than to

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, II, p. 420.

that of inspiration, if we may judge from the accounts which we have in the Old Testament. By the use of music, dancing, and other exciting means, a highly contagious ecstasy was developed, in which the participants prophesied. The influence of the nomadic, prophesying troops which traversed the country was felt by those who came in contact with them. Such was the experience of Saul as given us in I Samuel 10: 5 and 6, and of Saul and his messengers in I Samuel 19: 23 *f.* While this ecstatic state was gradually eliminated, as late as the days of Elisha music was needed to assist the prophet. II Kings 9: 11 and Jeremiah 29: 36, show us the general idea of the connection between prophecy and sacred madness or ecstasy.

Among the later prophets a quiet form of inspiration predominated. They received the message of Jehovah as ordinary men (see Amos 3: 7 and 8); in fact, not only prophets but poets, statesmen, warriors, and artisans all served Yahweh, and were prepared for this service and incited to this mission by the inspiration of His spirit.<sup>1</sup> Kaplan divides the prophetic age into three periods. In the first the external means were used, in which abnormal and highly excited states were considered a manifestation of the indwelling of the divine spirit. In the second period the prophets had advanced intellectually and morally, partaking in this transitory stage of the characteristics of both the first and third stages. With Amos and after, prophecy reached its highest point, and with a characteristic uniqueness of genius presented Jehovah as the moral ruler of the whole world.

The prophets themselves did a great service in the religious development of Israel, and most remarkable were the results to which they contributed. The contribution was the test of

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kaplan, "Psychology of Prophecy," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 171 *f.*

prophetism. "The possession of a single true thought about Jehovah, not derived from current religious teaching, but springing up in the soul as a word from Jehovah, is enough to constitute a prophet."<sup>1</sup> While every prophet considered himself the mouthpiece of Yahweh, and spoke as with authority from Him, endeavoring to sink his own personality out of sight, yet every one had his personal peculiarities, and these were used and emphasized rather than suppressed.

The drawing of lots, the experiencing of dreams, the seeing of visions, and hearing of auditions, were utilized; as a rule, however, the great prophets did not depend much on these, but they found that the message came through the more ordinary processes of the mind. The message which the prophet received in the more ordinary way might be best or only expressed through parables and symbols, but this is not to be confused with the method of reception. As has been said, the later and greater prophets received their messages in ways more in harmony with everyday experience rather than through ecstasy and vision, yet these could hardly be called normal.

There is every indication that the message is the result of subconscious processes. There is something sharp and sudden about its appearance, as though it had burst out as a new discovery, rather than as a result of conscious reasoning: as though it were provided by some external agency: as though it were "breathed into" the prophet that he might breathe it out to the people. Of course, the prophet must have spiritual sympathy and appreciation of the worth of things which the people in general do not recognize, but it does not seem, at least to him, that any known mental processes could account for his experience in receiving the message. Kaplan, in defining revelation, says, "Revelation, as I conceive it, therefore, is a sudden mysterious awareness of

<sup>1</sup> R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 182.

an inflow of thought, an inundation of spirit, an awakening of mind, seemingly from unaccountable [subconscious] sources, and therefore believed to be from not natural channels through supernatural agency."

It was this individual experience which probably accounts in part for the message of individualism which was the peculiar note of the later prophecies. Because God spoke directly to the individual in a personal way, it carried with it the implication of a personal care for the prophet, and hence for all individuals. In some of the later prophets, Mohammed, Joseph Smith, and Savonarola, the subconscious characteristics are equally prominent.<sup>1</sup> Not only among the Hebrew prophets, or the New Testament writers, or those who have styled themselves prophets since that time, do we find inspiration, but wherever religious truth, no matter how crude, is declared, there we must look for it.

"When I say that all religions depend for their origin and continuation directly upon inspiration, I state an historic fact. It may be known under other names, of credit or discredit, as mysticism, ecstasy, rhapsody, demoniac possession, the divine afflatus, the gnosis, or in its latest christening, 'cosmic consciousness.' All are but expressions of a belief that knowledge arises, words are uttered or actions performed not through *conscious ideation* or reflective purpose, but through the promptings of a power above or beyond the individual mind."<sup>2</sup>

The question of the true method of inspiration must come to us, and from psychology an answer may be expected. We then ask, Are men used simply as the amanuenses of God, or are they inspired as men and permitted to deliver their message in their own way? If we are to take the testi-

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 137-146; W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 479-482.

<sup>2</sup> D. G. Brinton, *Religions of Primitive Peoples*, p. 50.

mony of certain persons and decide by this alone, we must conclude that the former alternative is the correct position. For example, Milton claimed in all seriousness to be the mouthpiece of "that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and all wisdom;" in many other places he speaks of the light that breaks in upon the soul when it becomes transparent to such inflowing of the divine.

"We will listen to Blake's own account of the way in which he was inspired to write his symbolic poems 'Jerusalem' and 'Milton.' . . .

"Black was taken down from London into the country to Felpham by a patron, Hayley, the friend of Cowper. There he lived for three years by the seashore, and 'enjoyed for a time a new and ampler illumination.'

"'Felpham,' he says, 'is more spiritual. Heaven opens here on all sides her golden gates, the windows are not obstructed by vapors; voices of the celestial inhabitants are more distinctly heard, and their forms more distinctly seen, and my cottage is also a shadow of their houses.' As he walked along the seashore he was haunted by the forms of Moses and the prophets, of Homer and Milton. They seemed to him to be 'majestic shadows, gray but luminous, and superior to the common height of men.' These and other vague personages seemed to communicate to him the matter of his great poem. 'I may praise it,' he says, 'since I dare not pretend to be any other than the secretary; the authors are in Eternity.' . . .

"'I have written this poem from immediate dictation, twelve, or sometimes twenty or thirty lines at a time without premeditation, and even against my will.'" <sup>1</sup>

Savonarola said, "But for ill-will, these men might easily have understood that all these scenes were formed in my mind by angelic intervention." Beecher gives us his personal

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, pp. 215-218.

experience thus: "There are times when it is not I that is talking; when I am caught up and carried away so that I know not whether I am in the body or out of the body; when I think things in the pulpit I could never think in the study; and when I have feelings that are so different from any that belong to the lower or normal condition that I can neither regulate them nor understand them. I see things and I hear sounds, and seem, if not in the seventh heaven, yet in a condition which leads me to apprehend what Paul said, that he heard things that it was not possible for a man to utter." <sup>1</sup>

The experiences of Mlle. Hélène Smith, so thoroughly investigated by Prof. Flournoy,<sup>2</sup> seem to her to be the direct result of supernormal agency, but in this Prof. Flournoy does not agree. He thinks it is the result of subconscious activity only. She considers it of religious significance, but as the "revelation" has no moral or religious bearing, it does not come directly into our discussion at this point.

Now we are face to face with the problem whether the testimony of witnesses, of which we have just had examples, concerning their passivity in producing, is to be taken as they give it, or whether we are to modify it by our knowledge of the working of the subconsciousness. We have it presented in this way. "There is a difficulty also in conceiving how the revelation should be given. Was it written on the heavens, or was there a voice from heaven, or was there an incarnation of the divine upon the earth? If, on the other hand, we conceive that the revelation was given subjectively, impressed upon the nature of the soul, an inner and not an outer revelation, it may have come primarily through the intellect or through the feeling. . . . Another theory of revelation is found in the hypothesis of an actual presentation of the object

<sup>1</sup> J. R. Howard, *Beecher's Patriotic Addresses*, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> T. Flournoy, *From India to the Planet Mars*.

which excites the religious feeling,"<sup>1</sup> *e.g.*, the recognition of spirits through dreams.

Are we to consider the intellectual inspiration as verbal, and the feeling inspiration as dynamic? Not necessarily so, and yet it might be divided in that way. We may well understand how, when a speech, sermon, story, or a peculiar phrase comes into consciousness ready-made as frequently happens when the subconsciousness is particularly active, the person experiencing this would think of himself as passive. Consciously he is passive; if he goes no further to seek an explanation he may well believe that he is but the penman or mouthpiece of the Deity. But knowing the working of the subconsciousness we cannot psychologically defend this contention. Plenary or verbal inspiration really stands for an arbitrary and unhistorical method of interpretation, and costs more than it is worth. To try to explain the discrepancies and errors in non-religious matters in the Bible, for example, entangles us in more difficulties than the theory of plenary inspiration can rescue us from. If no other than the practical side is considered, it is unprofitable; psychologically it is indefensible when we examine the case. We notice that the Scriptures are not of equal value, but well suited to the times and particular events with which they are connected.

There is a difference in degree and mode of inspiration; we cannot treat history, drama, poetry, and prophecy as exactly equivalent in the expression of religious truth. We may recognize the inspiration, providing we recognize the difference in degree and in the variety of object. In considering race psychology, we must see that the inspiration of the prophets of the early peoples was in keeping with the capacity of the race to comprehend and apply, and in considering individual psychology we can see that the inspiration was not

<sup>1</sup> C. C. Everett, *The Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, p. 45.

above the capacity and peculiarities of the individual prophet. In fact, the superiority of the Bible over all other religious scriptures consists principally in just this combination of continuity, progressiveness, and adaptability to change of social conditions and to individual growth, with prophetic intuition which is attributed to the Spirit of God.

The prophet, the inspired man, is to give us new truth. It has been a mistake to attribute to the prophet simply the duty of foretelling the future. It is true that the spiritual insight of some has been of such a character that they have been enabled to tell some things which to them seemed inevitable, but which were hidden from the sin-blinded eyes of others, but these were not their chief nor most valued contribution to religion. In fact, this is where some religious geniuses, and especially religious fanatics, have failed. It was safe enough for them to perform miracles—among their followers; but they committed fatal blunders when they endeavored to foretell the future. It was here that St. Bernard was shipwrecked, and on the same rock his imitators in every age have split. The infatuations of the present day are meeting a like fate. On the other hand, Savonarola was able to forecast the future of Italy in a marvellous manner.

We have already noted that the theory of plenary inspiration is indefensible from a psychological standpoint, and whether it has ever been of value theologically we must allow the theologians to decide. In our examination of God's dealings with men we do not find Him using them as typewriters and phonographs, but their peculiarities are always respected and they are used as men. "From what has been said it will easily be seen that divine inspiration can never mean that the human ceases at any point to operate and becomes passive in the power of some non-ego, but rather that the human rises with all the splendor and pristine glory of its

native forces to the highest pinnacle of its own power.”<sup>1</sup> He does inspire men subconsciously, I believe, and hence some form—not the strictest form—of the dynamic theory would best fit the psychological facts. He works upon the subconsciousness in a dynamic way, furnishing increased energy and activity so that religious truth is produced. Inspired men rather than inspired words would be the psychological distinction.

In harmony with this idea, a recent writer puts forth the thesis that inspiration is suggestive rather than dictatorial. “Nothing can be done, and done successfully, unless we can get people to perceive that the essential character of revelation is the imparting of truth by way of suggestion. When, and only when they perceive this, will they begin to perceive that it is essential that they should use their own minds in receiving truth; then only will they begin to compare different utterances, and the bearings of each, and the logical connections between them; and then only may we expect them, finally, to arrive at that to secure which is one of the reasons why the revelation is made suggestive, namely, a rational conclusion.” “A suggestion, like a puzzle, not only gives every one who hears it an independent right to interpret it in his own way, but is more likely to be solved in the right way in the degree in which every one who hears it has been allowed to contribute his share toward its solution.”<sup>2</sup>

Ordinarily, the dynamic theory would posit that inspiration originates in suggestion, and develops from this suggestion according to the idiosyncrasies of the “earthen vessel,” but the result was usually considered, at least for the time in which it was spoken, dictatorial. That the result is suggestive has much evidence in its favor when we examine the

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kaplan, “Psychology of Prophecy,” *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> G. L. Raymond, *The Psychology of Inspiration*, pp. 326 and 328.

words of Jesus. He used the parabolic method, which, while being forceful was, at the same time, suggestive, and allowed of individual interpretation to such an extent that His words to-day, in contrast to the dogmatic statements of His time, are as fresh to the reader as when they were uttered. The suggestiveness of "the bread of life," "the mustard seed," "the lost sheep," and "the ten virgins," is cogent and potent, and no man has been in such a condition since Jesus walked in Galilee that these words would not appeal to him as living words fitted to his case. This view has much, from the example of Jesus, to commend it.

In inspiration the subconscious factor is a large and important one. While inspiration is not a commodity which has much current value, all of us have moments when we suddenly find in our consciousness some suggestion or idea which is totally different from the subject which has been engaging us, and yet which we immediately recognize as valuable and appropriate to some problem which concerns us. Or again we see the contemporaneous working of the consciousness and subconsciousness when some habitual action is performed, or even some new and perhaps skillful work is done, while we are deeply engaged in thought or conversation. It seems to us that some external agency is at work, using our lives to accomplish its tasks. At other times when the mind has apparently freed itself from the bonds of the ordinary means of mental functioning, difficult problems and intricate situations are treated with a facility which is surprising to us, and when we relapse into our accustomed condition, it seems as though we had fallen from a height, as though the higher individual which controlled us for a while had suddenly departed. The former are the moments which we call inspired.

Nor can this state of mind be confined to the religious department of life; it is that which distinguishes all forms of

genius, but is seen most prominently in æsthetic and religious experiences. Shakespeare perceives truths which are commonly hidden from conscious minds, Phidias fashions marble, Raphael paints Madonnas, Beethoven composes symphonies, Isaiah proclaims religio-political principles. Conscious phenomena do not explain these results completely—genius can be followed by consciousness but not explained.

A large part of the most valuable art work, it may be said, has been the result of intuitions and suggestions which seem to come from below the threshold of the conscious life, rather than from planning and reflection. Many artists have been apparently spectators and have consciously been surprised at the result of their labors; they have declared that the work has been done for them rather than by them; the credit has been given to some being working through them. In some cases, so great has been the control of the subconsciousness that, after the accomplishment of some superhuman task, the consciousness has been able to recall the circumstances almost as in paramnesia, as though it had been done at another time, under quite similar circumstances, but a haze so conceals it that it might well have been accomplished by another person. Thus the person thinks of himself as the tool of another, as the "mouthpiece," "scribe," or "pen" of some superior being. This is really possession or obsession, and is paralleled by the experiences of our dream life. What we are apt to think of in the extreme as abnormal, is really a familiar experience in its less emphatic forms, and is experienced more or less by all persons. A graduated scale from the most normal experience to that of "double consciousness" may easily be traced by presenting different cases.<sup>1</sup>

If the subconsciousness is thus really the prominent factor

<sup>1</sup> See my "The Case of John Kinsel," Part II, *Psychological Review*, November, 1903, for a fuller discussion on this point.

in inspiration which it appears, it may well be seen why religious genius might be connected with the neurotic temperament and thus with abnormal mentality. In early days and among primitive people religion exalted woman, among other ways, by recognizing her superior prophetic susceptibility. Such abnormal experiences as hypnosis, trance, ecstasy, epilepsy, etc., were considered by these people to be the prerogatives of those peculiarly fit for divine influences. We have recognized the pathological characteristics of these states and consequently have denied the persons who have been prone to such experiences any special religious significance. Have we emptied out too much? This abnormal quality shows itself in increased subconscious activity, or, shall I say, in the lowering of the threshold of consciousness, so that what, in other persons, is purely subconscious comes to be at least partially conscious in the genius.

The great artist, poet, or saint is separated from his fellows, and a portion of his greatness depends on the fact that he is not like the mass of mankind. There may be a difference of opinion as to whether he is inspired or mad, but that he is different all agree. All notable leaders and enthusiasts, being swayed by impulses largely below the threshold of consciousness, bring to bear on human affairs a force more concentrated and at higher tension than can be generated by deliberate reason. They may work and act as though impelled by an insistent idea, but this idea is permeated with reason so that it appeals to others, and thus the sect grows, or the religion spreads.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Ladd raises a pertinent protest. "The presence of the influence from factors that only rarely or never rise above

<sup>1</sup> For a view of the connection of the subconsciousness and inspiration, see G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 171-176; W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 483 f.; F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality*, etc., I, p. 56 f.; L. Waldstein, *The Subconscious Self*, p. 22 f.

the threshold of consciousness, and the important relation which these factors sustain to the characteristic phases and stages of conscious experience of religion, may be said to be a universal and inseparable factor in religious belief. It underlies the religious doctrines of revelation and inspiration. That some of these phenomena not only defy analysis but belong to the abnormal and even to the unpsychological (or *a*-psychological) need not be disputed. But when the sole, or even the chiefly important sources of the conscious life of religion are assigned to the obscure and misty regions of the 'sub-liminal Self,' and the inevitably added impression is made that religion itself is something psychologically abnormal or wholly mysterious, the errors involved cost more heavily than can be paid for by the truth gained."<sup>1</sup>

Even in inspiration the product is not wholly that of the subconsciousness, but the conscious factors contribute their part. If, however, we hold to our theory of God's working directly on man through the subconsciousness, the inspiration which is received through the consciousness is indirect. This must be at best a more or less arbitrary distinction, for the subconscious products must receive the approval of consciousness in order to be at all effective. We must further recognize that in saying that inspiration comes to us through or by means of the subconsciousness, we do not mean that God is eliminated from it; far from it. According to our theory, it means that God may be directly responsible for it. We must, though, guard against the conclusion that, because God works through the subconsciousness, all the products of the subconsciousness are the direct messages of God. This would be as unfortunate as it is erroneous. We must try the spirits—the test must be a practical one.

The further question comes to us: Is there any difference between the religious genius and other kinds—artists, in-

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 266.

ventors, or generals? The answer must be "Yes and No." There is a difference according to the person inspired and the subject treated. God's voice to man and through man has been expressed in a variety of ways. Personality God always respects. In viewing the products of inspiration in different persons we must recognize the influence of the temperament, mood, and capacity of the person at the time of the utterance, and no great revelation has ever come to us through an inferior person. We note the difference in inspiration between different persons, and the difference in the same person at different times. Perhaps, though, we have not touched the vital point in the question. Let us suppose the same person was inspired as a prophet, a poet, and a general, what difference is there in the inspiration? Psychologically the difference would be in the difference of mental activities which would be necessary for the apprehension of new truth in the different spheres. The inspiration of the poet must differ much from that of the general, for the work is vastly different; so must that of the prophet from that of the artist. We cannot posit a wider distinction or relegate religious inspiration to a separate realm.

In the days gone by, when the mind was divided into faculties, religious inspiration was assigned to the religious faculty; but to-day when we know that the same mental factors are used in religion as in the general affairs of life, except that they are turned in a different direction, inspiration must be thought of as a general experience, and the difference predicated according to the subject treated. Further, to-day we are recognizing that God is interested in art, inventions, and commerce, as well as in religion in the narrower sense of the word, and that as His kingdom is coming through all these means, inspiration may well come from Him for the declaration of new truth in these fields. The idea of inspiration must be extended to include these other things or aban-

done altogether. But the measure of religious inspiration is not only the consciousness of the person inspired, but there must be the proof of a higher providence at work. This proof comes in the production by the inspired one of new truth of a high moral and religious value.

## CHAPTER XXV

### WILL

“My will is something sorted with his wish:  
Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed;  
For what I will, I will, and there an end.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THINKING is most likely to move in circles. This is true not only with the individual but with the race. That every gyration is on a more elevated plane is probably the case, so that the figure would really be a spiral rather than a circular movement. In psychological theory different mental factors are given the supremacy by different persons or at different times. At one time the intellect, at another time the feeling, and at another time the will is put into the ascendancy.

We are returning now to Aristotle, for the will is primal in modern psychology. All psychic experience must have the basic factor in will, and although it may be said that affective and intellectual qualities are not lacking in conative factors, this is not true to the same extent. The purpose and direction of thinking are what make it valuable; it is because we will that we think. The relationship between desire and liking shows the connection between will and feeling. Will, rather than an element in consciousness, seems to be the process by which the self realizes itself and its mission through activity. Although we cannot isolate any one function and say that it is the principal factor, for all psychic elements have their mission and worth, yet we can distinguish that which seems to us basal.

Now, what is true of psychology in general, is, of course, true of religious psychology. Many of the recent movements and developments in religion have laid emphasis on the will, and movements of this kind are characteristic of the age. The recent movement known as Pragmatism, as well as by other names, assumes the primacy of the will, and is developed from this basis. It is noticeable that our heresy trials of the past have been conducted with the assumption of the primacy of the intellect. A man's creed, or lack of creed, was the subject of investigation and discussion. The creeds of most denominations are dead to-day. This is an inevitable consequence of definite and exact statement; the creed is thus stationary while the race develops. Few creeds written years ago can now be accepted with "mental reservations," and those written to-day can only be for to-day and not for a century hence. Now, if the emphasis be shifted to the will in religion, heresy trials must be concerned with this factor rather than with the intellect. The heresy of creed has really never been a serious matter notwithstanding the emphasis laid upon it by the church, but the heresy of conduct always has been. If this new emphasis causes men to recognize this it will take them back to Christ more assuredly than any recent movement. He laid emphasis on conduct, and neither had nor left any formulated creed. "By their fruits ye shall know them" emphasizes the will, and this is the kernel of Christ's doctrine concerning heresy.

The only thing, therefore, that He recognized as positively evil seems to have been a perverted will, just as the only thing that He considered positively good seems to have been the good will. Heresy has never been centered around the feelings, because these are rather intangible, but the religious aristocracy of the past has consisted largely of those of emotional temperament. Those who could not feel well have been pitied rather than blamed, and have been considered un-

spiritual and consequently of a lower order even if not classed as heterodox. To-day, and probably increasingly more so in the future, the doers must be considered the aristocracy of Christianity and the feelers must be both pitied and blamed, if doing is not also a part of their religion. Men now are agreeing more with Pope when he said,

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,  
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”

The following quotation seems to state the relation of the psychic factors in true proportion. “That religion psychologically considered, like all other human conscious developments, has in some sort its seat in the voluntary powers; that from the ethical point of view, it necessarily shows itself in the form of control over conduct; and that the objective manifestations of religion in its cult and institutions cannot properly be disregarded in forming our conception of the nature of religion;—all these, and other correlated evidences to the prominence of will in the religious life and development of man must be freely acknowledged and fairly estimated. . . . But unintelligent and unemotional willing cannot form the essential content of anything that has worth.”<sup>1</sup>

Owing, not a little, to the influence of the modern revival and the methods which have been associated with it, will has had little part in the form of conversion espoused by the revivalist. The emphasis has been laid upon emotional states rather than upon conation, and the legitimate use of the will has been largely neglected. Self-surrender and a total disuse of the will have ever been the keynote of the revival; everything must be forfeited—intellect, will, possessions, ambitions, pleasures—everything. The opposition of man's will to the Almighty's was presented with the portrayal of fearful doom. Even the presence of man's will in

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 116 f.

religion was to be visited with awful consequences. Most revivalists are not psychologists, but were they, they could not more skilfully contrive to get their audiences in a passive condition where they are peculiarly susceptible and ready to accept any suggestion which the revivalist may then present.

Is there, then, no element of self-surrender in conversion? Does not Jesus speak of giving up parents and possessions for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven? Was not His life one of self-surrender and self-sacrifice? To all these questions the affirmative answer is the only true one, but there is a vast difference between the non-voluntary, passive self-surrender of the revivalist, and the deliberative, voluntary self-surrender which Jesus proposed and which the New Testament emphasizes. In the latter case it was the functioning of the will which was required, and never the lack of it.<sup>1</sup>

One reason for our misinterpretation is that we have translated the Greek words and given to the translation an emotional meaning. For example, *μετάνοια* is translated "repentance" which is commonly defined "feeling sorry for your sins." As a matter of fact, the Greek word does not carry with it the feeling element at all. It conveys the impression of the activity of intellect and will. It might be defined as "a deliberative and thoughtful change of mind." It is just the opposite of impulsive, emotional action. The confusion has probably arisen from the fact that two Greek words have been translated by the same English word. The other Greek word, *μεταμέλομαι*, does signify regret and sorrow, and is a purely emotional word. This is not the word used by Jesus in His effort to persuade men to change their mode of life, but it is used to describe Judas' feelings when he returned the thirty pieces of silver to the donors. One word encourages to hopeful action, the other condemns to hope-

<sup>1</sup> See my *Psychology of Alcoholism*, pp. 305-308.

less regret. James gives a good illustration of the difference between the two words in the following psychological analysis.

"The difference between willing and merely wishing, between having ideals that are creative and ideals that are but pinings and regrets, thus depends solely either on the amount of steam-pressure chronically driving the character in the ideal direction, or in the amount of ideal excitement transiently acquired. Given a certain amount of love, indignation, generosity, magnanimity, admiration, loyalty, or enthusiasm of self-surrender, the result is always the same. That whole raft of cowardly obstructions, which in tame persons and dull moods are sovereign impediments to action, sinks away at once."<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, *ἐπιστροφή*, conversion, signifies a definite act; it is a volitional word. "It is man's first act under the leading of divine grace in the process of salvation, the initial step in the transition from evil to good."<sup>2</sup> Repentance and Conversion are closely connected and both are volitional acts; the first is the act of turning away from evil and the second the act of turning toward good. Each one implies the other, and either might be used to describe the total process.<sup>3</sup> With the meaning of these words before us we can easily see that will is not only admissible in conversion but absolutely essential. It is the lack of deliberate will which causes so many retrogressions among revival converts. A similar analysis of the Greek word translated "love" in the New Testament will show that it is primarily a state of will rather than of feeling, a certain attitude of mind which can be voluntarily assumed by all persons regardless of temperament.

Perhaps another reason why the emotional elements in

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> J. S. Banks, Art. "Conversion," *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, I, p. 478.

<sup>3</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Trails in Religious Revivals*, p. 295; G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, pp. 195-200.

conversion are emphasized at the expense of the will is that the emotional factors in Jesus' life have been unduly enlarged upon, and His passive characteristics exaggerated. As we have already pointed out in the chapter on sex, Jesus' will rather than His emotions predominated. He practised what He preached. The great need of volitional hymns, hymns of activity, and the abundant supply of emotional hymns, have probably had an influence in the same direction. In both these matters we have followed the church interpreters rather than the Gospel. Religion, true religion, must affect the whole man, and any process under the name of religion which leaves out the will can hardly be called Christian.

Some cases seem to appear when the will is almost shattered, and conversion seems to stimulate and renew it; this is true, and yet in even the cases where the effort of will seems least possible, some effort, however small, must be made in order that the other factors of mind may be directed in the proper channels. An appeal to the moral will is never hopeless, especially in men. Starbuck defines the function of the will in conversion to be "to give point and direction to the unconscious processes of growth which, in turn, work out and give back to clear consciousness the revelation striven after."<sup>1</sup> This is probably true, but does not express all the work of the will. Conscious action must also be directed, and however prominent the subconsciousness is in conversion there is always a conscious factor; or else it is not conversion according to the New Testament definition.

Not only revivalists but mystics as well have laid great emphasis on the subjection and subduing of the will, and for not dissimilar reasons. When the will is subdued the subject is in a condition of suggestibility. There is no direction of conscious thought, and consequently the subconsciousness

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 112.

is allowed control. It is at such times that visions and other ecstatic experiences are most likely to appear. Not all mystics, however, have neglected the will. Eckhart made much of it. He said, "If your will is right you cannot go wrong"; "There is nothing evil but the evil will [intention], of which sin is the appearance." Ruysbroek said, "Ye are holy as ye truly will to be holy." From the very nature of the case it is evident, though, that the will cannot be exalted among most mystics. To mysticism, in general, the chief value of the will is in the reaction which it has upon the emotions. Nor need we minimize this action of the voluntary powers. The reaction upon both the intellect and emotions in the case of the invigorated will of the new convert is most noticeable. The other factors are of little religious value without the will—in fact, they are so closely bound together that one cannot be stimulated without affecting the others, but in different types of character one of the factors predominates.

We know nothing of the intellect or of the emotions without the use of the will: these other activities show themselves only in acts, and unless the aspirations and recognized duties of the soul toward God are translated into their different effects, they tend to die away into a mechanical and barren turn of mind. Mere self examination without the accompanying effort to right the wrongs discovered is like discovering a disease without trying to effect a cure, and becomes either useless or morbid. It is the will which can furnish the only fitting culmination to all other mental activity, it is the end toward which all other factors tend. And in religion, especially, the will is not something that finds expression in an isolated act, but it reveals itself in the attitude of mind toward the whole universe of ends.

It is further to be recognized that religion furnishes the best and safest outlet for the excesses of activity of either the intellect or the emotions; if these excesses are objectionable

in religion, as, of course, they are, we should find them far more objectionable and abnormal in other departments of life. The mystic shows usually strong emotions, but a weak intellect; in what more harmless or at the same time useful way could he express these characteristics? The fanatic, on the other hand, exhibits a strong will with a weak or narrow intellect, and as dangerous as this occasionally is in religious life, it most frequently passes off in harmless activities.

The effect of the will on the intellect is nowhere more plainly seen than in its relation to beliefs, as strange as that may seem. The presented facts or the logical conclusions do not have the power of "the will to believe." The religious beliefs of a person demonstrate this more readily than any other. The wish is father to the thought, and most persons accept the religious beliefs which they wish to. The beliefs follow the ideals or lack of ideals; for example, a person may recognize the fear and despair which would follow disbelief, accept certain comfortable doctrines for his peace of mind, and does not, will not, investigate. His search is not for truth, but he accepts only the fragments—perhaps contradictory fragments—which he wills to accept.

On the other hand, the searcher for truth is equally dependent upon will. He cannot search, he is unable to attend, he cannot form judgments according to ends or ideals without definite acts of will. If we take will as the basal fact of life, and activity as its culmination, we should more correctly say that the intellect and the feelings are at all times simply the aids of will. They give to the self the facts upon which it works, and help to establish values so that the self may act in the most profitable way.

Other factors have their appropriate work, but all subserving the same ends of purposeful activity. However exalted a thought may be, and however lofty the emotions, we cannot call them religion nor can we think of them as a re-

ligious unit capable of being developed religiously unless there is connected with them appropriate activity. A. Sabatier says, "The essence of religion is a commerce, a conscious and willed relation into which the soul in distress enters with a mysterious power on which it feels that it depends." Ladd says, "Religion, subjectively considered, covers all the relations in which the will of man must be, or properly may be, conceived of as standing to the Divine Will." Will is the basis; other things are essential to the development of will in order that religion may be real and valuable.

It may be fitting at this time to glance at the different factors of will to determine more accurately the exact place which they have in the religious life. Will is distinguished from lower conative activity by a conscious end to be attained. It is this matter of ends or ideals which is set before the self that determines the standard of values so important to life as a whole, and particularly religious and moral life. The feelings have not a little influence on these ideals, but the will, far more than the feelings, regulates the question of values, for the will is used to control and change the feelings, and in choosing what shall have value.

Deliberation is usually considered an intellectual attainment, but it requires a definite act of will to deliberate. It is here that we see the work of voluntary attention, that most valuable and ubiquitous mental factor. No mental work of any value or importance can be produced without the aid of voluntary attention; it is the prime requisite for effective mentality.

Closely connected with this is the matter of control. Control is a necessity of deliberation. It may be defined as the balance between the ever-present impulses on the one hand and inhibition on the other. If the force of either of them is much increased, or the presence of either abated, there control is more or less lost. It is the will which overcomes

inequalities in these contrary forces, and maintains the balance as necessary for control.

Choice approaches the culmination of the work of will. Whether in the form of superior choice or of the minor choices of every day, we can all recognize the value of this element. What would, what could, religion be without it? It is here that decisions are made which are the root of all religious effort. We not only choose the main course of life, but with that in view make choices almost every minute. The religious life is at heart a series of choices to be put into effect.

But the supreme factor in will is effort. The whole process, however complete in the first parts, is a failure if it does not result in effort. We may say further that religion as a whole is a failure if there is no effort. This is one reason why we have affirmed that will is the basis of the religious life, and why we have spoken of the heresy of will rather than that of the intellect. However satisfactory the feelings may be to the individual expressing them, and however faultless a creed or argument may appear to its author and his friends, if these do not result in effort, in a superior form of conduct, and in an attempt to help others, it cannot be deemed religious, or at least Christian. Long continued effort in any one direction is a test of mental force: and if this direction is in the line of religion or morals it is a supreme test of character. It is no accident that the New Testament lays such emphasis on endurance; success comes only through endurance in any field, and religious success is no exception to the rule. Sustained effort must be the aim of the Christian life. I have endeavored to present the value of these factors of will, not exhaustively, but merely suggestively, so that some idea may be had of the real place of will in the religious life.

It is necessary for us to touch briefly the much mooted subject of "the freedom of the will," but this from the psychological standpoint only. What theology and philosophy

have to say on the question does not interest us in our discussion here, but psychology has something to say. Viewed from this point we may say that man is *practically* free, or, shall we say, *morally* free.<sup>1</sup> The usual statement of the question is an unfortunate one, for as we have already implied, by will we mean a much wider scope than is ordinarily understood by this term, and by "freedom of the will" we mean the freedom of the self to will. Religion then asks the question, "What is the attitude of the human will to the Divine Will?" Has this question any meaning for religion unless man is morally free? Will, then, comprehends the entire active aspect of the mental life as it reaches its highest attainment in conscious deliberation and choice, and in an effort to act intelligently on this choice, in the furtherance of moral conduct. Activity is the keynote, and man shows his freedom in thinking, imagining, and feeling. The highest expression of freedom, then, is the ability to respond to the Divine Will.

"It is, however, in the adjusting of himself, by a more or less deliberative choice, to the Object of religious belief that man's freedom makes the culminating exhibition of itself. . . . To choose whether, or not, to worship or to serve this Being is the highest exercise of human freedom in the domain of religion." "Every individual is a more or less perfected Selfhood, according to the intensity and comprehensiveness attained by the development of the so-called faculties of self-consciousness, recognitive memory, reasoning, and the susceptibilities to the higher forms of ethical, æsthetical, and religious feeling—all suffused with, and controlled by, the self-determined activity called a 'free will.'" <sup>2</sup>

Of course we must recognize that moral freedom is not

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, pp. 334-339, discusses this question.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, pp. 335 f. and 602.

ready made, and an accompaniment of birth. Both morality and freedom are matters of development, and differ in degree and kind according to the acquisition of the individual and the race. When we speak, then, of moral and religious freedom, it should always be remembered that we are not speaking of a constant quantity, but of something varying with every individual and even in the same individual at different times. These two things, then, psychology has to say on the subject of "freedom of the will": man is morally free, the freedom showing itself most plainly in the response to moral appeals; and the amount and quality of the freedom varies with the individual.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### EMOTIONS

“Hang those that talk of fear.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE place of the emotions in religion has been variously estimated. There is no doubt about their importance. As sources of religion they are probably primal, and for furnishing material for religion they take a prominent place. The intellect and the emotions furnish the material with which the will operates. Considering this, it is not strange that many have defined religion in terms of the emotions. Schleiermacher, one of the first writers on psychology of religion, took this position, and he has been followed, among others, by Herbart, Sabatier, Upton, and more recently Everett, James, and Starbuck.

As a general thing, there is a lessened regard for emotionalism in religion to-day, probably due to a reaction, for in the past it has been unduly honored. A claim to sainthood, or even to religion of any kind, without an excess of emotional experience, would have been considered invalid, and as has already been indicated, if our hymns are any index to past religion it was almost totally emotional. In the reaction, some have been inclined to reject emotional experiences altogether, judging the whole product by the excess, but the general disposition is to accord them the proper position in a symmetrical and well developed life. The problem to-day is to discover this position. One thing we can postulate, and that is that feeling alone is not sufficient to account for religion either in its source or material. If this is true, it nat-

urally follows that no one emotion, as *e.g.*, fear, is large enough for the task.

No emotions can stand as purely affective states. Take, for instance, that one of dependence, upon which Schleiermacher endeavors to found religion; it is impossible to separate this from rational implicates. The same is more or less true of all the emotions, and an emotional basis in which the intellect does not have an important part is scarcely conceivable from the standpoint of modern psychology, whatever may have seemed consistent when men studied about the separate faculties of the soul. On the other hand, it is just as impossible to think of reason absolutely devoid of feeling, and we would as freely combat the thesis that reason alone will suffice in religion. For example, a purely intellectual cult is almost unthinkable, for in worship the emotions must be appealed to, appealed to primarily to prevent the degeneration into a formal exercise of little or no value to the individual. On the other hand, untrammelled emotions in worship produce camp-meeting phenomena, which are always to be deprecated in the interests of healthy religion. Self-control by the will is necessary in order to prevent hysteria or formalism, both of which we must eschew. The tendency to-day may be rather in the direction of too complete suppression of the emotions, but this tendency will naturally be overcome. A further objection to the use of any single emotion, or to all the emotions for that matter, as a distinguishing characteristic of the religious life, is that these emotions are common outside the realm of religion.<sup>1</sup> It brings us back to our thesis that religion deals with the whole man, and the whole man deals with religion.

The great divergence of opinion concerning the emotions and their place, not only in religion but in other psychic

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, "Religion as a Factor in the Struggle for Life," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 314 f.

states, is due to the great difficulty in treating them satisfactorily and completely. They may only be studied through memory, and that when memory is not in its best form. In addition to this, they vary greatly with the individual and with the occasion. The relegating of the emotions in their primary effects to the reflex system entirely, and only to the higher mental factors in a secondary way, which the now popular and over-worked James-Lange theory does, has been an additional confusing element. Of course, no one doubts the reverberating influence of the bodily organs, but to make the part take the place of the whole has been a fallacy. It is easy to understand how Professor James could eliminate the intellect or any higher function from connection with the emotions, under the influence of this theory, as a primary source of religion; for under this theory the emotions, except in an indirect way, cannot have much commerce with the intellect.

An injury which emotionalism has done religion through misunderstanding has been that it has been considered that any kind of excitement was distinctively religious in character if it was in any way associated with religious gatherings or worship. Christianity, or certain of its doctrines, has been condemned, when the real condemnation should have been of certain emotionalisms. This is especially true of revivals. We have noticed not only the emotional type, but also the rational and controlled type in revivals. It is the former to which we refer here. In the latter type the emotions are not absent, but controlled. The stimulation is not followed by reflex action, but by reflection and then, perhaps, by action.

In addition to these revival cases, we have a type which most often, if not always, appears in solitude and is quite characteristic of adolescence. It is a comparatively calm, yet intense state, which does not express itself in so boisterous a manner as the revival type, and arises spontaneously.

While this is a distinct type, the two forms are sometimes found in the same individual, or more or less mixed, as in certain mystics. While the revival form of religion is liable to be transitory, the spontaneous, calm form is likely to be much more permanent. The revival type is too common to need any examples, but of the other type notice that most vivid and forceful description of the night of the soul by the Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross. Emotionalism as "the vice of democracy" has been distinctly recognized in past revivals, and this is a great gain. Its contagious character is also well known. In the most extreme cases we have had religious intoxication, but because of this we must not make the mistake of eliminating the emotions entirely; instead, they should be rationally controlled.

It is one of the seeming paradoxes of religion, yet none the less true, that religion is the cure for the excitement in which sometimes it takes its rise, by furnishing an outlet through appropriate activities. By crystallizing the feelings through activity they are deepened, strengthened, and at the same time appropriately placed. Feelings must get in touch with the practical or they inevitably fade away and their usefulness is destroyed. James points out<sup>1</sup> that unless we act upon our emotions we are the worse for them, and life fails in its realization. Here, of course, the emphasis is placed on the will. We must further realize that, without the association of emotionalism with high and comprehensive ideals, it amounts to no more than a puff of powder in the open air. The same powder might have been orderly arranged with rifle, bullet, and cartridge, and have been a great power. Excessive emotionalism not only is useless in itself, but it so destroys the equilibrium that the other mental factors are unable to perform their functions. —

Emotions are not uniform in their expression, and this is

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *Principles of Psychology*, I, p. 125 f.

especially true in religion. It is impossible to maintain the powerful emotions of religion for a very long time, for either the strain will become too great and a temporary insanity will ensue, or else it will be followed by complementary emotions. From the greatest religious exaltation the saint frequently fell to the depths of depression, or else there would follow a more or less dull and inactive state which the tired nerves demanded in order to recuperate. This weariness may be accompanied by irritability of temper, which has been characteristic of some devout persons, among whom was St. Teresa. The high tension of the emotional state produced by the devoutness of the saints during worship inevitably was followed by a reaction and concomitant irritability when relieved from worship and the association of those who surrounded them.

As thought advances, emotionalism declines; reasoned action takes the place of impulsive action. The emotions of to-day are of a milder type; men are care-worn oftener than melancholy; jovial, more than joyous; sagacious and ingenuous, rather than meditative. This repression of the profounder emotions is to be regretted, but must be taken into account when we attempt to compare the religion of to-day with that of the past, or prognosticate concerning the future. So intertwined are our intellectual and emotional states that our conceptions of Divinity alter our feelings toward Him and, moreover, toward our fellow-men, and they in turn have an influence on our conceptions. Let us now consider some of the individual emotions in their relation to religion.

Among those who have delved into the sources of religion, and both by examination of primitive religions and reasoning from general considerations have formed conclusions, fear seems to stand out prominently as a cause of religious reactions, but not, as some have tried to demonstrate, the only

cause. The cause must have been as complex as the nature, but on the other hand, the impulse to self-preservation must have both quickened and in turn been stimulated by fear.<sup>1</sup> The history of the race is corroborated by that of the individual, for the first emotional reaction in the infant is that of fear. Of course the speculation and deductions concerning the origin of religion are intensely interesting and not without profit, but as religion was well developed before Christianity was introduced, it is only indirectly of interest to us in our present inquiry.

Fear has played an extensive rôle in Christianity, although its founder was in no sense actuated by this emotion. Perfect trust and love seemed to eliminate fear. We must recognize, however, that He did not represent His times, for phenomena, like demoniacal possession, show beyond doubt that the people were far from fearless in their religious beliefs. So powerful were these emotions in the religious world that after His death Christianity was soon permeated with fear, and only later years have been able to eliminate it.

In the Dark Ages, fear, stimulated by the cruelty with which the Roman Church endeavored to conquer and rule, seemed to be one of the chief factors in the general religious life. The element of fear was not eliminated after the Protestant Reformation. The opportunity for relief offered by purgatory was removed from the idea of punishment, and nothing but the inevitable and awful mouth of unquenchable hell yawned for the sinful. Were men given a chance this might not have aroused such fears, but the predestination of Calvinism might doom anyone to this fate notwithstanding his most strenuous efforts. So far as the element of fear

<sup>1</sup> See G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, pp. 284-287; J. H. Leuba, "Fear, Awe, and the Sublime in Religion," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, pp. 3 f.; T. Ribot, *The Psychology of the Emotions*, p. 309, and many works dealing with the history and philosophy of religion.

was concerned, it was rather increased than diminished by Protestantism.

The effect of fear during the revival period has already been noticed in our chapter on that subject. Up to the time of Finney, at least, through the Wesleyan, Edwardsian, and Kentucky revivals we may well say that it was the prime factor of the preaching and of the reaction of the converts. The financial fear preceding the 1857 revival was also a potent factor. To the general fear of hell and certain local and occasional fears, must be added that instinctive fear which is always liable to manifest itself in a crowd. This slumbering mass of inherited instincts and feelings may be awakened and frequently is awakened by the skillful use of means which the revivalist usually employs, and for a time there is the reversion to the primitive type, so that a wave of fear sweeping away individual control, engulfs the whole audience. Primitive feelings were accompanied by primitive reflexes, and hence there appeared the physical phenomena so characteristic of the early revivals.

In Starbuck's investigations, over a decade ago, of conversions, many of which are now a quarter of a century old or older, only twenty per cent. could be assigned to self-regarding motives and forces, fourteen per cent. of which were fears of death and hell. Coe's returns showed less than eighteen per cent. While this percentage is not large, I doubt if present-day conversions would give nearly so many of this type. In fact, in answer to a recent *questionnaire* of Professor Leuba's, in only two instances did fear enter into the religious life, except "incidentally and fitfully." In both these cases fear was constitutional, rather than religiously inspired. Except among the most primitive, and probably among Roman Catholics, fear is no longer an influential factor in religion.

It is true that this is a great advantage to religion and the

gain will be more and more recognized, but I am not sure that too much has not been thrown away. While arbitrary punishment is at variance with all that we know of God's dealings with men either in nature or in religion, logical punishment is not only consistent but certain. All sin must bring this and cannot be escaped; and while hell is not believed in very much to-day, the awful effects of sin in destroying the higher life and the real man furnish a punishment of which there is no doubt, and which is more serious in its results.

Professor Leuba gives three causes for the decline of fear. It should be noticed that these causes are general in their application, and are not simply applicable to religion. 1. Among civilized people the occasions for fear have greatly decreased. The pressing dangers to which man in a primitive state was exposed have been removed, and the phenomena of nature, *e. g.*, lightning, have been explained and partially mastered. 2. Education and training have ministered to the control of emotions. 3. The fear reaction is recognized as inadequate for the fulfilment of its task. The physical concomitants of fear make man less fitted to combat the danger which inspired the emotion. Several modern cults have recognized this, and especially the "New Thought" movement. Here fear is viewed as the greatest sin, largely because it unfits man for his higher duties. As a propædeutic for therapeutic measures, lack of fear is very beneficial. It is, therefore, usually connected with modern mind and faith cure cults.<sup>1</sup> While the lack of belief in hell and God's wrath have undoubtedly ministered to the decline of fear, this lack of belief is a result of the three causes already cited rather than an independent cause. Fear in religion is out of harmony with life in general—the highest life.

Closely related to fear is awe, and developed from awe is

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 98 f.

the feeling of the sublime.<sup>1</sup> While all three of these emotions are inspired by the presence of the mysterious, the great, and the superior, in the fear reaction antagonism is manifested, and a feeling of shame eventually accompanies it; in the reaction which we know by the name of awe and the sublime, attraction and admiration are evinced, and a dignity and kinship with the great are felt. "Awe might be defined arrested fear in the presence of objects whose greatness is apprehended." In awe the distinctive fear reaction is about to manifest itself, but is held in check by the judgment of lack of danger; in the sublime there is no fear activity awakened.

So far as any emotions may be called disinterested, awe and the sublime must here be classed, and in this respect they add a valuable factor to religion; it must further be recognized that as such they are not religious emotions, but should rather be classed among the æsthetic: they become religious when man perceives back of the object the superior and controlling force to which, recognizing a kinship in some way to his own nature, he responds. The response may either be through the indirect means of reflection, or directly in the sense or feeling of the divine presence. St. Francis is said to have been so overcome with this emotion that he was unable to express himself in prayer, but could only reiterate the name of the Deity. Many other examples might also be given. Artificially this may become almost if not quite a constant experience by the so-called "practice of the presence of God."<sup>2</sup>

Any help which awe and the sublime may render to religion is largely disregarded by Protestantism to-day. In

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, "Fear, Awe and the Sublime in Religion," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, pp. 14-23; G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, pp. 58 f., 327-331.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experiences*, pp. 58-72; G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, pp. 234-242.

former years the fearful, awful, and sublime were cultivated to some extent. God, before whom men could only stand with unshod feet, has given place to a familiar—too familiar—friend, who inspires no awe, or sublimity. The awfulness of the sinner's fate and of the Christian's danger have also passed away among most Protestant churches. The Roman Catholic Church, however, has retained as much of the awe inspiring as the times will permit, and endeavors to use the sublime as much as possible. Through the means of architecture, music, pageantry, and mystery, these emotions are stirred, and as a result reverence and veneration are not so shockingly lacking as in some Protestant churches. Our consideration of the sublime leads us in two directions: either to the æsthetic emotions of which this is a part, or through admiration to sympathy, love, and the more tender emotions. We will take these up in order.

Perhaps not in the same degree, but none the less surely, all of the æsthetic emotions may be cultivated in the interests of religion. Especially is this true when we consider the beautiful under the forms of the orderly and free, which in extreme cases excite the feeling of sublimity. When through reflection we look back of the orderly, we see the Supreme Being as the source of order, and when we reflect on freedom, we find Him also to be the ground of that free control which is the root of all harmony and law. The other æsthetic emotions may likewise be of service in religion: we may best recognize this by turning our attention to the relation of art to religion.<sup>1</sup>

Art and religion have much in common, especially when we consider their ideals and aspirations; but we must be careful not to identify them, for there is always a line of demarkation. It is in the sublime that religion and art most nearly approach each other, and probably the feeling of dependence is

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, pp. 435-453.

the factor of the sublime where they most nearly coincide. This is especially true in what we may designate the moral sublime, as in the heroic in man, which caused primitive people to deify him. Professor Everett defines religion from the standpoint of feeling as follows: "Religion is a feeling towards a supernatural presence manifesting itself in truth, goodness, and beauty." "Why," he says, "is it that beauty has such prominence in religion? Because religion is the feeling toward the supernatural, and beauty is a manifestation of the supernatural in the world."<sup>1</sup> Whatever we may think of the first part of this answer, the second is undoubtedly true. ✓

In the feelings of mystery and appreciation, and in the enthusiasm for the beautiful in deity, we find common sources of both art and religion, although differently developed; and in the symbolism in which both deal we find a further connection. It is in this very matter of symbolism that art is so helpful to religion. Each has been helpful to the other, if in no other way than by mutual aspiration, and each in turn has been the means of degrading the other, but chiefly through their wandering into by-paths. On the whole, however, we may say of the past, and surely as the ideal, that art beautifies and glorifies the concepts and worship of religion, and religion in turn inspires, purifies, and elevates art, and they are complementary in the higher life. This has been manifested in the history of the Christian church.

Among some psychologists fear does not stand alone as the primary religious emotion, but is coupled with love in the larger sense, *i. e.*, "tender emotion."<sup>2</sup> This sympathy or love is what attracts men to the Deity, while fear tends to repel them. When this attraction and love inspire a morbid

<sup>1</sup> C. C. Everett, *Psychological Elements of Religious Faith*, pp. 202 and 208.

<sup>2</sup> T. Ribot, *Psychology of the Emotions*, pp. 263 and 309.

exaltation, we have different forms of abnormal phenomena, such as ecstasy, which are determined according to the mixture of other emotions. The mystics, who dwell so much on this one factor of love, are examples of the morbid effects. They have generally chosen the Gospel of John as their favorite scripture. Some would say that Mysticism is a practical application of the Gospel of John. "Love, as St. John teaches us, is the great hierophant of the Christian mysteries."<sup>1</sup> Some mystics fail to come up to the standard of John, for while through love they found God in nature and in their own souls, they seldom found Him in the souls of others. Deeds of charity they performed, it is true, but real communion with others was foreign to them.

Love was always, however, the pathway to God in Mysticism. William Law is quoted as follows: "No creature can have any union or communion with the goodness of the Deity till its life is a spirit of love. This is the one only bond of union betwixt God and His creature." A favorite maxim with some of the mystics was that "love changes the lover into the beloved." We cannot conceive of mysticism among Christians without a basis of love, yet some used it more than others, and the definitions of love would vary greatly among different schools of mystics. With some there was an undoubted sexual element in it, others had as an ideal reciprocal love, while with some the only worthy kind was pure or disinterested love.<sup>2</sup>

The present development of Christianity through the influence of love is, in some respects, unhealthful if not pathological. It shows itself in lack of reverence to the Deity, who loves us so much as to be very companionable with us, and consequently the true spirit of worship has either been eradicated or has degenerated so as to be hardly recognizable.

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 234-242.

If this is a detriment which has followed the emphasis of love, it is more than overbalanced by the good which has resulted.

Christian love is not a pure emotion, as many mystics and others have supposed, but contains other elements, especially of will. Hence the command to love our enemies is not meaningless nor incapable of fulfilment. Love is expressed by service, and finds its culmination in complete self-surrender to God and self-sacrifice to man. Some of the saints have searched for the most disagreeable and difficult tasks, in order that they might demonstrate how completely all consideration of self had been destroyed. The tortures devised by all the genius of asceticism were never truly selfish, and however abnormal or foolish they may seem to us, we must recognize them as an imperfect yet purposeful way in which men tried to obtain satisfaction for the impulse to self-surrender generated by love for the Divine in obedience to His will toward men as interpreted by them. Notwithstanding this pathological fruit found in Christianity, but less in Christianity than in other religions, it is Christianity, with its teachings of Divine fatherhood and of redeeming Divine love as shown in the life and death of Jesus, which has stimulated the love of God and of our fellowmen, and brought it into prominence as religious practice. Whether other religions have received similar teaching through the influence of Christianity or developed it independently, it has never reached the high plane of Christianity either in principle or in practice.

There appears to be an organic affinity between love and joyousness. The two are concomitants at least. Love seems to inspire joy and joy love. In the ascetic life the climax of aspiration was the combination and perfection of both. In modern Christianity the acute stage of both seems to be at the time of conversion. If it is true that religion starts with fear it is equally true that it develops towards joy; joy, per-

haps, because of deliverance from fear. This seems to be a partial explanation of the conversion joy, coupled as it is with the sense of perfect trust, and consequent loss of worry. The joy and exaltation are probably largely responsible for the sense of newness so characteristic, we have found, of many conversion cases. The joy in conversion, especially in revival conversions, is partially due to suggestion. Contrasted with the fear inspired by a part of the preaching, is the expectation of joy which is proclaimed as an immediate effect of deciding to live a life of righteousness. In addition to external influences the question of whether there shall be depression or joy depends not a little upon the individual temperament. The element of fear, of course, brings depression, and the lack of decision when the matter is to be settled, as in revival experiences, is also a fruitful cause of depression, together with the dread which comes from the uncertainty of the future. In pathological cases this depression or sadness becomes religious melancholia, in which the emotional state accompanies the insistent belief that the individual is guilty, rejected, or damned.

In some cases of sainthood we have a strange combination of these two apparently contradictory emotions. We may call it the joy of sadness as a comprehensive name. St. Pierre writes, "I know not to what physical laws philosophers will some day refer the feelings of melancholy. For myself, I find that they are the most voluptuous of all sensations." Marie Bashkirtseff says, "In this depression and dreadful uninterrupted suffering, I don't condemn life. On the contrary, I like it and find it good. Can you believe it? I find everything good and pleasant, even my tears, my grief. I enjoy weeping, I enjoy my despair. I enjoy being exasperated and sad." The biographer of Marguerite Marie says of her, "Her love of pain and suffering was insatiable. . . . She said that she could cheerfully live till the day of judgment, provided she

might always have matter for suffering for God; but that to live a single day without suffering would be intolerable." Madame Guyon, in speaking of a severe storm which kept her eleven days at sea while sailing from Nice to Genoa, which I have already referred to, says, "As the irritated waves dashed round us I could not help experiencing a certain degree of satisfaction of mind. . . . Perhaps I carried the point too far, in the pleasure which I took in thus seeing myself beaten and bandied by the swelling waters."<sup>1</sup>

This love of suffering may have been extended to others and have been a factor in the cause of the cruelties in which some of the saints indulged. However, jealousy of the Deity's honor, and the bursting out of pent-up emotions which had been denied their natural outlet, are probably greater elements in the cause. Through this cruel tendency, Christianity in practice has been a continued tragedy instead of a love feast. The Roman Church, especially in the Middle Ages, used the argument of the sword, the fagot, and the gallows to make converts; and those who refused to be converted suffered the penalty. The Puritans hanged the witches, and both Roman Catholics and Protestants have turned against Jews and infidels with fury.

One can hardly conceive of stronger evidence of a lack of love than is found in some of Jonathan Edwards' sayings. Take that passage, for instance, in "The End of the Wicked contemplated by the Righteous: or, the Torments of the Wicked in Hell no occasion for Grief to the Saints in Heaven," where he says, "When they have this sight it will incite them to joyful praises. . . . The damned and their miseries, their sufferings and the wrath of God poured out upon them, will be an occasion of joy to them." Or take the words of Andrew Wellwood when picturing the future: "I am overjoyed

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 83, 287, and 310.

in hearing the everlasting howlings of the haters of the Almighty. What a pleasant melody are they in mine ears! O, Eternal Hallelujahs to Jehovah and the Lamb! O, sweet! sweet! My heart is satisfied." These men who gave expression to these words were not barbarians, but Christians in high repute in the church. Many of the ascetics have taken too literally the words of Jesus about hating father, mother, and others, and have had peculiar pleasure in causing their loved ones the most bitter sorrow and woe.

There is a related group consisting of humility, dependence, resignation, and other allied states which cannot be overlooked even if we are not able to devote much space to them. Considered as sources they are not far removed from fear, and probably those who would choose fear as the emotion on which religion depends for its origin have in mind very much the same emotion as those who choose dependence for the same task. Humility does not consist in advertising one's weakness as such, but depends on the recognition of the infinite distance between the moral or religious ideal and the state which the individual knows to be his own. It has been a cloak for inactivity, but genuine humility is never that; it strives to bridge the gap, however hopeless, between himself and Divinity. Recognizing the greatness of God and the insignificance of the individual, two states may result: man may see that he can only attain his ideal by the help of the greater power, and therefore recognizes his dependence upon God; not without striving, but on account of this very same recognition he realizes that the great power of foresight and knowledge of which he believes the Deity to be possessed is doing for him that which is best, and so he becomes resigned. In its full development, resignation is one of the most advanced of our religious states.

There are other affective states which have had not a little influence in religion and upon its development. Courage, pity,

curiosity, unrest, social feeling, and the feeling of obligation have all had an important place in Christianity, and still have. We must, however, curtail and leave these to the further investigation of the individual reader. The emotions concerned with worship and the sexual emotions will be considered in separate chapters, and "Faith-state" has already been presented.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### WORSHIP

“The plants look up to heaven, from whence  
They have their nourishment.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE discussion of Worship must necessarily be incomplete in this chapter. It has already been referred to in our discussion of Sex, the chapter on Prayer takes up a vital factor of worship, and Denominationalism also touches our subject. We find sufficient, however, outside of these three chapters, to call for discussion at this time.

We have taken up this subject in connection with the study of the emotions because of the large affective element in it. The sermon is supposed to be instructive and therefore of an intellectual character, but this is sometimes a gratuitous supposition. Apart from the intellectual factor in the sermon and in an occasional hymn, worship appeals principally to the emotions.

During the life of the apostles, and in the age following, worship was the spontaneous expression of religious feeling and, therefore, free from ceremonial. This continued until about the end of the second century when worship assumed a merit of its own on account of the belief that it was an acceptable service to God. In public, Christians knelt in prayer except on Sundays when they stood as a special token of joy. Extended passages of scripture were read and expounded, the sermon developing from the exposition. In some places a discussion added an intellectual element to the service. In the Epistle of Clement of Rome and in the

Didache certain forms of prayer are found, but their use was optional.

In the description of the Lord's Day worship which Justin Martyr gives, the prayers of the president seem to be extemporaneous, but the prayers of the people before the eucharist were evidently fixed in form. The "Apostolic Constitutions," a book written before the end of the second century, contains brief forms of prayer which were probably in use. In the Diocletian persecution there is no record of the search for or the surrender of books of ritual. That does not mean that forms did not exist, but that, on account of the secrecy surrounding the eucharist and other ceremonies, the forms were committed to memory and passed on in this way, rather than entrusted to writing.

At the end of the fourth century, on account of the marked division of times and places into secular and sacred, worship became little else than forms and ceremonies—a veritable round of arbitrary observances imposed by ecclesiastical authority. Decorations and pictures came into the church, and the idolatry which soon arose among the ignorant was condemned by the church, but its cause, the extravagant veneration of the saints, was commended. About this time and later numerous liturgies arose, most of which bore the name of apostles, without any claim, though, to apostolic authority.<sup>1</sup> This brief resumé of the beginnings of ceremonial in worship has been given in order that we may see two things: first, that it was a matter of development, and second, that it ministers to a psychological need.

The term "worship" is used in a double sense. It may mean the feeling of reverence and love toward God, or it may mean the forms by which this feeling is expressed. The ambiguity and confusion in this double meaning is escaped in part because this feeling, if at all intense, must express itself.

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 65 f., 116 ff., 120.

The expression may be in an elaborate ceremonial or it may be by putting into practice what our feelings impel us to do in the way of social service. These two are not mutually exclusive, yet either one or the other is liable to dominate us, and the lesser experience is correspondingly eliminated.

We have represented here two types of mind, and all minds are composite—made up more or less of each factor. The one type grasps ideas more readily when aided by outward objects and symbols, while the other type is hindered thereby. The simple-minded person finds it hard to contemplate an abstract idea without some concrete object to represent it on which he can fix his attention; the more abstract-minded person likes to shut his eyes so as to be able to think more clearly and without distraction. The former type depends upon ceremonial for his religious life, the latter undervalues or dislikes it. The dislike may be enhanced simply because the ceremonial is connected with religious things, which are too spiritual to be associated with the earthly, and to such persons, much ceremonial is not only derogatory to real worship but may be actually blasphemous. On the other hand, it is simply because of the spiritual and intangible quality of religion that others find the ceremonial so helpful and even necessary.

It is impossible for any of us to think long in abstract terms, and in spite of all we can do, spirituality takes some form and develops a body. God becomes a big man and the throne, the symbol of earthly power, his seat. What is true of the use of the symbol in our thinking is also true of the ceremonial in our worship. The symbols are necessarily only partial presentations of the truth, yet they have more effect upon the mind than bare abstractions. Although a map or a picture may be rough it is of some value, and the parable, as used by Jesus, for example, was more effective

than ethical definition. In fact, there are many truths which can only be properly expressed through visible forms. We know that historical study is greatly aided by maps, pictures, portraits, and other objective means, and it is difficult to understand it without some such help. Thus the personification of the beauty of virtue and the hideousness of vice is helpful to those who find it difficult to comprehend them in an abstract way. However crude the form, it may also be a great aid to faith in keeping the object of faith constantly before the mind and preventing the worshipper from forgetting it. Unless these persons or ideals in which we believe are frequently thought of, faith and the concomitant spiritual life deteriorates.

The Quaker and the Ritualist not only disagree on the subject of ceremonial, but they are usually intolerant. They not only have different ideas, but on account of the dissimilar types of mind they are unable to appreciate each other's point of view. This is especially true when the difference is one of taste rather than of fact. You may be able to convince a man that the earth is round rather than flat, but when you try to convince him that he should like olives and dislike onions when his taste is not of that kind, you have an impossible task to accomplish. He simply cannot understand why you should like the one and dislike the other when he is not thus constituted. There is the further disadvantage that not only is he unable to understand your tastes but he is unable to justify, explain, or give a reason for his own. There are, therefore, no controversies so bitter as those of taste and feeling, when the proper attitude seems to be simply to agree to disagree. In religion there are historical, legal and argumentative considerations, but these may be adjusted or even ignored; the questions of taste in art, difference in feeling, and use in symbol, the questions which are temperamental rather than general, furnish occasions for most of the dis-

putes. The forms of worship vary not only with temperament but with belief and custom.

The great danger connected with ceremonial is, of course, the liability to displace the Deity with symbol or form, or to make fetishes of symbols. The more rigid and unchanging the form, the more liable is this to happen. It is curious, yet none the less true, that in the past the rigidity of form has caused more dissensions than the rigidity of creed, and either far more than the departure from the moral life for which the church stands. The causes for dissent are usually in inverse proportion to their real importance. If the external forms were left plastic so that they could change with the growth or alteration of our religious experience, their value would be greatly enhanced to the cause of religion, and the great injury which they are capable of doing would be prevented.

The Greek Church has always laid much emphasis on the form, but less on real religious life. Even in the churches where religion is supposed to be more developed, we have been surprised to find insistence on form and external devotion conjoined with a notoriously immoral life. The trouble is that in some cases worship is merely a matter of the senses, appealing through external objects and practices, but does not involve the whole man. Religion cannot be a matter of the senses only, any more than it can neglect the senses. The æsthetic nature is a real part of man and indeed a part very closely related to religious ideas—so closely related in some cases that the individual is unable to distinguish between them. In the early religions God seemed to reveal himself principally through the sense of beauty, and to-day we may see Him more clearly in beautiful surroundings. "It is possible to blaspheme God under His attribute of beauty as well as under that of truth or of holiness. And, on the other hand, we may worship Him under this attribute no less than

under His other attributes.”<sup>1</sup> This was very clearly pointed out by Mr. Ruskin in whom real worship consisted so much of this one factor. To stunt the growth of any element of real manhood is opposed to true religion, so we must make room in our religion for the development, or at least the expression of, our æsthetic nature; and we must not permit the existence of a separation between the arts of expression and the religious life, to which the Puritan spirit is so prone.

Unfortunately, among Protestants the first question has been, “Is it Roman?” and if so it could not be too hastily excluded, regardless of the beauty or the value. The primary inquiry should be, “Is it legitimate and helpful?” if so it must be retained, for not everything that is Roman is bad.

Some ceremonies are matters of custom, habit, and taste, while others spring naturally from the part of the service to which they adhere. There is, of course, a presumption in favor of that which is old and widespread in the church, but a distinction should be drawn between the correct and incorrect adherence to traditions, customs, and habits. Ceremonial should either be a spontaneous expression of feeling, or else the form which, although initiated by others perhaps centuries ago, most adequately expresses our religious emotions.

On account of the reciprocal relation of cause and effect it is not easy to determine how far unity of doctrine and feeling precedes agreement in ceremonial, or to what extent it follows it. Ceremonial is both the fruit and the seed of the doctrine. While they are closely related they are really independent, for while two persons might agree in ceremonial they might differ in doctrine or, on the other hand, agree in doctrine and express it differently. Since the feelings are so intimately connected with the external impressions, the surroundings of worship are therefore a school of emotion and taste, and assist or detract according to their character.

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 207.

Perhaps, though, the difference between the Puritan and the Ritualist could best be reconciled by adopting the position of the former for private worship, and of the latter for public worship, for worship is both individual and corporate.

“But it is also to be remembered that there are, in reality, no such things as ‘mere externals.’ Every external implies and has reference to something internal, and must be estimated accordingly. Ceremonial is an external because it is an expression of an inner reality; this reality is often of such a sort as to baffle expression by any other means. Reverence, for example, is more eloquently signified by the publican’s bowed head than in any other way. Irreverence is equally signified by an attitude or a gesture. No other method of expression could be so expressive. And in general it must be urged that externals are not ‘mere externals’ but things pregnant with importance, because of that state of mind which they signify or express.

“Ceremonial, again, is expressive of religious truths. Sometimes these are better defined by a gesture or a symbol than by theological definition. Many a poor sinner can express his trust in his Divine Savior far better by kissing his crucifix than by attempting to expound his conception of the doctrine of the atonement.”<sup>1</sup>

In dealing with the subject of sex it was indicated that the  
 ✓ feminine characteristics were exalted in church worship.  
 ✓ Beauty rather than strength has been sought. Sermons must abound in rhetoric and oratory rather than in rugged simplicity, in beautiful descriptions rather than in logical thought. Attractive appearances, fastidious exactness, good form, and conformity to social rules have always been emphasized. The music also must be artistic. All the elements which tend to produce emotion, and therefore minister to the feminine mind, have predominated, and ruggedness, mas-

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Frere, *The Principles of Religious Ceremonial*, pp. 11 f.

culinity, has been made subservient. Starbuck found that girls express a pleasure in religious observance more frequently than boys by a ratio of seventeen to seven, while, on the contrary, boys express a distinct dislike for it more often than girls by a ratio of twenty-one to nine. This throws further light on the sex question in religion. Men like a feminine woman, undoubtedly, but they do not like to have to express their masculinity in a feminine service; they do not like to act like women any more than women like to act like men.

Hylan<sup>1</sup> presents three factors as the legitimate and valuable elements in worship. They are, 1. The ideals suggested by the sermon are the important part of worship, but suggestions of artistic decorations and the service as a whole assist the imagination to form effective ideals of conduct. 2. Feelings play a more primitive rôle, and in worship proper they form the necessary motor force which makes the service effective. In answer to the *questionnaire*, emotional rather than intellectual effects were most prominent. The religious emotions may be so intense as to destroy all others. 3. The expression of emotion through ritual has an important value. The motor expression of an emotion tends to keep it from merely evaporating. Feeling without some expression is bad training, for soon the emotion will cease to be a motor power. In the Lord's Supper, therefore, we have a good illustration of true worship in first, the mental content of worship, second, the emotional accompaniment, and third, the immediate expression and permanent effect of the first two.

The religious emotions, in common with all emotions, may be divided into two classes. The one of which fear is the keynote, consists of painful and depressive states, the other, touched by tenderness, consists of pleasurable and expansive states.<sup>2</sup> Ceremonial ministers to the inciting of

<sup>1</sup> J. P. Hylan, *Public Worship*, pp. 65-88.

<sup>2</sup> T. Ribot, *The Psychology of the Emotions*, p. 324.

both classes, and they should express themselves, through the developing aid of worship, in the moral control of conduct.

There are three ways in which public worship is psychologically valuable to religious development. In the first place, consciousness is controlled and directed into religious paths. The control is both negative and positive. The seclusion of the church supplies a condition where there is a lack of distracting ideas not equalled by the hermit's cell; and, on the other hand, the architecture, decorations, music, social influence, and a developed taste for worship are positively attractive, so that consciousness is not only not distracted but is held by public worship in religious lines far better than in other ways. In the second place there is a collective suggestibility. We have already seen one effect of this in our study of the crowd. Whatever suggestibility there may be in symbolism, the effect is greatly heightened by the presence of others—the emotional stimulation is much increased. The third point is this: the bodily posture connected with any feeling, if assumed, brings about this feeling or tends to strengthen it if already present. This posture may be natural, or one artificially connected with the emotion and inculcated through training, the effect is the same. The hypnotized person shows this very well. Clench his fist for him and without further suggestion he becomes pugnacious; in the attitude of shaking hands he is friendly; clasp his hands and he prays. Even in a normal state it is impossible for us long to be sad with the corners of our mouths turned up, or to be cheerful with a frown and an ugly look—the bodily attitude influences the emotion and the expression reacts so as to heighten feeling. The suggestion of devotion is strengthened by the attitude of prayer and by the surroundings which we have all associated with worship. The favorable influence of a special environment is a great aid to real worship.

There are two factors of worship which we may be able to deal with more in detail. Especially is this true of public worship. In Christianity, public worship is dependent not a little on the observance of Sunday as a day specially set apart for that purpose. How the idea of a special day for worship originated we do not know; its origin is hidden in antiquity. Hebrew tradition sinks its roots in the act of creation, and makes God the direct originator of the rest (Sabbath) day. Among primitive people there is evidence of its origin being centered around the lunar feasts, the full moon, the new moon, and hence every seventh day.

Whether or not God directly instituted the Sabbath, there is no doubt about His originating it indirectly, for in man's nature we find the true reason for the day. Science has come to the aid of religion in demonstrating this. It has been proved by an analysis of the blood and in other ways, that the nightly rest does not provide sufficient recuperation, and the need of an extra day occasionally is seen. France tried one day in ten but found it insufficient. The testimony before the British Parliament by physicians and scientists was to the effect that some extra days of rest were needed; "to maintain a condition of vigor a supplementary rest of about one day in seven" was advised.

In answer to a *questionnaire* on the subject<sup>1</sup> a large proportion of the respondents signified that rest was the most important factor in producing a Sabbath feeling. Rest does not mean the cessation of activity but rather the exercising of functions not ordinarily used. The joy which comes from this is psycho-physical—the use of unused paths to discharge a superabundance of accumulated energy.

The early Jewish Sabbath was a time of joyous feasting and merry-making until after the priestly code came into

<sup>1</sup> J. P. Hylan, *Public Worship*, pp. 15-45, for a discussion of the whole subject.

effect at the end of the Babylonian Captivity. Then there was an effort to please God by manifold rites, and by sacrifice, which, together with the sad environment, made the day funereal. While it would be interesting to trace the development of the Lord's Day from the Jewish Sabbath, this is not our province; it is well to note in passing that the early Christian Sunday was joyous, and the Puritan Sunday was an unnatural development.

I cannot help thinking that not a little of our present lack of Sunday observance is due to calling the day "The Sabbath." Why it should be called the Sabbath which it is not, rather than Sunday or The Lord's Day, which it is, I do not know. The idea of the Sabbath is that which the Jews held at the time of Christ, dreary, sad, awful, and, of course, decidedly unattractive. So long as the word is used no other interpretation is allowable, for this is the idea which the New Testament distinctly gives and the Puritans emphasized. The idea which Jesus presented, in contrast to the dreary negation of Judaism, was that it was lawful to do good on the day, and if the resurrection anniversary means anything, it means joy and happiness. The celebration of Sunday should be joyous, and if this were understood there would be more of a tendency to the religious observation of the day. The present *desecration* is due to a reaction—a natural reaction—against "The Sabbath"; the Lord's Day, the Sunday, idea contrasted with that should present such an ideal that men would welcome it rather than try to shun it. Nature demands a day for rest, religion demands a day for public worship. "The Sabbath" cannot furnish such to Christianity, "Sunday"—"The Lord's Day"—is our hope.

Music is always an important feature in worship. Chants and crude songs are found in the worship of the most primitive people, and musical instruments are used to intensify

and emphasize the rhythm.<sup>1</sup> Elisha requested the minstrel to play that he might prophesy, and when the minstrel played "the hand of the Lord came upon him." In the Christian church at the outset the music consisted mostly of the singing of psalms, and flourished especially in Syria and in Alexandria. It was both choral and congregational, but was very simple in its character. Pliny describes some alternate singing in the worship of Christians, and the introduction of antiphonal singing at Antioch is ascribed by tradition to Ignatius. In the third century, or earlier, the anthem of the angels (Luke 2 : 14) was expanded from the Greek original into the Latin hymn, the *Gloria in Excelsis* of later date.<sup>2</sup> We find that hymns were also used to counteract the Arians. About the twelfth or thirteenth centuries the hymnology of the Latin church had a singularly solemn and majestic tone, and was inseparably wedded to the music. Its cadence was musical rather than metrical, and to be appreciated it must be heard and not read.

We notice a contrast in Protestant hymnology, especially at the time of the Reformation. The characteristic of the Protestant religion is the free and joyous spirit inspired by the doctrine of gratuitous forgiveness, and this was evidenced by the outburst of music and poetry, especially in Germany. Luther himself published thirty-six hymns, twenty-one of which were original, and music made a corresponding advance. His hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," has been called by Heine "the Marseillaise of the Reformation." Since that time the church has never been in need of great hymns, but unfortunately there is a tendency at the present time to neglect the great hymns, and to emphasize some new sacred song with poor literary form and worse music.

The best hymns and music stimulate religious feelings

<sup>1</sup> J. P. Hylan, *Public Worship*, p. 61 f.

<sup>2</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 65.

and give proper vent to them, so it is needful that we have the best. There is little doubt that singing is a very popular part of worship, and is sometimes considered the most influential part of the service. The reason for this is that the hymns are the most direct and spontaneous expression of personal experience, and the heart throb calls for and receives a response. That is what causes hymns to live longer than creeds. No one to-day believes the same as the psalmists, yet their hymns of milleniums ago are still fresh, attractive and valuable.

Coe has given us an analysis of Hymnology and Sacred Songs from the psychological standpoint. Calling attention to the fact that the hymn is not only the expression of emotion but the quickener and inspirer of emotion, he also points out that hymns should be of such a character as to inspire all the emotions in the proper proportion to develop a well-balanced life. An examination of various hymnals proves this to be anything but so. The tabulated analysis of one hymnal is as follows:

“Number of hymns in the entire collection . . . . .	1,117
Number of hymns on Christ, the Christian, and the Church . . . . .	608
On Life and Character of Christ, Christian Activity, and Church Work . . . . .	144
On the Life Activities of Christ, Christian Ac- tivity, and Charities and Reforms, all ob- jectively viewed . . . . .	17

“In other words, less than twenty-four per cent. of the hymns on Christ, the Christian, and the Church have to do with the life and character of Christ, Christian activity, and Church work. Again, less than three per cent. of the said hymns on Christ, Christian, and Church treat of the life activities of Christ, Christian activity, and charities and reforms in an objective spirit. Finally, it follows that, of the

entire collection, only about one and a half per cent. take up the practical problems of the everyday activities of the adult Christian in this spirit."<sup>1</sup> Now, not only is one side of all lives left undeveloped, but some temperaments are not ministered to at all. Our great need in hymnology to-day is a number of hymns on social goodness, rather than so many which cultivate sentiment.

The will must be stirred in order that men may do as well as feel. In an examination of the popular revival, prayer meeting, and Sunday School songs, Coe finds that "feeling is still in the ascendancy, but it is of a mobile and superficial kind. There is nothing of the profound emotion and stately movement of the standard hymn." Thought, composition, meter, and music agree in deficiencies. He quotes one song, "Let Him in," beginning "There's a stranger at the door," which is characterized not as the worst, but as one of the best of the recent revival songs. The criticism is as follows: "You perceive that the thought and composition, especially after the first stanza, are decidedly patchy. With the omission of two 'ands,' the second, third, and fourth stanzas could be read in inverse order of the lines as well as in the order given. More than that, leaving out the last two lines—the only ones having any obvious rhetorical connection—we could take the remainder, write one line on each of thirteen slips of paper, shake the slips in a hat, draw them out indiscriminately, and, taking them in the new order, have nearly, if not quite, as good a poem as the one before us. And yet this composition is probably less open to serious objection than the majority of songs of its class." The emotionalism of most of our hymns is such as ministers to youth, but that of our popular revival songs being characterized by an appeal to

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, pp. 225 ff. See also C. W. Super, "The Psychology of Christian Hymns," *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, III, pp. 1-15.

the mercurial and impressional, ministers more to childhood. The hymns and songs for maturity and of action are wanting, and the need of them is much felt. We need a few masculine hymns.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### PRAYER

“We, ignorant of ourselves,  
Beg often our own harms, which the wise Powers  
Deny us for our good; so find we profit,  
By losing our prayers.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

No religion has ever been known which did not contain prayer in some form. It is the most widespread, reliable, and important factor in worship. It has always occupied a very noticeable place in Christianity, and notwithstanding the many interesting and instructive forms found among other religions, we must confine our attention to this. To ask why men pray would be to ask why men are constituted as they are, for it has proven itself to be a universal characteristic. In some way it ministers to a psychological need. The belief in an infinite power awakens emotions and sentiments which best find their expression in prayer. Professor James has put it very well in the following words:

“We hear, in these days of scientific enlightenment, a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer; and many reasons are given us why we should not pray, whilst others are given us why we should. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we *do* pray, which is simply that we cannot *help* praying. It seems probable that, in spite of all that ‘science’ may do to the contrary, men will continue to pray to the end of time, unless their mental nature changes in a manner which nothing we know should lead us to expect. The impulse to pray is a necessary consequence of the fact

that whilst the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a Self of the *social* sort, it yet can find its only adequate *Socius* in an ideal world.”<sup>1</sup>

Ideally it is the fruit of the filial attitude to the Supreme Power, and in this attitude of sonship we must find our conceptions of prayer expressed, however imperfectly. No more than in the earthly family, however, may we expect the expression of the different members to agree, but we must be prepared to find it vary according to the temperament and age of different persons, and in the same person according to circumstances. If this filial attitude is to be truly maintained by each individual, he must not try to copy anyone else, not even those who have “the gift of prayer,” but endeavor in his own way, and in a manner which best expresses his own religious life, to come into personal touch with the Father. The effort may be crude and far removed from the ideal, but if personal relationship is established by any man, we must, therefore, say that he has prayed. “Its [prayer’s] human analogue is not petition, but intercourse with a friend. Primarily we desire such intercourse as an end in itself, simply because our friend is our friend, and the fact of converse with him manifests and satisfies our friendship.”<sup>2</sup>

Our justification for prayer, then, is intrinsic, wrapped up in the experience itself, and not dependent upon aught else than the relationship established by the very act. It therefore accomplishes its chief end by its mere existence. This relationship established through prayer is the very essence of religion, and, as has been pointed out,<sup>3</sup> it distinguishes religion from moral and æsthetic sentiments. This intercourse between man and the higher powers with whom he feels himself related is the deepest mysticism. This is the one experi-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *Psychology*, I, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. Illingworth, *Christian Character*.

<sup>3</sup> A. Sabatier, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 27.

ence which makes mystics out of all persons who are at all religious; but in this mysticism the real, vital power of prayer consists.

So long as restrictions in form, place, and media exist, prayer is thereby robbed of its spontaneity, mysticism, and, therefore, essence. (Repetition in prayer is a hindrance, as though the filial relationship could be established by mechanical means.<sup>1</sup> Yet it is recognized as very common in all religions; there is a belief shared by all sects "that the benefits of this universe are to be secured by the perfunctory lip-service or barrel-service of human beings."<sup>2</sup> "Prayer, even among Christians, is apt to degenerate into a dull, mechanical uniformity, and to become scarcely less perfunctory than that which the Thibetans grind out of their prayer-machine."<sup>3</sup>

Restrictions of place have been characteristic of most religions. Temples and special holy places have been designated as the particular dwelling place of the Deity, and here men came to meet God, feeling that nowhere else could they communicate with Him at all, or at least, so well. Jesus sounded the death-knell to such a necessity when He declared that not in any particular mountain, but in "spirit and in truth" God must be worshipped. We must not, however, disregard the significance of the influence of certain places where men have habitually prayed, which I have tried to bring out in the chapter on Worship.

In regard to the media, let me quote the following:

"Every worshipper may go directly to God, with the prayer of faith; nor may any man intervene as an indispensable, or even as a particularly favored medium, between any other and his God. At the same time the power and helpful influence of associations and favorable circumstances

<sup>1</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> M. D. Conway, *Idols and Ideals*, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> W. H. D. Adams, *Curiosities of Superstition*, p. 2.

cannot be neglected by any form of religious cult; neither can the social benefit and spiritual assistance which the better and stronger may always render to the less developed and weaker be neglected. For disregard of the one and neglect of the other would both do violence to those very psychological characteristics which give rise to the necessity, and secure the benefits, of any religious cult at all." <sup>1</sup>

Concerning the type of prayer which might be recognized as a universal ideal, I can do no better than to quote again.

"But the form which is called after his name, 'the Lord's Prayer,' is the universal type of all true prayer; it thus embodies the essential features of the ideal religious cult. For it expresses the attitude of filial piety as a perfect confidence in God, the Heavenly Father; as sympathy and love toward all men who are children of this Father; and as the disposition to govern one's own life according to the Divine Will, in a constant loving trust that this Will for us is best for us. This prayer is the perfect expression of the end of religion, attained in the spiritual communion of the finite Self with the Infinite Self; it sets forth in few and simple words the voluntary relations in which the realized content of faith places the human life to the life of God." <sup>2</sup>

If, as is stated above, prayer is the essence of religion, a study of the forms and contents of prayers should indicate the nature of religion at any time; such we find to be the fact. Coe has pointed out that we spend less time in prayer than did our fathers, and while they agonized and stormed the celestial gates, we are less confident and more confused in our ideas concerning prayer. The confusion and change, he thinks, is due to the following six causes. 1. Active work rather than submission is the keynote to-day. 2. The pernicious distinction between sacred and secular is becoming

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 536.

obliterated. 3. The Fatherhood of God is being more emphasized. 4. Results show that prayers for the weather, etc., are ineffective. 5. Prayers peculiar to certain temperaments have been exalted, and tears rather than action have been preferred. 6. Material prosperity makes us forget prayer.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not these reasons are exhaustive, they are at least suggestive, and to the results of the change which are psychological, rather than to the cause which is largely theological, we must now turn our thoughts.

While there has been some argument against the practice of prayer at all, the principal protest has been against a particular style of prayer. Some think that men should rely on their own efforts rather than waste their time in prayer, and would advise Christians to heed the words spoken concerning primitive peoples. "Thus man by appealing to the rain-god, instead of using scientific means to promote rain-fall or to supply the lack of irrigation, has hindered his development for centuries."<sup>2</sup> The great weight of objection has not been against prayer as communion, but against prayer as petition.

"The world is to be made over into the kingdom of Christ, not by the easy way of begging the Almighty to do the work, but by the vastly harder way of doing it ourselves. The effectiveness of prayer does not consist in inducing God to do something, but at most, in removing obstacles that tend to defeat his loving purpose. Prayer is not merely means to an end, but its end is in itself. What we must do is to make God end and not means. The simple believer who asks that he may have rain for his wheat-field, truly prays. His praying will not alter the order of nature, in which rain has its place, but through his prayer he assumes a relation of conscious dependence and trust toward God, and rightly assumes

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, pp. 329-342.

<sup>2</sup> H. M. Stanley, "The Psychology of Religion," *Psychological Review*, V, p. 254.

that God is interested in wheat.”<sup>1</sup> Taking as a text the futility of prayer regarding the weather, and quoting many examples of the failure of such prayers to accomplish results, a sermon may be preached in which the petitional element in prayer is relegated to the scrap heap.

Few, perhaps, would assign the power of regulating the weather which was comparatively recently attributed to a Boston clergyman. “The minister at Sudbury, being at the Thursday lecture at Boston, heard the officiating clergyman praying for rain. As soon as the service was over he went to the petitioner and said, ‘You Boston ministers, as soon as a tulip wilts under your windows, go to church and pray for rain, until all Concord and Sudbury are under water.’”<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, very few wish to be confined to the theory of a mechanism which leaves even the Almighty no freedom. But even in such a machine, prayer—petitional prayer—has a place.

“Even the most strictly mechanical view of the world-order must admit that prayer may, under certain circumstances, have an important effect in modifying the course of physical events. Indeed, within certain limits not easy to be fixed, the more strict and minute the tenure of the principle of mechanism, the more sure and widespreading becomes the physical influence of the subjective attitude of prayer. Taken in its strictest form, the mechanical conception regards the Cosmos as a totality, including all of man’s life, which is so sensitive throughout the whole to every slightest change in every minutest part, that ceaseless and boundless vibrations proceed from every finger point, no matter how delicate its touch may seem to be. Especially does this conception connect together, in terms of some comprehensive

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, pp. 331, 337, 341, 353, and 357.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Emerson, *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*, p. 363.

theory of relations, all the phenomena of human consciousness and certain correlated changes in the bodily mechanism. No more interior, unheard whisper, or even muttered thought, of a prayer could, then, fail of its record in some corresponding physical event. . . . The same Being of the World which expresses its will in souls as the conscious attitude of prayer, is expressing the same will in countless, unknown other ways, throughout its own entire being.”<sup>1</sup>

If we may make a place in our system for the freedom of man, then we open a gap which might allow of some freedom to God, if for no other end than to pursue His strict purpose which man's freedom may have, to some extent, disarranged, or to assist man in freely conforming to this purpose. However, we must allow the theologians and philosophers to arrange the possibility of such freedom, and trust that their permission may not be withheld.

In answer to a *questionnaire* regarding the results of prayer,<sup>2</sup> 83 per cent. of the respondents thought the results wholly subjective, 12 per cent. thought them both subjective and objective, and but 5 per cent. considered them mostly objective. A large number of the respondents to another *questionnaire*<sup>3</sup> seem to be sure of the two-sidedness of prayer and say, “I pray because God hears.” Even a large number of persons who are theoretically sceptical state that they believe that God does send things. Nearly 70 per cent. of Beck's respondents say that they feel the presence of a higher power, while in the act of prayer, and this feeling of the presence of God is very real to some persons at such times. I have already noted that at one time St. Francis tried to pray, but so great was the sense of the presence of God that until

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, II, pp. 377 f.

<sup>2</sup> F. O. Beck, “Prayer: A Study in its History and Psychology,” *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, p. 273.

daybreak he could do nothing but reiterate the words, "My God! My God!" Almost every answer to Beck's questions feels the manifestation of unusual power which gives ability to accomplish ends, but 75 per cent. are very positive in their conviction that it is always a mistake to pray for a change in the weather. The other 25 per cent. have a variety of convictions or none at all.

The consensus of opinion, both scientific and general, seems to be that prayer has real subjective value, but does not bring about objective results.<sup>1</sup> Of the former contention there seems to be little doubt. Men agree in the statement that in and by prayer they receive strength, insight, comfort, and peace. We must take the testimony of individuals for this, and this testimony is almost unanimous. For example, take the following:

"Times without number, in moments of supreme doubt, disappointment, discouragement, unhappiness, a certain prayer formula, which by degrees has built itself up in my mind, has been followed in its utterance by a quick and astonishing relief. Sometimes doubt has been transferred into confident assurance, mental weakness utterly routed by strength, self-distrust changed into self-confidence, fear into courage, dismay into confident and brightest hope. These transitions have sometimes come by degrees—in the course, let us say, of an hour or two; at other times they have been instantaneous, flashing up in brain and heart as if a powerful electric stroke had cleared the air."<sup>2</sup>

Even if these and similar effects are admitted our main problem of the efficacy of prayer yet remains. Let me state it in the words of Mr. Beck. "The experimental

<sup>1</sup> Compare D. S. Hill, "The Education and Problems of the Protestant Ministry," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, pp. 227 f.

<sup>2</sup> Unbekannt, "The Art of Prayer," *Outlook*, LXXXIII, pp. 857 f.

method cannot completely solve the question as to whether the answer to a petition comes from a superior force of energy (God), as cause and effect, or is but the reflex effort upon the one who prays. It would require the testimony of God to establish this beyond a peradventure." <sup>1</sup> For a number of years it has seemed evident that the factor which would have most influence in eliminating God from the position of the *direct* answerer of prayer was the study of the subconsciousness, and I have expected a full treatise by someone on the subject. It has come, partially at least, from the pen of Miss Strong.<sup>2</sup> Some further suggestions have also been made along the line of reflex answer to prayer.<sup>3</sup> The following is an epitome of the conclusions of these articles.

The idea of God, dominating consciousness and bringing all thoughts and desires into captivity to itself, is capable of giving a peculiar satisfaction. The adoration of God, *i. e.*, the æsthetic contemplation of God, is a constant factor of most prayers, and brings peace and quiet by doing away with some of the distressing conditions of mental activity. The idea of God, being a counterpart of man's aspirations after the ideal, produces a positive pleasure when dominating consciousness, because man is thereby enabled to reach his ideal. Beck found prayer to be largely the result of habit, and in habitual actions there is a release of tension which brings about peace. P. Brooks defined prayer as "the complete rest of the life of man upon the life of God." If this state can be attained, relaxation and peace must follow. The feeling of strength and power which often follows prayer is due "to the

<sup>1</sup> F. O. Beck, "Prayer: A Study in its History and Psychology," *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> A. L. Strong, "The Relation of the Subconscious to Prayer," *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, pp. 160-167.

<sup>3</sup> S. W. Ransom, "Studies in the Psychology of Prayer," *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, pp. 129-142.

recuperation of the mental faculties under the relieved tension, and partly to the removal by suggestion of all inhibiting ideas and the consequent ease of action along habitual lines in the carrying out of the one habitual idea." Prayer for specific virtues or special blessings for self is often productive of results. The effects are due to auto-suggestion. Sudden happiness so often felt is due to the relief of conscious tension and falling back upon the subconscious organization. When we give up the struggle and pray and relax, we give the subconsciousness a chance to work, and extra normal mentality is the result. Miss Strong concludes as follows:

"The laws of mental procedure are not all discovered yet. Until they are, the last word has, of course, not been said with regard to either 'objective' or subjective 'answers' to prayer. Yet the percentage of yet unexplained cases is so small that it seems fair to assume that in time all answers to prayer will be seen to come as the result of definite psychic laws and that many of these laws will be those which are peculiarly appropriate to subconscious activities. The prayer-attitude is a definite psychic state and has its natural psychic consequents. Its value for the higher life of the individual is rather increased than diminished by the discovery of its laws. And the psychologist would agree with the religious leader in holding that this value lies not in the specific phrases of prayer, but in its more general aspects, as meditation and relaxation and in the peace and unification of aim resulting therefrom. 'We have,' to quote James, 'in the fact that the conscious person is continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come, a positive content of religious experience which, it seems to me, is literally and positively true, as far as it goes. The practical needs of religion are met by this belief.' Least of all has the immanent view of theology any quarrel to make with psychology for finding the answer to prayer in our own wider self. And

taken in connection with an idealistic view of philosophy, the conception of prayer and its relation to the subconscious assumes a meaning much more vitally religious and, perhaps, much more in accord with the common conception of prayer than appears from the bare discussion of its psychology."

Before commenting on this, let us turn to another province of subconscious activity which has been already brought out in our study of Stigmatization, Faith Cure, etc. In our chapter on Faith Cure we reserved the question concerning the efficacy of prayer in disease until this time, and we must now take it up. At the 1905 annual meeting of the British Medical Association, Dr. Theodore B. Hyslop, Superintendent of Bethlem Royal Hospital, a specialist in neurology and in the treatment of mental diseases, said, "As an alienist and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depressed spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a distressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer. . . . Let there but be a habit of nightly communion, not as a mendicant or repeater of words more adapted to the tongue of a sage, but as an humble individual who submerges or asserts his individuality as an integral part of a greater whole. Such a habit does more to clean the spirit and strengthen the soul to overcome mere incidental emotionalism than any other therapeutic agent known to me"<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding the weight of authority which might be accumulated along this line, the objection might well be made that this is not essentially different from the cases already cited of the cure of doubt, discouragement, etc., but that insanity is simply an exaggeration of such conditions. We must look at the more distinctively bodily ill.

<sup>1</sup> "A Medical Estimate of Prayer," Editorial, *Outlook*, LXXXI, p. 110.

“As regards prayer for the sick, if any medical fact can be considered to stand firm, it is that in certain environments prayer may contribute to recovery, and should be encouraged as a therapeutic measure. Being a normal factor of moral health in the person, its omission would be deleterious.”<sup>1</sup> This may be predicated of prayer, regardless of the form of the disease. I do not mean by this, however, that a cure will be made regardless of the disease, but that the liability of cure is greater regardless of the disease. Absence of worry, cheerfulness, and hopefulness are valuable therapeutic aids, and the confident expectation of a cure is incomparable medicine. From a therapeutic standpoint, any physician would far rather have a praying patient whose life corresponds with his prayers than one who gives not this assistance. Science recognizes the value of prayer, and further recognizes that this value is concerned in some way with the subconsciousness. We may now state our problem again. All the subjective value of prayer is of subconscious origin. Does it come about simply through the general psychological laws on account of a certain attitude of mind of the individual who prays, or is there a special and direct answer on the part of God?

It will be remembered that I have already opined that if God works directly through and on the individual He works through the subconsciousness. This, of course, is only a theory and the necessity of the theory is conditioned by an “if”—a large “if” some would say. “We must look upon natural law as simply God’s way of doing things, and invariable because his intelligence and his purpose change not.”<sup>2</sup> Let us for the time admit this, are we yet so familiar with every phase of natural law that we can definitely say that God’s working through the subconsciousness is not a part of this

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 463.

<sup>2</sup> G. A. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 352.

same natural law? Can we say that this is an infraction of natural law? May we not, on the other hand, say that it conforms to some psychic laws, *e. g.*, influence, suggestion, etc., and conserves rather than infringes on natural law? I am simply asking questions in order to leave an opening for such as are assured of a direct answer in a subjective way. We may have a machine which does a certain work. By the product we cannot always be sure whether man-power, horse-power, steam-power, or electric-power is used. It makes no difference to the working of the machine and little difference in the product. In the bodily machine, where the power is applied by both in the same place, the subconsciousness, it may be difficult to determine whether man-power or God-power is used, and if the machine feels the difference and can distinguish, its testimony must be taken. The only test between these two which can be objectively made is in the permanency and thoroughness of the results.

That there is something more at stake than a simple choice of theory may be inferred from the following:

“The genuineness of religion is thus indissolubly bound up with the question whether the prayerful consciousness be or be not deceitful. The conviction that some thing is genuinely transacted in this consciousness is the very core of religion. As to what is transacted, great differences of opinion have prevailed. . . . Through prayer, religion insists, things which cannot be realized in any other manner come about: energy which but for prayer would be bound, is by prayer set free and operates in some part, be it objective or subjective, of the world of facts.”

“The fundamental religious point is that in prayer, spiritual energy, which otherwise would slumber, does become active, and spiritual work of some kind is effected really.”

The conclusion is “that prayer or inner communion with

the spirit thereof—be that spirit ‘God’ or ‘law’—is a process wherein work is really done, and spiritual energy flows in and produces effects, psychological or material, within the phenomenal world.”

“The appearance is that in this phenomenon [prayerful communion] something ideal, which in one sense is part of ourselves and in another sense is not ourselves, actually exerts an influence, raises our centre of personal energy, and produces regenerative effects unattainable in other ways.”<sup>1</sup>

Or take the following:

“*Prayer* is the general name for that attitude of open and earnest expectancy. If we then ask to *whom* to pray, the answer (strangely enough) must be that *that* does not much matter. The prayer is not, indeed, a purely subjective thing;—it means a real increase in intensity of absorption of spiritual power or grace;—but we do not know enough of what takes place in the spiritual world to know how the prayer operates;—*who* is cognizant of it, or through what channel the grace is given.”<sup>2</sup>

All this may be true and yet, it may be argued, it may mean nothing more than that God has stored a certain amount of spiritual energy about us and by getting our minds in a certain condition we open the gates which allow the energy to flow through the subconscious sluice-way. Even accepting this, it is not the same as saying that the answer to prayer is nothing more than a subconscious reaction, even when we know that God is the author of the subconsciousness, and has so arranged it in the process of creation through evolution that it shall give a certain reaction. Neither of these views, however, seems likely to inspire the practice of prayer, or calcu-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 466, 477, 485, and 523.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. H. Myers, in a private letter to a friend. Quoted by W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* p. 467.

lated to bring about that attitude of communion and dependence in which we believe true prayer to consist.

While it is true that "it is not as a Giver but as a Companion that God is chiefly valued and sought in prayer," and that "God rather than His gifts is desired," it is also true that there can be no companionship without giving something on both sides. Petitional prayer is only a part of prayer, yet it *is* a part, nevertheless, and must be recognized as such. In this companionship God asks something of us, and is it not legitimate for us to ask something of Him? True, our petitions are limited by "Thy will be done," and it is not ours to demand, but if God's love is what we are led to suppose it is, our prayers are the occasion of the blessing of which His love is the cause. An analysis of Jesus' prayers<sup>1</sup> shows us that while communion was the main element, petition was far from lacking.

We have been endeavoring to confine our analysis so far to subjective results of prayer, but one may see how far-reaching this is in itself. And if we go further and admit that God works directly upon the subconsciousness of man, we include a far greater scope. If He influences men through the subconsciousness, this influence is not confined to the person who offers the prayer, but *may be* extended to other or all men directly. On the other hand, through the influence of one person upon another indirectly our prayers may be answered, and if it shall be scientifically demonstrated that telepathy is something more than a theory and its laws are understood, influence not only between man and man but between God and man will be better comprehended and come more fully into the class of natural law.

Take, for example, the demonstration of George Müller,

<sup>1</sup> See F. O. Beck, "Prayer: A Study in its History and Psychology," *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, II, p. 110 f.

of Bristol, England, who died in 1898. There is a tendency to make either too much or too little of his test. God, to him, was simply a business partner in the maintenance of his orphanage, and he seldom seemed to arise above this narrow view. What is the value of such a test? It is simply one test. It is good as far as it goes, but the conditions were not just what a thoroughly scientific man would impose. It proves simply what it proves, that he was able to do certain things in a certain way; but it does prove that. However, it is only one case, and we are not privileged to generalize too broadly on one case. The tendency has been for some to say that it proved everything and for others to say that it proved nothing. If God works on men through the subconsciousness, this case would come within our theory; for it was the minds of men which were influenced to give in providing this demonstration.

We recognize the tendency on the part of men to see objective answers when they do not exist, and no doubt a certain reduction must be made on account of this mental attitude. Much has been written and many cases cited to prove the possibility of such answers.<sup>1</sup> The line of demarkation which is drawn to my thinking is not between subjective and objective answers, but between personal and material answers, and this, as may be seen, on account of the theory that God works through and on the subconsciousness of man. Prayer for a change of weather would seem to me, therefore, outside of the legitimate sphere of petition, but prayer for the spiritual advancement of certain persons would be a legitimate petition to offer, but not so likely to be answered as prayer for the spiritual advancement of the person offering the prayer, for in the latter case, both consciousness and subconsciousness would be in perfect accord.

<sup>1</sup> See such books as W. W. Patton, *Prayer and its Remarkable Answers*; W. W. Kinsley, *Science and Prayer*.

Prayer for the sick would not be unlike that for spiritual advancement.

The philosophical and theological problems which surround the subject of prayer must remain untouched; and the special problems which the subconscious theory arouses cannot be discussed here, but I believe the position is philosophically defensible.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### SEXUALITY

“Though Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor.”—SHAKESPEARE.

EVEN the most casual students of religion must have observed an apparently intimate connection between religious and sexual emotions, and not a few have read with amazement the abnormal cults which have had the sexual element as a foundation for their denominational dissent. To those who have been reared to consider all sexual matters as particularly sacred or sinful, according to their standard of use and abuse, erotic factors have seemed to have little in common with religious worship. When any connection between the two has been discovered by investigators the temptation has proven very strong to overestimate the closeness of the relation. It is not unusual to read that the sexual emotions are the primary factors in religious development, and some very questionable arguments are used to substantiate this position. Undoubtedly there is a relation, and perhaps we can say that sexual emotions may have had some direct and certainly some indirect part in religious development.

We are aware that if the torrent of feeling is choked in one direction, it is very apt to swell and burst a passage in another; and when we consider that love and religion are the two most violent emotions to which humanity is heir, it is not surprising that any disturbance of one should cause a corresponding excitement of the other. A disappointment in love may send a girl to the convent who was formerly with-

out religious fervor, the excitement of religious revival may be followed by unbridled licentiousness.

The evidence for this relation may be divided into three classes, viz., historical, pathological, and psychological. Early religious rites were largely sexual and orgiastic. Especially is this true in phallicism, the worship of the generative principle.<sup>1</sup> In this form of worship there is usually uncontrolled debauchery, but sometimes the licentiousness takes the form of religious rite and duty. This phase is exhibited in some contemporary Russian Christian sects. Few if any of the early and primitive forms of religion are devoid of sexual elements: "The simplest functions of physiological life may be its [religion's] ministers. Everyone who is at all acquainted with the Persian mystics knows how wine may be regarded as an instrument of religion. Indeed, in all countries and in all ages, some form of physical enlargement—singing, dancing, drinking, sexual excitement—has been intimately associated with worship."<sup>2</sup>

It is, however, with the Christian religion that we are now concerned. A glance at a partial list of the sects which have had some abnormal sexual element at least attributed to them shows that the followers of Jesus have been far from free from this taint—Nicolaitans, Antitactes, Carpocrates, Cainites, Euchites or Eustathians or Messalians, Tauchelm, Brethren of the Free Spirit, Beghards and Beguines, Turlupins, Luciferians, Adamites, Men of Understanding, Libertines and Spirituels of Geneva, Flagellants or Chlistowschini, Skopsi, Shakers, Agapomone, Mucker, Oneida Community, Bible Communists, Perfectionists, Free Lovers, Spiritualists, etc., etc.<sup>3</sup>

While yet the apostles wrote, certain irregularities had

<sup>1</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, pp. 22-30.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ellis, *The New Spirit*, p. 232.

<sup>3</sup> Compare T. G. Crippen, *History of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 268-313.

crept into the church. The agape, which was intended to promote the fraternal feeling existing between the brethren and sisters in the Lord and to minister to the poor, soon degenerated. The needy were neglected, the licentiousness characteristic of the heathen worship, with which the people were familiar, crept into the love feast, the holy kiss inspired unholy thoughts, and the general gathering was supplemented by secret meetings. The church, not on account of external criticism but for its own safety, soon abolished the agape, for, notwithstanding its social value, it could not be controlled. It was denounced by the Fathers and condemned by the Councils of Laodicea and of Carthage, but it lingered as a scandal and an offence until the Council of Trullo, at the end of the seventh century, when it was finally suppressed. The Commemoration of the Martyrs also degenerated into scandalous dissipation until it became a stench. Gross breaches of chastity were frequent, and the annual festivals were suppressed on account of the immorality they produced.<sup>1</sup>

The lax conditions seemed to call for some radical measures in the early church, and the eastern and pagan idea of the celibacy of the priest appealed to the church. The necessity was the excuse. Any arguments which are or have been used to substantiate the doctrine were probably of subsequent origin. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves of the failure of this step to stamp out the evil. The remedy seemed to aggravate the trouble rather than to relieve it, except that it revealed the church's nominal disapproval of licentiousness. The church in the middle centuries reeked with sexual abominations in every form, and it did not always, or even frequently, receive the censure which it deserved, but the condition was winked at by those in authority, who, themselves, were not free from scandal.

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, p. 150.

In later years, some whom Protestants have been led to look upon with much favor were carried to one extreme or the other. Bunyan, thankful he is shy of women, says, "Some, indeed, have urged the Holy Kiss; but then I have asked why they make balks? Why did they salute the most handsome and let the ill-favored go?"<sup>1</sup> We notice further that Bunyan's pilgrim would not even take his wife with him on the celestial journey. On the other hand, Erasmus writes from England while on a visit there, "To mention but a single attraction, the English girls are divinely pretty; soft, pleasant, gentle, and charming as the muses. They have one custom which cannot be too much admired. When you go anywhere on a visit the girls all kiss you. They kiss you when you arrive. They kiss you when you go away, and they kiss you again when you return. Go where you will it is all kisses; and my dear Faustus, if you had once tasted how soft and fragrant those lips are, you would wish to spend your life here."<sup>2</sup>

In our own times the connection between religious and sexual phenomena is largely confined to revivals and will be mentioned later. In fact, much of the historical argument must be deferred until we take up specific cases in dealing with different phases of the subject.

The argument from pathology rests upon the testimony of many alienists to the effect that in cases of insanity where religious delusions predominate the disturbance usually has a sexual origin. On this point there appears to be a general agreement. Notice some quotations from eminent writers.

"It has been noticed that among the morbid organic conditions which accompany the show of excessive piety and religious rapture in the insane, none are so frequent as disorders of the sexual organism. Conversely, the frenzies of

<sup>1</sup> J. Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. Froude, *Erasmus*, p. 42.

religious revivals have not unfrequently ended in gross profligacy. The encouragement of celibacy by the fervent leaders of most creeds, utilizes in an unconscious way the morbid connection between an over-restraint of the sexual desires and impulse toward extreme devotion.”<sup>1</sup>

“Love and Religion are closely related, and when the sexual desire, connected with love, is considered sinful, it is readily understood why religious insanity of love has a sexual origin, even though the sick cannot be accused of sinfulness.”<sup>2</sup>

“The history of female insanity, as appears from cases given by Havelock Ellis, shows how, when the balance of the religious emotions is upset, the latent, subconscious physical element may temporarily reassert itself and dominate the spiritualized sexuality.”<sup>3</sup>

“Ecstasy, as we see in cases of acute mental disease, is probably always connected with sexual excitement, if not with sexual depravity. The same association is constantly seen in less extreme cases, and one of the commonest features in the conversation of an acutely maniacal woman is the intermingling of erotic and religious ideas.”<sup>4</sup>

“I venture to express my conviction that we should rarely err if, in a case of religious melancholy, we assume the sexual apparatus to be implicated.”<sup>5</sup>

“All through the history of insanity the student has occasion to observe this close alliance of sexual and religious ideas; an alliance which may be partly accounted for because of the prominence which sexual themes have in most creeds, as illustrated in ancient times by the phallus worship of the Egyptians; the ceremonies of the Friga Cultus of the

<sup>1</sup> F. Galton, *Inquiries into the Human Faculty*, p. 66 f.

<sup>2</sup> A. Nystrom, *The Natural Laws of Sexual Life*, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> H. Northcote, *Christianity and Sex Problems*, p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> C. Norman, *Tuke's Dictionary of Psychological Medicine*.

<sup>5</sup> Schröder van der Kolk, quoted by H. Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, II, p. 233.

Saxons; the frequent and detailed references to sexual topics in the Koran and several other books of the kind, and which is further illustrated in the performances which, to come down to a modern period, characterize the religious revival and camp meeting, as they tintured their mediæval model, the Münster Anabaptist movement.”<sup>1</sup>

I have quoted sufficient on this point to show the almost universal agreement among neurologists. I am not sure, however, that the argument, while possessing some potency, has not been exaggerated. The derangement of mind is not always as trustworthy as the normal condition for a foundation for reasonable conclusions. Why is it that an alcoholic paranoiac who is married presents as a symptom of his condition, almost without exception, a suspicion of the infidelity of his spouse? Why is it that the unmarried alcoholic usually has sexual or religious delusions? If the connection between religion and sex is no more definitely indicated in insanity than the relation between alcohol and sex in this other form of insanity, the argument loses its force. Not as a proof in itself, though, but as a series in the chain of proof, this argument has its value.

There might be added to the pathological argument the fact that many religious geniuses have been sexually abnormal. Many eminent thinkers have been without sexual desire, and some have been so enraptured with the heavenly state that they have been disqualified for married life; Joan of Arc never menstruated.

What I have called the psychological argument has two phases to present: the connection between human and divine love, as having a common emotional basis; and the relation between sexuality and religious awakening during adolescence. Many devout men and women have been sen-

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Spitzka, *Insanity*, p. 39. See also R. von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, pp. 8 and 10.

sitive to carnal pleasures. From a psychological standpoint the wonder is, not that so many fall, but that so few give way to sexual pressure. Much ado is made if a clergyman or prominent religious worker is guilty of sexual sin, and correctly, too; but in not a few cases the alienist might furnish us with a basis, not only for pity, but for a partial (at least) justification. The very nervous constitution which is necessary for excessive devoutness, in different female members of a congregation, may make sexual desire more active and at the same time lessen the power of self-control.

In cases where religious leaders fall, the principals are seldom or never of the lewd, coarse type, but, to the amazement of those who do not realize this relationship, the more refined, delicate, neurotic, and devout. The word "hypocrite" so freely used at such times may be entirely incorrect, for the fallen ones may well be the most devout and really religious members of a congregation, who are, in their very devoutness, emotionally unbalanced, but who give no other token of this abnormality than sexual indulgence. When we know ourselves only in part we appear to be a mass of entanglements and confusion.

"Human love is the root from which all other love springs. And it is instructive to trace the behavior of the different forms of the religious spirit to those human passions with which it is so mysteriously bound up. The fire of heavenly love passes back very easily into an earthly flame. There is scarcely anything more common than to find the natural impulse of ordinary affection tricking itself out in the garb of religion. And it is not easy to say how far the custom of celibacy may not have arisen among the clergy in order to avoid an almost inevitable confusion between two overlapping groups of emotions."<sup>1</sup>

No one will deny that love is an important element in re-

<sup>1</sup> F. Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 186.

ligion, having both man and God as the objects. It seems highly probable that human love has its root in the sexual instinct. Indirectly, then, divine love must have sprung from the same source.<sup>1</sup> If this is true, we can the more easily trace the connection between sexuality and religion, and understand why religious excitement, stirring as it does the primitive elements in our being, should degenerate into licentiousness. Professor Ladd objects to this in the following words:

“It is not, as several recent writers have endeavored to show, the sexual emotion of love which either becomes a source of religion or which develops into a truly religious love. The close connection of sexual conceptions with the mysteries of faith in a great number of religions, and indeed in all religions at a certain stage of their development, and the relation of sexual and semi-religious emotions as reciprocal stimuli of certain mental attitudes toward certain of the deities cannot, indeed, be denied. It may also be said, of course, in a general way, that without the sexual emotions and relations no social life could arise or be sustained among human beings under existing conditions. From this it follows that, without its relations to the social life and social development of humanity, religion could not have arisen and developed into human history. But to say these things is to say both something less and something more than is necessary to establish a claim for the sexual emotions to be an independent source of religion; or even to establish a parity of kind and a partnership in activity between these emotions and the more definitely religious feelings.”<sup>2</sup>

Whatever our theory of origin may be, the truth of which is hidden in the obscurity of antiquity, the fact of the relationship and connection is held by both parties, and this is

<sup>1</sup> See R. von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, p. 9 f., regarding the relation of religious and sexual love.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 292 f.

the main point, after all. Love is not different in quality according to its object, and love for God and man may indeed become confused if we consider the truth of what Ritschl says, "It is one of the conditions of religious faith that what it contains in thought should be represented as present." Only to those who represent God as an intellectual ideal rather than as a living person does it seem impossible to realize Him as an object of love in the same sense as human beings. Myers calls attention to another factor which adds to the significance of this relationship when he says, "That instinct for union with beauty which manifests itself most obviously in sexual passion may be exalted into a symbolic introduction into a sacred and spiritual world."<sup>1</sup>

The contemporaneous development or crisis of the sexual and religious life in adolescence has been noted by many recent writers, and seems to add to the proof of a relationship. It does not, though, as some have maintained, prove that the religious upheaval at this period is due to sexual changes any more than it proves the opposite cause and effect. Starbuck points out this relationship with some detail. He says:

"We shall see later that at the present stage in evolution the reproductive instinct has a negative rather than a positive significance as a factor in religion; but in its biological import it conditions, in a certain sense, the great awakening on the physiological, psychical, and spiritual side which comes in adolescence. . . . Although this connection is a remote one, and the religious instinct in its higher development is dependent upon other conditions and has other sources, nevertheless, the various phenomena—accession to puberty, rapid physical development, transformations in mental life, and spontaneous religious awakening—are so closely inter-

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, I, p. 177.

woven that we may say with certainty that they have had in evolutionary development a direct and intimate relation. . . . Not infrequently the struggle is between the tendency of the new life to express itself, on the one hand, in higher ideational centres, and, on the other hand, to centralize in the reproductive instinct; consequently, storm and stress is the accompaniment of *effort to control passion*. The struggle becomes so vital and far-reaching as to involve the whole religious nature, and sometimes takes a definitely religious turn.”<sup>1</sup>

Other authorities concur: “Beyond a question of doubt, man becomes religiously enthused most frequently either early in life when pubescence is, or is about to be established, or later in life when sexual desire has become either entirely extinct or very much abated. . . . Of all insanities of the pubescent state, erotomania and religious mania are the most frequent and the most pronounced. Sometimes they go hand in hand, the most inordinate sensuality being coupled with abnormal religious zeal.”<sup>2</sup>

“It is no accidental synchronism of unrelated events that the age of religion and that of sexual maturity coincide, any more than that senescence has its own type of religiosity. Nor is religion degraded by the recognition of this intimate relationship, save to those who either think vilely about sex or who lack insight into its real psychic nature and so fail to realize how indissoluble is the bond that God and nature have wrought between religion and love.”<sup>3</sup>

Starbuck further points out<sup>4</sup> that about one-third of the

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, pp. 147, 207, 219, and 220.

<sup>2</sup> Wier, “Religion and Lust,” quoted by J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects*, etc., p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> G. S. Hall, *Adolescence*, II, p. 292. The same author, pp. 295-301, draws a number of parallelisms between religion and love which are carried to rather fanciful limits in some instances.

<sup>4</sup> E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, pp. 70 and 206.

males who answered his *questionnaire* said that sexual temptations were the chief temptations of youth, and that they usually accompany spontaneous awakenings. He further takes notice of the fact that in nearly all instances the phenomena during conviction are remarkably like those which follow the sexual evil. If this is true, the reverse is also to be considered; religious conversion not infrequently cures sexual temptation in a single hour, so that it is no longer to be reckoned as a danger by those habitually addicted.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Ladd comes forward as an opponent to the over emphasis which has been given to the connection between the sexual and religious factors in adolescence. He points out "a defect if not a fallacy" in Starbuck's conclusion "that the principal factor in religious conversion is the sexual changes which accompany the period of adolescence." In detail he shows, from Starbuck's own graphic representations, that the curve of conversion does not agree with the physiological and sexual curve.<sup>2</sup> He proceeds further to disagree with Starbuck "when it is regarded as a safe conclusion from an inductive study that 'in a certain sense the religious life is an irradiation of the reproductive instinct' (p. 401); and even that the sexual life 'seems to have originally given the psychic impulse which called out the latent possibilities of the development' of religion, although it did not furnish the 'raw material out of which religion was constructed' (p. 402)."<sup>3</sup>

There is little doubt that, in common with the investigation of all new subjects, the importance of the sexual changes to religious development has been exaggerated, yet a residue of truth remains. There is a relationship which, taken in

<sup>1</sup> See the case of Colonel Gardner reported in W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 269. The cure is probably not unlike that of alcoholism, an account of which may be seen in my *Psychology of Alcoholism*, chap. X.

<sup>2</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 276 note.

<sup>3</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 292 note.

connection with the other facts which alone are not conclusive, makes a strong case for the thesis that religion and sexuality are vitally related. We must be on our guard, however, against thinking that the sexual development is the cause and the religious growth is the result. There is no proof of this. They appear contemporaneously.

We must further refrain, especially with the young, from allowing our religious methods to be of such a character that they will minister to sexual excitement, and degrade those whom we are trying to uplift. Davenport raises a protest against some of our hymnology, and gives an example of a hymn sung at a gathering of thousands of young people between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five. This hymn became intensely popular at this camp-meeting and was heard everywhere. Whatever advantage might have accrued to the musical part of the programme was probably more than counterbalanced by the pernicious moral influence. The following is one stanza of the hymn:

“Blessed lily of the valley—oh, how fair is He!  
 He is mine, I am His.  
 Sweeter than the angel’s music is His voice to me,  
 He is mine, I am His.  
 Where the lilies fair are blooming by the waters calm,  
 There He leads me and upholds me by His strong right arm.  
 All the air is love around me—I can feel no harm—  
 He is mine, I am His.”<sup>1</sup>

It seems clear that the most serious source of religious difficulty for male adolescents is sexual irritability, and those who have care of youths should see that the body is robust and the thoughts clean and wholesome, to insure both sexual and religious development in the best way.

In addition to the objections raised by Professor Ladd and cited above, we have even stronger protests from Professor

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 291 f.

James against the contention of the close relationship between sexuality and religion. These two prominent psychologists are the strongest opponents to the theory, or the interpretation of the facts, but their eminence should give the opposition not a little weight. Professor James says:

“A more fully developed example of the same kind of reasoning is the fashion, quite common nowadays among certain writers, of criticising the religious emotions by showing a connection between them and the sexual life. Conversion is a crisis of puberty and adolescence. The maceration of saints, and the devotion of missionaries, are only instances of the parental instinct of self-sacrifice gone astray. For the hysterical nun, starving for natural life, Christ is but an imaginary substitute for a more earthly object of affection. And the like. As with many ideas that float in the air of one’s time, this notion shrinks from dogmatic general statement and expresses itself only partially and by innuendo. It seems to me that few conceptions are less instructive than this reinterpretation of religion as perverted sexuality. It reminds me, so cruelly is it often employed, of the famous Catholic taunt, that the reformation may be best understood by remembering that its *jons et origo* was Luther’s wish to marry a nun;—the effects are infinitely wider than the alleged causes, and for the most part opposite in nature. It is true that in the vast collection of religious phenomena, some are undisguisedly amatory—*e. g.*, sex-deities and obscene rites in polytheism, and ecstatic feelings of union with the Savior in a few Christian mystics. But then why not equally call religion an aberration of the digestive function, and prove one’s point by the worship of Bacchus and Ceres, or by the ecstatic feelings of some of the saints about the Eucharist? . . . In fact, one might almost as well interpret religion as a perversion of the respiratory function. . . . One might then as well set up the thesis that the interest in mechanics, physics, chemistry, logic,

philosophy, and sociology, which spring up during adolescent years along with that in poetry and religion, is also a perversion of the sexual instinct—but that would be too absurd. Moreover, if the argument from synchrony is to decide, what is to be done with the fact that the religious age *par excellence* would seem to be old age, when the uproar of the sexual life is past? The plain truth is that to interpret religion one must in the end look at the immediate content of the religious consciousness. The moment one does this, one sees how wholly disconnected it is in the main from the content of the sexual consciousness. Everything about the two things differs, objects, moods, faculties concerned, and acts impelled to. Any *general* assimilation is simply impossible: what we find most often is complete hostility and contrast. If now the defenders of the sex theory say that this makes no difference to their thesis; that without the chemical contributions which the sex organs make to the blood the brain would not be nourished so as to carry on religious activities, this final proposition may be true or not true; but at any rate, it has become profoundly uninformative: we can deduce no consequences from it which help us to interpret religion's meaning or value. In this sense the religious life depends just as much upon the spleen, the pancreas, the kidneys as on the sexual apparatus, and the whole theory has lost its point in evaporating into a vague general assertion of the dependence, *somehow*, of the mind upon the body.”<sup>1</sup>

I agree with Professor James in what I have already said concerning the fallacy of making sexuality the cause and religion the effect, but nevertheless it seems that he has greatly minimized the relationship, which the facts appear to prove.

Religious devoutness shows itself by sexual abnormality in two extremes, excess and continence. Why some devotees are led into sexual indulgence and others into abstinence is a

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 10-12.

question which can only be answered by an appeal to the psychology of the individual and the forces which are brought to bear upon his mind. The arguments supporting the course chosen are subsequent to the disposition to follow in a certain way, and it is the disposition rather than the reasoning that is the prime point in the explanation. To appreciate in any way the great numbers which have followed either one course or the other, we must now take up the subject from these two standpoints, and give an epitome of the way in which Christianity has been led from the natural and Christian mean.

Sexual excess has not always manifested itself in the same way, but as the result of religious revivals spontaneous licentiousness has broken out, while in the form of "spiritual marriage" a more deliberate and apparently reasonable course has been taken.

Religious revivals, strange as it may seem, far from rooting out sexual desires, seem to stimulate them at times. This has been especially true of at least two of the great revivals in America, and the licentiousness prevalent at camp-meetings in later years has become a byword. Concerning the Kentucky revival of 1800, many charges of sexual liberty have been made and undoubtedly some exaggerations have crept into the accounts of those who have written in an antagonistic manner. We are bound in justice to say, however, that some of the charges were too true and they were well recognized by some of the wiser leaders at the time, who made plans for a night patrol and frequent examination of different parts of the camp.

The revival of 1832 left even worse results in its train, for while there was licentiousness in Kentucky, it was of a more transient character and did not interfere with domestic relations to nearly the same extent that the later revival did. In the "burnt district" (so called on account of the revival

flame which had continuously swept this community for years) of New York State, in the counties of Madison and Oneida, "spiritual marriages" and pernicious sexual indulgence followed, until families were broken up, children were deserted, and in some cases, the parentage of children was in doubt, while in other families the children of the "spiritual" husband would assume the name of and be dutifully cared for by the lawful husband.

"If the facts were not before us, some of these unions would appear incredible. These were what the French would call *ménages à trois*. The lawful husband and the spiritual one lived under the same roof, in some cases with the one wife, who denied all conjugal rights to the husband in law, and accorded them freely to the husband in spirit; and remarkable instances are furnished of the husbands submitting to such a state of things as being in accordance with the Divine will. And such examples of degradation, according to the annals of the time, do not appear to have been rare."<sup>1</sup>

While these are the most flagrant examples, it appears that in not a few of the cases in which the doctrine of "spiritual marriage" was renewed, the impetus came from some revival. It may further be stated, I think, that the denominations which suffer most from the fall of clergy and members of the church by sexual dissipation are those which participate most frequently in revival services of a more emotional character.

"The kind of spiritual excitement which a super-emotional revival generates is likely to be more harmful than helpful to the self-control of the individual as exhibited in both his sexual and spiritual activities. The over-stimulation of religious sentiment among the young frequently arouses the

<sup>1</sup> A. S. Rhodes, "Convulsive Religion," *Appleton's Journal*, XIV, p. 751.

human love passion much more fiercely than the divine. It is natural that it should be so from what we know of adolescent psychology and from what we know of the inhibitive effect of religious excitement upon the higher centres of control.”<sup>1</sup>

Those who are carried away by the excitement of religious revivals usually justify their licentiousness by the claim that they are perfect and therefore cannot sin, regardless of their conduct; as the followers of Amalric many years ago claimed that “he who lives in love can do no wrong.” Any persons or sects which present such a doctrine are usually suspected, and probably justly, of the licentious conduct which results from such teaching. Some Russian Christian sects to-day, after hysterical and ecstatic dances, shouts, and actions, abandon themselves to unbridled licentiousness, claiming that the presence of the Holy Spirit sanctifies their acts.<sup>2</sup> This license cannot be morally justified and the excuse is never acceptable to those outside the esoteric circle, however much the elect may try to make themselves believe it.

“Spiritual marriage” rests upon an altogether different basis. In early days and in the form where the principals are the individual and deity, some mystical interpretation of figurative language in scripture formed the foundation for the doctrine. The Song of Solomon has ever been a favorite book for such mystics, and the tendency of Roman Catholic mysticism has ever been to think of the individual rather than the church as the bride of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

“The notion of a spiritual marriage between God and the soul seems to have come from the Greek Mysteries, through the Alexandrian Jews and Gnostics. . . . And among the

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, pp. 81 and 292.

<sup>2</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> For much that follows regarding this form of “spiritual marriage,” see W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, Appendix D.

Jews of the first century there existed a system of Mysteries, probably copied from Eleusis. They had their greater and lesser Mysteries, and we hear that among their secret doctrines was 'marriage with God.'" Harnack says, "We can point to very few Greek Fathers in whom the figure [spiritual marriage] does not occur."

There is little doubt that the enforced celibacy and virginity of monks and nuns led them, consciously or unconsciously, to transfer their affection to God, Jesus, or the Virgin Mary, and the sexual impulse, unable to express itself naturally, found an outlet thereby. Fénelon said, that the contemplative desired "une simple présence de Dieu purement amoureuse." Ribet classified the experiences of the mediæval saints as follows: 1. "Divine Touches" which Scaramelli defines as "real but purely spiritual sensations, by which the soul feels the intimate presence of God, and tastes Him with great delight." 2. "The Wound of Love" which was not always purely spiritual. A post-mortem examination showed that St. Teresa had undergone a miraculous "transverberation of the heart," "et pourtant elle survécut près de vingt ans à cette blessure mortelle." 3. Catherine of Sienna was betrothed to Christ with a ring, which remained always on her finger, though visible only to her. St. Gertrude's experiences furnish a culmination.

While both male and female mystics show amorous inclinations towards Divinity, in this, as might be expected, the female experience and expression are more intense. Among the males, "The Imitation of Christ" abounds in language which might easily be adapted to sexual love; Ruysbroek's principal work was on "spiritual nuptials"; and Suso's loving nature, like Augustine's, needed an object of affection. Of Suso it was said:

"His imagination concentrated itself upon the eternal Wisdom, personified in the Book of Proverbs in female form

as a loving mistress, and the thought often came to him, 'Truly thou shouldst make trial of thy fortune, whether this high mistress, of whom thou hast heard so much, will become thy love; for in truth thy wild young heart will not remain without a love.' Then in a vision he saw her, radiant in form, rich in wisdom, and overflowing with love; it is she who touches the summit of the heavens, and the depths of the abyss, who spreads herself from end to end, mightily and sweetly disposing all things. And she drew nigh to him lovingly, and said to him sweetly, 'My son, give me thy heart.'"<sup>1</sup> There were other amorous experiences in which the eternal wisdom and his soul took part.

Among the female mystics who have expressed sensual pleasure in communion with God are Mme. Guyon, Sœur Jeanne des Anges, St. Catherine of Sienna, Juliana of Norwich, Marie de l'Incarnation, St. Teresa, and St. Gertrude. A few examples of their experiences will follow. Juliana ardently desired to have a bodily sight of her Lord upon the cross "like other that were Christ's lovers." She repeatedly reiterated the words which she said the Lord said unto her, "I love thee and thou lovest Me, and our love shall never be disparted in two."<sup>2</sup> Of St. Teresa it is said that "her idea of religion seems to have been that of an endless amatory flirtation . . . between the devotee and the deity."<sup>3</sup> St. Gertrude's experiences are still more to the point.

"Suffering from a headache, she sought, for the glory of God, to relieve herself by holding certain odoriferous substances in her mouth, when the Lord appeared to her to lean over towards her lovingly, and to find comfort Himself in these odors. After having gently breathed them in, He arose,

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, pp. 201 and 209.

<sup>3</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 347 f.

and said with a gratified air to the Saints, as if contented with what He had done: 'See the new present which My betrothed has given Me!'

"One day, at chapel, she heard supernaturally sung the words, 'Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.' The Son of God leaning toward her like a sweet lover, and giving to her soul the softest kiss, said to her at the second Sanctus: 'In this Sanctus addressed to my person, receive with this kiss all the sanctity of my divinity and of my humanity, and let it be to thee a sufficient preparation for approaching the communion table.' And the next following Sunday while she was thanking God for this favor, behold the Son of God, more beautiful than thousands of angels, takes her in His arms as if He were proud of her, and presents her to God the Father, in that perfection of sanctity with which He had dowered her."<sup>1</sup>

I close these examples with a quotation concerning Marie de l'Incarnation.

"She heard, in a trance, a miraculous voice. It was that of Christ promising to become her spouse. Months and years passed full of troubled hopes and fears, when again the voice sounded in her ear, with assurance that the promise was fulfilled, and that she was indeed his bride. Now, ensued phenomena which are not infrequent among Roman Catholic female devotees when unmarried, or married unhappily, and which have their source in the necessities of woman's nature. To her excited thought, her divine spouse became a living presence; and her language to him, as recorded by herself, is of intense passion. She went to prayer, agitated and tremulous, as if to a meeting with an earthly lover. 'Oh, my love!' she exclaimed, 'When shall I embrace you? Have you no pity on the torments that I suffer? Alas! Alas! My love! My beauty! My life! Instead of healing

<sup>1</sup> *Révélations de Sainte Gertrude*, I, pp. 44 and 186, quoted by W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 345 f.

my pain you take pleasure in it. Come let me embrace you; and die in your sacred arms!"<sup>1</sup>

The other form of "spiritual marriage" was of a much more carnal nature. It has usually existed in the Christian church, but there seems to have been a spontaneous revival of this doctrine in the early part of the last century. There is evidence of immorality among the Gnostics and Manicheans of the first centuries, and down through the Amalricians, Brethren of the Free Spirit, and other sects, so that the doctrine seems never to have been extinct.

Among those who believe in "spiritual marriage," three reasons are given for their action. The first is that which we have found to be the excuse of those who indulge in promiscuous sexual intercourse after revivals, viz., that they have become perfect and cannot sin. In the exalted atmosphere of the perfect Christian society, relationships become possible that would be scandalous among persons of less regular lives. The Brethren of the Free Spirit thought they could not sin and that their passions were no longer snares but sanctified and heavenly powers. They did not marry, but one of their rewards for leading a life of grace and purity was the privilege of tendering to each other a Seraphic Kiss; each brother having the right to give his sister a chaste salute. In this they were followed later by the Ebelians.

The second reason is the doctrine of affinities. "To true mates marriage is not for the time only, but for the time to come. . . . To their eyes wedlock is a covenant of soul with soul, made for all worlds in which there is conscious life; for the heavens above no less than for the earth below."<sup>2</sup> To prevent the awful calamity of an entrance into heaven

<sup>1</sup> F. Parkman, *The Jesuits of America*, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. Dixon, *Spiritual Wives*, I, p. 92 f. I am indebted to this work for much of my material on this subject, and the reader is referred to it if he wishes to pursue a plenary treatment.

with a wrong mate each one must seek his affinity, and, strange to say, the ideas often changed, so that one had to try many mates before getting the right one, if this latter was ever accomplished. Swedenborg maintained that "without perfect marriage, there is no perfect rest for either man or woman, even in heaven; nothing but a striving of the soul after distant joys; joys which can never be attained, except by the happy blending of two souls in one everlasting covenant of love."

Rev. John H. Noyes, founder of the Bible Communists of Oneida Creek, writes in a letter to Mr. Dixon: "Religious love is a very near neighbor to sexual love, and they always get mixed in the intimacies and social excitements of Revivals. The next thing a man wants, after he has found the salvation of his soul, is to find his Eve and his Paradise. Hence these wild experiments and terrible disasters." Very few, however, found an Eden at home, or an Eve in his lawful wife. All earthly ties, they thought, should be left behind by the saved ones, and the things of heaven should be the chief bond between them.

During a Perfectionist meeting at Manlius, N. Y., Erasmus Stone related a vision which he had experienced of a mighty host of men and women in heaven, flying hither and thither in great anxiety seeking their true mates. So great was the effect of the recital of this vision that the leaders of the meeting, Revs. Sheldon, Stone, and Rider, all sought and found affinities. Shortly afterwards they left these and found others. At first such unions were to be of a purely spiritual character, but, of course, in the end they became sexual; the spiritual union was found to be incomplete, and it assumed the ordinary character of that which exists between man and woman who live together in close intimacy.

The third argument is biblical, and 1 Cor. 9 : 5 is the passage quoted and used as a warrant for the doctrine. The

Pauline church of Massachusetts and New York claimed that the woman referred to in this passage was a "spiritual wife" of St. Paul's, and hence to follow the great apostle this action is allowable and praiseworthy. Among many who espouse this doctrine the Song of Solomon is the favorite book.

In regard to the revival of this doctrine in the early part of last century, I can do no better than to quote the following:

"Three of the most singular movements in the churches of our generation [the edition from which I quote was printed in 1868] seem to have been connected, more or less closely, with the state of mind produced by revivals; one in Germany, one in England, and one in the United States; movements which resulted, among other things, in the establishment of three singular societies—the congregation of Pietists, vulgarly called the Mucker, at Königsberg, the brotherhood of Princeites at Spaxton, and the Bible Communists at Oneida Creek.

"These three movements, which have a great deal in common, began without concert, in distant parts of the world, under separate church rules, and in widely different social circumstances. The first movement was in Ost Prussen; the second in England; the third, the most important, in Massachusetts and New York. They had these chief things in common: they began in colleges, they affected the form of family life, and they were carried on by clergymen; each movement in a place of learning and of theological study; that in Germany at Luther-Kirch of Königsberg, that in England at St. David's College, that in the United States at Yale College. These movements began to attract public notice much about the same time; for Archdeacon Ebel, the chief founder of Muckerism, announced the year 1836 as the opening year of the personal reign of Christ; in that year the Rev. Henry James Prince became a student of divinity, founded the order of Lampeter Brethren, and received his

pretended gift of the Holy Ghost; and Father Noyes published the famous paper known as the Battle Axe Letter. These three divines, one Lutheran, one Anglican, one Congregational, began their work in perfect ignorance of each other. . . .

“Each movement was regarded by its votaries as the most perfect fruit of the revival spirit. . . . These fruits of the revival seem to have been equally received by the countess who knelt at the feet of Ebel in Ost Preussen, by the dowagers and country gentlemen who swelled the ranks of Prince in Sussex and Somerset, by the craftsmen who followed Noyes and Sheldon in Massachusetts and New York. They who had been called by the Lamb, no longer dwelt on earth, subject to its laws and canons; they were no longer amenable to pain, disease, and death. They had risen into a sphere of gospel liberty and gospel light. A new earth and a new heaven had been created round them, in which they lived and moved by a new law. To some of them the decrees of courts and councils were as nothing; property was nothing, marriage was nothing—mere rags and shreds of a world that had passed away. To all of them a new light had been given on the subject of spirit-brides; the higher relation of woman to man in the new kingdom of heaven.”<sup>1</sup>

So much for the spontaneous revival in Germany, England, and America, but what further can be said of the doctrine and its progress? In Europe it was hindered by the stern hand of the state, and its appearance was more often mixed with philosophy and with theology than with practice.

“The doctrine of Natural Mates and Spiritual Love between the sexes is an old Gothic doctrine; one which published itself in the great Fraternity of the Free Spirit; which startled mankind in the conduct of John of Leyden; which appeared in the sermons and practice of Ann Lee; which

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Dixon, *Spiritual Wives*, I, pp. 84-87.

took a special form in the speculations of Emmanuel Swedenborg; which found voice in the artistic work of Wolfgang von Göthe. This doctrine was known in Augsburg and Leyden, in Manchester and Stockholm, in Frankfort and Weimar, long before it was heard of in New Haven and New York."

"This tradition [of the superior rights and felicities conferred by a marriage of souls] has proved its existence in many ways; sometimes cropping out in theory, sometimes in practice; here breaking out into license with Hans Matthieson, there dreaming off into fantasy with Jacob Böhme. Under John of Leyden it took the shape of polygamy; under Gerhard Tersteegen that of personal union with the Holy Ghost. Swedenborg gave to it a large extension, a definite form, and even a body of rules. Ann Lee made use of it in her project for introducing a female messiah, and establishing on the new earth her dogma of the leadership of woman. Göthe, who seized so much of the finer spirit of his race, made this tradition of natural mates assist, if not the ends of his philosophy, at least the purposes of his art."<sup>1</sup>

In America, on account of the freedom of speech and action, the doctrine spread much more widely. In Massachusetts, Brimfield was the centre. It was here that Dr. Gridley, one of the leaders, boasted that he "could carry a virgin in each hand without the least stir of unholy passion." The Bundling Perfectionism finally ended in the doctrine of affinities and the practice of spiritual marriage.

The starting point of Mormonism, be it remembered, was the "burnt district" of New York State. The order of things in Mormonism was the same as among the Bundling Perfectionists. Religion with its revivals and conversion of souls came first, but this led to a socialism which incorporated Spiritual Wifehood and finally Polygamy. The completion of the development in this case seems to have acquired two

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Dixon, *Spiritual Wives*, II, pp. 188 f.

generations of leaders: Joseph Smith laid the religious foundations, and Brigham Young perfected Polygamy.

The gist of the famous Battle Axe Letter is found in the sentence where Noyes said: "In a holy community there is no more reason why sexual intercourse should be restrained by law, than why eating and drinking should be; and there is as little occasion for shame in the one case as in the other." The publication of this document made a commotion hardly less startling than the Brimfield affair, and resulted in the complex marriages of the Wallingford and Oneida Creek communities. Following the lead of Ann Lee, the Shakers founded their colony at Mount Lebanon where the doctrine of a chaste Celibate Love is proclaimed and presumably practised.

Andrew Jackson Davis, a cobbler of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., wrote "The Great Harmonia," a parody of Swedenborg's mystical dreams, and advocated the doctrines of free marriage and spiritualism. Since that time the teaching of "affinities" has become a part of Spiritualism; many Spiritualists endeavor to find their affinities. In addition to these more pronounced movements, in a hundred cities of America, some more or less open forms of Free Love have appeared and have been undoubtedly encouraged by the teachings of those who sought after the better life and formed irregular unions for that purpose.

We can thus see how the doctrine of "spiritual marriage" may bring forth a great variety of fruits: at Salt Lake City we find Polygamy; among the Spiritualists "Affinities"; at Mount Lebanon, Celibate Love; at Wallingford and Oneida Creek, Complex Marriage; and in many places, some more or less open form of Free Love.

The other sexual extreme is continence, and is found to be connected with religion even more widely than excess. It has taken two forms according as the surety for the conti-

nence was castration or vows. Among the ancients and Indians of America castration was performed as a sacrifice to the gods, as the most sacred gift. To-day it may be considered as an obsolete doctrine among Christians. The Skoptsy, a contemporary Russian sect, is the exception, for this forms the fundamental tenet of their belief.<sup>1</sup> In justification of their action they quote Jesus' words as recorded in Matt. 19 : 12, "and there are eunuchs which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." By this means all carnal promptings are stifled and worldly affairs are renounced so that they can attend to spiritual things only. True, sexual passions are eradicated by this means, but the gain is not commensurate with the loss. We are told that eunuchs are cowardly, envious, untruthful, deceitful, and devoid of all social feelings.<sup>2</sup>

The cause of the change is somewhat in dispute. Do the sexual organs furnish some element to the blood which changes the brain and thereby acts upon the mind so as to allow it to function in a normally religious manner? Or is it that the secreting power of the sexual organs withdraws from the blood some element which is detrimental to the normal action of the mind? Whatever the cause, the result is evident. We see the great difference in the lower animals. The ox is smaller, his neck is more slender, and in other ways his body is much changed; but above all, the change in disposition is most noticeable. He is kind, docile, and easily led, compared with the ugly, tricky, and dangerous brute which he might otherwise have been. The bull is the normal, the ox the abnormal, but the change brought about by castration is what I wish to emphasize. The change in man is undoubtedly as great, and undoubtedly undesirable.

<sup>1</sup> J. Moses, *Pathological Aspects of Religions*, p. 32; H. Ellis, *Man and Woman*, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> H. Maudsley, *Pathology of Mind*, pp. 453 ff.

There is a belief, very old and of doubtful origin, that castration is followed by the sudden appearance of characteristics of the other sex.<sup>1</sup> This has probably no basis in fact, but the correct statement is that the secondary sexual characteristics tend to remain undeveloped.<sup>2</sup> In the male human species, at least, this would be equivalent in some respects to the appearance of the physical characteristics of the opposite sex, but it does not in the least apply to the mental traits. It unsexes man mentally rather than re-sexes him.

The other form of continence is protected by vows and is seen in the celibacy of the clergy, monks, and nuns. While the example of pagan religions must have had some influence in this direction, there were special reasons which may be enumerated why the Christian Church adopted the idea of the value of celibacy. It was quite common to quote the example of the chief figures in the Christian church: the belief in the perpetual virginity of Mary was current, and the celibate life of John the Baptist and Jesus was pointed to with pride. The fact that St. Peter, to whom a general primacy was early ascribed, was unquestionably married was a difficulty which, it was hoped, would be nullified by the tradition that both he and the other married apostles abstained from intercourse with their wives after their conversion. St. Paul was probably unmarried and his writings, which showed a decided preference for the unmarried state, were always exhibited and not infrequently exaggerated.

Coupled with this we find a second reason, viz., woman *per se* was considered an evil. The monks especially shunned women. St. Basil would only speak to a woman under extreme necessity; St. John of Lycopolis had not seen a woman for forty-eight years. "So far as possible," says Isadore,

<sup>1</sup> O. Weininger, *Sex and Character*, p. 18 j.

<sup>2</sup> Geddes and Thompson, *The Evolution of Sex*, p. 23.

“all converse with women is to be shunned—or, if this cannot altogether be avoided, they shall be spoken with only, the eyes fixed on the earth. . . . In the case of almost all who have fallen by their means, *death hath entered in by the windows!*”<sup>1</sup> Dom Guigo, of the Carthusians, said, “Under no circumstances whatever do we allow woman to set foot within our precincts, knowing as we do that neither wise man, nor prophet, nor judge, nor the entertainers of God, nor the Sons of God, nor the first created of mankind, fashioned by God’s own hands, could escape the wiles and deceits of women.”

Women were represented as the door of hell, and as the mother of all human ills; all sorts of insults were heaped upon them, and the complete inferiority of the sex was continually maintained by law. The sudden upheaval of passion experienced by monks at the sight or touch of women and due, of course, to the unnatural inhibition which they endeavored to force upon themselves, was charged to the demoniacal nature of women. To laymen, who read of Jesus’ mission at the marriage, the reproach that He readily mixed with the world, and His choice of women as among His most devout followers, the doctrine of celibacy and the inherent diabolism of women seemed at variance with the example of the Master.

“Of our Lord it is said that he was continually accompanied in his journeys by women who ‘ministered unto Him.’ But the doctors of monkery assure us that the society of woman is altogether pernicious, and is wholly incompatible with advancement in the Christian life; yes, that the mere touch of a female hand is mortal to sanctity! The sanctity of the monk, then, and the purity of the Son of God had not, it is manifest, any kindred elements. Of the Apostles and first disciples it is said that they consorted together ‘with the

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I, *Epis.* 67.

women'; and throughout the history of the Acts nothing appears to have attached to the manners of the Christians that was at variance with the genuine simplicity and innocence which is characteristic of a virtuous intercourse of the sexes." <sup>1</sup>

It was concerning the difference of opinion about women that the dispute arose between the north and the south of Europe regarding celibacy. The south said its worst of women, and thought it a duty to eschew them. "A girl was represented as a serpent, in which there was a lurking demon. At her best she was only a fury and a cheat. All the worst things in earth and heaven were feminine; . . . the Vices were feminine, the Fates were feminine. Eve ate the apple, the daughters of Lot debauched their sire, Asenath tempted Joseph, Bathsheba led David into sin. Concubines were the curse of Solomon. From first to last woman had been a danger and delusion to the unsuspecting eye. Her heart was vain, her head was light; she was a thing of paint and patches, of bangles and braids. Her eyes were bent to entice, her feet were swift to go wrong, her words were softened to deceive. Her veins were full of fire, and those who came near her were always scorched. Her thoughts were unchaste; her mouth was greedy for wine; she threw out her lines to entice men's souls. Painted and perfumed like a harlot she sat in the porches and the gateways ready to make barter of her charms. All her passions were seductive, all her inclinings for evil. Her touch was a taint, her very breath was unclean. Nay, the desires of her heart were unnatural and demoniac; since she preferred a demon lover to a handsome youth of mortal parentage, and would yield her beauty to an imp of darkness rather than to a holy saint.

"Men of the Gothic race, on the other side, held woman in the highest reverence. Taken as either a mother or a wife,

<sup>1</sup> I. Taylor, *Fanaticism*, p. 106 f.

they looked on her, habitually, as something finer and more precious than themselves. In their simple souls they imagined that the best of men must be all the better for having won a good woman's love; nay, that a wise husband and father would be more likely to make a good pastor, than a recluse who had neither wife to soften, nor child to instruct his heart. An old and mystic sentiment of their race inclined them to believe that women have a quicker sense and keener enjoyment of spiritual things than men; hence they never could be made to see how the separation of priests from the daily and domestic company of women should work for good. In their old mythologies women had a high and almost sacred place. . . . " <sup>1</sup>

The south triumphed for a season, but the world has recognized that the feminine part of human nature is not so degraded and degrading that the man who loves the society of a wife is thereby unfitted to approach the altar of God. Notwithstanding the bitter feeling on the part of the monks, it appears that there was always a respect for women who had taken a vow of virginity. "The most esteemed writers, from Cyprian back as far as Justin Martyr, give special honor to the class of women who, from early times, chose to remain single and to devote themselves to doing good. Consecration to virginity by a vow solemnly taken, which it was a great sin to violate, was an established custom in Cyprian's time. The order of virgins continued. In the fourth century it was already the custom for them to wear a dark-colored dress and to be invested by the hands of the bishop with a bridal veil, a symbol that they were wedded to the Lord. It may be here added that an order of widows, distinct from the class of poor widows noticed in the Pastoral Epistles, appears in the fourth century. They are pledged to remain unmarried and to devote themselves to doing good. From them the

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Dixon, *Spiritual Wives*, II, pp. 278-280.

class of deaconesses was often recruited, the duties of both classes being similar.”<sup>1</sup>

But further, there was a certain mystical exaltation of the unmarried state whereby the celibate considered this the highest spiritual attainment. It was a praiseworthy act of self-denial.<sup>2</sup> The central and distinctive virtue of the New Testament was undoubtedly love; not so with the mediæval church; chastity was the ideal state. This, however, did not refer to the purity of undefiled marriage, but the absolute suppression of the sensuous side of nature by the perpetual struggle against all carnal impulses.

What advantage was gained by impressing the minds of men with the importance of chastity was more than counter-balanced by the pernicious influence upon marriage. Only the lowest aspects of marriage were discussed; the love elicited and the holy and beautiful domestic qualities inspired were apparently unthought of. “It is remarkable how rarely, if ever (I cannot call to mind an instance), in the discussion of the comparative merits of marriage and celibacy, the social advantages appear to have occurred to the mind. . . . It is always argued with relation to the interests and the perfection of the individual soul; and, even with regard to that, the writers seem almost unconscious of the softening and humanizing effect of the natural affections, the beauty of parental tenderness and filial love.”<sup>3</sup> The effect on married persons of any devoutness seemed to have been to make it impossible for them to live together longer, and the church frowned upon any thought of a second marriage.<sup>4</sup> Of not a little influ-

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> See A. V. G. Allen, *Christian Institutions*, p. 162; G. P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 62; W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> H. H. Milman, *History of Christianity*, III, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, pp. 322-

ence upon the idea that celibacy engendered an exalted spiritual state was the example of men who by temperament were not inclined to marriage and devoted themselves with great zeal to the work of the church.

“The true extent of the violence done to human nature by the practice of religious celibacy has been in a great measure concealed from notice by a partial fact which seems to excuse it. It is always true that, in a body of men taken at random, a certain number will be found—we need not hazard a conjecture as to the amount, to whom, from peculiarity of temperament, a life of celibacy cannot be deemed unnatural, and to whom it will be no grievance. At least it may be affirmed as such, that some moderate and accidental motive of prudence, or taste, or the vexations of an early disappointment; or perhaps a praiseworthy regard to the welfare of relatives, will abundantly suffice to reconcile them to their singular lot. Then beyond this small circle there will be a wider one, including not a very few, to whom a motive some degrees stronger will prove efficient to the same end. A vigorous selfishness, for example, abhorrent of disturbance in its comforts, or fearful of the diminution of its dainties, will answer such a purpose; and are there not those who would never marry lest they should be compelled to dine less sumptuously? Or a strong intellectual taste produces the same effect: there have been artists and philosophers, many; indeed, some of the most illustrious of men, who, having wedded a fair ideal, have sought no other love. Still more, the powerful sentiments of religion have, in very many instances, and in a manner not culpable—sometimes commendable—separated men from the ordinary lot, and rendered them in a genuine sense virtuous, as well as happy, in single life. Such cases—exceptions made without violence, it is proper to take account of; they are Nature’s exceptions, and those who come fairly under the description might be styled

a physical aristocracy, born to illustrate the supremacy of mind." <sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the Roman system is not eclectic; it takes all temperaments, and does not restrict itself to the frigid class upon whom celibacy would fall most lightly. If willing to do this it would be exceedingly difficult, for the decision to take orders is made before character is really settled, usually at about the age of eighteen.

From the standpoint of the church, the value of clerical celibacy was as a supposed remedy for clerical licentiousness. The celibacy of the clergy was the great victory of monasticism, and to the Clugny monks much of the credit for this victory should be ascribed. Unfortunately, the victory was a signal defeat, for the clergy were no more faithful to their vows than the monks. The monks and clergy took the vow of celibacy and called it chastity, and the result, as all would expect, was such disastrous moral failure and collapse as to cast a discredit on monasticism from which it has not yet recovered, and the church has not entirely escaped. Men who would have possessed an ordinarily pure mind in some useful occupation of life, became the prey of the most lewd and obnoxious imaginations. They then fancied themselves vile above their fellowmen, and laid on more stripes, fasted more hours, and put more nails in their garments, only to find that instead of fleeing, the devils became blacker and more numerous. The puny, emaciated body which most of the saints desired to possess, gave no advantage in the struggle with the carnal nature. Their austerities were a failure, for in many cases the passions were stronger, and in all cases the self-control was less.

Intellectual precocity, with its attendant irritable delicacy, or debility of constitution, was often the reason for taking orders, and these are the very cases upon which most vio-

<sup>1</sup> I. Taylor, *Fanaticism*, p. 154 f.

lence would be perpetrated. Instead of peace as the result of the irrevocable oath, a tempest of passion raged in the bosom—a tempest so much the more afflictive because it could gain no vent. In the clergy more than in the monk the duty of the confessional aggravated this.

“But what must be thought of auricular confession when he into whose prurient ear it is poured lives under the irritation of a vow of virginity! The wretched being within whose bosom distorted passions are rankling is called daily to listen to tales of licentiousness from his own sex . . . and, infinitely worse, to the reluctant, or the shameless disclosures of the other! Let the female penitent be of what class she may, simple hearted, or lax, the repetition of her dishonor, while it must seal the moral mischief of the offense upon herself, even if the auditor were a woman, enhances it beyond measure when the instincts of nature are violated by making the recital to a man. But shall we imagine the effect upon the sentiments of him who receives the confession? Each sinner makes but one confession in a given time, but each priest in the same space listens to a hundred! What, then, after a while must that receptacle have become into which the continual droppings of all the debauchery of a parish are falling, and through which the copious abomination filters.”<sup>1</sup>

What was the moral result? Open scandals and shameless bigamy and concubinage were too common to attract attention. Nunneries were like brothels; unnatural love lingered in monasteries; in 1130 an abbot in Spain was proved to have kept no less than seventy concubines; in 1274 the Bishop of Liege was deposed for having sixty-five illegitimate children; Pope John XXIII was condemned among other crimes for incest and for adultery.

“It is a popular illusion, which is especially common among writers who have little direct knowledge of the middle

<sup>1</sup> I. Taylor, *Fanaticism*, p. 174 f.

ages, that the atrocious immorality of monasteries, in the century before the Reformation, was a new fact, and that the ages when the faith of men was undisturbed were ages of great moral purity. In fact, it appears, from the uniform testimony of the ecclesiastical writers, that ecclesiastical immorality in the eighth and three following centuries was little if at all less outrageous than in any other period, while the Papacy, during almost the whole of the tenth century, was held by men of infamous lives. Simony was nearly universal. Barbarian chieftains married at an early age, and totally incapable of restraint, occupied the leading positions in the church, and gross irregularities speedily became general. An Italian bishop of the tenth century epigrammatically described the morals of his time, when he declared, that if he were to enforce the canons against unchaste people administering ecclesiastical rites, no one would be left in the church except the boys; and if he were to observe the canons against bastards, these also must be excluded.”<sup>1</sup>

It is only just to say that in the most degenerate times there were a few who held rigidly to their vows, and in some cases the object of their vows was accomplished, if we can trust the contemporaneous accounts. Evagrius describes, with much admiration, how certain monks of Palestine, by “a life wholly excellent and divine,” had so overcome their passions that they were accustomed to bathe with women; for “neither sight nor touch, nor a woman’s embrace, could make them relapse into their natural condition.” It is also true that after a struggle absolute sexual suppression was achieved in a few cases, which caused a greater intensity of spiritual fervor. The emotions being dammed up on one side burst out in another direction. This direction cannot always be guided, however, nor can we always tell, when we tamper with natural impulses, how it will affect the other psychic factors.

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II, p. 329 f.

If the spirit is baffled in its first desires, and defeated, not subdued, it may suddenly meet a new excitement of a different order, and combining with the novel element, rush on ungovernable. May we not then believe that some of the most portentous exhibitions of ungovernable violence in history have been the perversion of some long-suppressed passion which suddenly found an outlet? Certain extreme cases of religious ferocity might be explained on this principle; then the mystery of the union of virtue and piety (?) with a horrible cruelty of temper would be elucidated. It is certainly true that whatever tender and compassionate influences may come from a wife and family (and they are not a little) would be lost by the celibate, and hence this factor would not be present to restrain him.

One other cause which may have had some influence on the adoption of continence was the tendency which it gave to morbid conditions when observed. Under this rule religion assumed a very sombre hue. The business of the saint was to eradicate a natural appetite and to become abnormal. Morbid introspection and hallucinations resulted. In early days all abnormal conditions were considered to be signal favors from God, and the celibate was the recipient of these.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In addition to the references already given in this chapter, see T. Schroeder, "Religion and Sensualism as connected by Clergymen," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, III, pp. 16-28.

## CHAPTER XXX

### DENOMINATIONALISM

“A plague of opinion! A man may wear it on both sides, like a leather jerkin.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE trees in the oak grove, the nestlings in the robin's brood, the cattle upon the thousand hills, and the children around the family table indicate very clearly that individuals of the same species are very much alike and yet quite different. Not only the bodies but the minds of men show these two characteristics. These striking similarities and concomitant wide divergencies are the marvel of God's universe. To the former fact is due the possibility of a common religion, to the latter, the necessity of different denominations.

The dream of the idealist, that denominations at some time will be a memory of the past, is a will-o'-the-wisp. It recedes as one advances, and at the moment you catch it, behold it is lost. Supposing the possibility of one church, what conditions would exist? It would be but a name and no more of a reality than at present. The Methodist would still cling to his methods, the Presbyterian to his presbytery, the Baptist to his baptism, the Episcopalian to his episcopus, and the Congregationalist to his congregational government. Birds of a feather would continue to flock together, and the real conditions would not be changed.

Why not have one church? Are the perversity and stubbornness of mankind to blame? Not that; men are psychologically constituted so that different things appeal to different persons, and religiously these things are represented by

different denominations. Cannot men be sufficiently loyal to Jesus Christ to give up their petty differences? They are so loyal to Jesus that they will not surrender what to them is truth. Are the citizens of this country less patriotic because they are divided into numerous political parties? They express their patriotism by espousing those principles, the adoption of which, they believe, would assist in the country's prosperity. Denominations are a necessity and will continue to be, so long as men's minds operate as they do now. And these differences show God's handiwork as plainly as the planets in the heavens which shine with different brilliancy, travel in different orbits, and attract different satellites.

“Man is constitutionally bound to seek continually, and until he find it, such a religious belief and such a life of religion as shall bring satisfaction to his manifold cravings and needs. These cravings and needs are themselves the subject of ceaseless change; they may become the subjects of development. That is to say, they may become more refined and enlightened, more rational, and morally worthy of satisfaction.”<sup>1</sup>

The general absence of sects, and the agreement in belief among primitive people and in new sects was due largely to the lack of reflection concerning religious truth, and the weight of authority which was always felt. No variety of experiences of a religious character asserted itself in the lower stages of religious development, for the mentality of the people was too crude to favor originality. When religion became more complex in its later development, and individuals began to think, and to have certain varieties of experiences which did not agree with the fixed creed, then sects sprang up and have continued to increase in number ever since. The individual soul, being capable of a certain amount of initiative, refuses to allow his religious beliefs to

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 252.

be circumscribed by the statement of his neighbors, and is impelled to think things out for himself. He recognizes the repression of church creed and organization, which refuses him adequate expression of his individual experience, and there is a tendency to form a new religious body which, although it may repress someone else, gives freedom to him and to others who have felt as he does. This individuality in religion is an evidence of growth.

“The formation of sects is, indeed, both an evidence of, and a necessity to, the life of any religion.” The more vigorous and vital the religious spirit, the greater is the tendency to division; and it is noticeable that where we find the greatest religious intensity, the evident difference of religious opinion exists. These spontaneous, individual experiences inevitably become labelled heterodoxy, and sects founded on them are called heretical; through continued existence and final success they become orthodoxy, and hence our religion is enriched by a new element. This new sect, however, becomes the old and stable, and, forgetting its origin, attempts to annihilate any heretical genius who may appear to fight for recognition. In the estimation of his fellowmen the religious leader passes through the stages of lunacy, knavery, death, martyrdom, and saintship; the different stages show the growth of the ideas which he espoused. The blood of the martyr is really the seed of the church out of which grows a richer and grander and fuller form of religion.

“In what can the originality of any religious movement consist, save in finding a channel, until then sealed up, through which those springs may be set free in some group of human beings? The force of personal faith, enthusiasm and example, and, above all, the force of novelty, are always the prime suggestive agency in this kind of success. . . . In its acuter stages every religion must be a homeless Arab of the desert. The church knows this well enough, with its everlasting inner

struggle of the acuter religion of the few against the chronic religion of the many, indurated into an obstructiveness worse than that which irreligion opposes to the movings of the spirit.”<sup>1</sup>

Unless, in some way, every large church can shepherd a variety of subordinate groups, and permit individual diversity, it must inevitably be broken into sects. Perhaps the great mistake of the past has been in denominational dogmatism. When a sect started, the church said, “You must not.” If left alone and undisturbed it would soon die, or else the truth in it would readily coalesce with the doctrines already held. The emphasis of attempted destruction or violent persecution is the soil in which sects flourish best—in fact, it is the only soil in which they can grow at all.

Some persons explain their adherence to one denomination rather than to another by saying: “I believe I am a Methodist because my father was.” That is true, and is only another way of saying that psychologically he is constituted so as to accept the tenets of the Methodist Church because, through the well known laws of heredity, he is like his father who was likewise constituted.

Another one says: “I am a Presbyterian because I was brought up in a Presbyterian family and taught Presbyterian doctrines, although my parents were both Congregationalists.” This is the statement of another scientific fact. It is no secret: we know that our minds are changed by training, and we are different persons psychologically to-day because we have reacted to different environments. The characteristics of men’s minds are determined, to a certain extent, by these two factors—heredity and environment—and the resultant choice of a denomination is no accident, it follows a scientific law.

We must also recognize, however, that notwithstanding the

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 114.

similarity brought about through the agency of heredity and environment, there is always the variation to be taken into consideration, and to this variation is due the possibility of evolution and general advancement. With similar heredity and environment we find vastly different minds. Luther is a pertinent example of this. His parentage was Roman Catholic, his training was Roman Catholic even to that of the cloister, and yet psychologically Luther was not a Roman Catholic. From the historical fact that many were found at the same time with similar tendencies, we might consider the psychological change from authority to rationalism to be a product of the evolution of the race.

The mental affinity of certain persons and denominations is an ideal and theoretical condition. Practically the case is different because many persons have not found the denominations where they correctly belong. One's soul may yearn for æsthetic satisfaction to be found in those denominations which lay emphasis on the beauty of worship, whose lot is cast among Puritans who despise what they consider the show of form, or condemn elevating strains of inspiring music. Another, equally unfortunate, is worshipping amidst that which appeals to the finer feelings but which finds no response in the breast of him whose idea of worship is that of rigid bodily sacrifice, and he austere condemns the pleasures of sense disguised in religious garments. Until these two exchange places they cannot really worship, nor are they true to themselves and to God. Puritans think that Ritualism worships a fantastic God who is pleased with toys and tinsel; ritualists consider that Puritanism worships a God who is a monster of cruelty, and that the service is bleak and cold. Ritualism appeals to the complexity of man's nature, especially the æsthetic sentiments which are so closely allied to the religious; beside these appeals, the more strict Protestantism presents but barrenness.

The great dividing line in the Christian religion is that drawn between Roman Catholics and so-called Protestants. What are the distinguishing characteristics?

“In the great convulsions of the sixteenth century the feminine type followed Catholicism, while Protestantism inclined more to the masculine type. Catholicism alone retained the Virgin worship, which at once reflected and sustained the first. The skill by which it acts upon the emotions by music, and painting, and solemn architecture, and imposing pageantry, its tendency to appeal to the imagination rather than to the reason, and to foster modes of feeling rather than modes of thought, its assertion of absolute and infallible certainty, above all, the manner in which it teaches its votary to throw himself perpetually on authority, all tended in the same direction.”<sup>1</sup>

“Whoever is lacking in character is lacking in convictions. The female, therefore, is credulous, uncritical, and quite unable to understand Protestantism. Christians are Catholics or Protestants before they are baptized, but, none the less, it would be unfair to describe Catholicism as feminine simply because it suits women better.”<sup>2</sup>

In addition to this we may find other distinctions. They chiefly centre around differences of authority and emphasis. The organization or its representatives is the authority in the Roman Catholic Church, and its emphasis is laid on death rather than on life. Among Protestants authority is found in reason, conscience, or the Bible, or in a combination of any or all of these with the church organization. When any person desires to have men tell him what to believe so that he can accept this dictum as final and infallible, rather than having a “reason for the faith that is within him,” he is a Roman Catholic whether he is worshiping in St. Peter’s in

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *The History of European Morals*, II, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> O. Weininger, *Sex and Character*, p. 207.

Rome or Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London. If connected with this attitude there is a tendency to emphasize dying, death, and after death, rather than correct living here and now (and these two are not infrequently connected) the diagnosis is certain, and you have discovered a Roman Catholic even if he is in the midst of a Protestant church. And it is not so difficult as it might at first seem to discover Protestant popes among our clergy who are willing and anxious to dictate to their parishioners with a consciousness of infallibility which might cause Pius X to guard his laurels.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that under the sheltering wing of the Papacy there are those who are not satisfied with the *ex cathedra* utterances of other men, but who wish to think their own way through, and with the use of the Bible, interpreted by an enlightened understanding, they come to independent conclusions. These men are Protestants and have no right to remain in Rome. While the Roman Church is undoubtedly more tolerant than formerly, and is now very careful not to make any utterances which would bring the papal authority to a real test, it yet demands absolute submission, and this some cannot give.

"The strength of these æsthetic sentiments makes it rigorously impossible, it seems to me, that Protestantism, however superior in spiritual profundity it may be to Catholicism, should at the present day succeed in making many converts from the more venerable ecclesiasticism. The latter offers a so much richer pasturage and shade to the fancy, has so many cells with so many different kinds of honey, is so indulgent in its multiform appeals to human nature, that Protestantism will always show to Catholic eyes the almshouse physiognomy. The bitter negativity of it is to the Catholic mind incomprehensible."<sup>1</sup>

What is so clearly illustrated by this wider division be-

<sup>1</sup> W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 460.

tween the Roman Catholics and the Protestants is equally true but less apparent in the more closely allied branches of Protestantism. Men, from their very natures, belong to certain denominations, and can never receive the most from their worship until they find their proper niches. We cannot, therefore, call denominationalism an unmitigated evil: rather the opposite. If we know that men cannot worship with us in the way which seems best to them, we should be willing and even rejoice that there are congregations with whom they can worship in sincerity and truth.

The benefits of denominationalism so far discussed have been chiefly concerned with its necessity. It is not well to stop with this, for, in addition, denominationalism is valuable on account of the emphasis placed on various important doctrines by the different sects. All denominations either have stood in the past or do stand now for some doctrine by which Christianity has profited on account of this emphasis. And this denomination may have done its work so well that the world has accepted its teaching, and therefore its *raison d'être* has ceased. For example: in the early history of this country the Baptists advocated religious liberty, and although flogged, fined, and imprisoned by those who came here to seek freedom of worship, never persecuted others. So well has this lesson of religious liberty been inculcated into the American people, and so thoroughly does it fit into the political and other ideas of this continent, that were this the only variation of Baptist doctrine, the denomination as a separate body should surrender its individuality.

The union now taking place between different denominations may be accounted for in this way. The distinctive doctrines are now matters of common belief and the excuse for a separate existence is becoming less and less valid. Thus it is in some cases that persons may say that they could as well unite with one church as another, because there may be

little or no real difference. But even although denominations so emphasize certain doctrines that they are in danger of "working themselves out of a job," on account of the psychological differences in people, there is no likelihood of denominationalism being entirely eliminated. The doctrines of different denominations may appear to be almost or quite contradictory, and these denominations can never agree to abandon either or both doctrines, and if they should, Christianity would suffer a distinct loss rather than a gain.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### IMMORTALITY

- “1. I can call spirits from the vasty deep.
2. Why, so can I; or so can any man:  
But will they come when you do call them?”

—SHAKESPEARE.

It may seem strange to some persons that psychology should touch the subject of immortality when in the past philosophy and revelation have had the exclusive right to this field.<sup>1</sup> They have used this right to such good advantage that they have largely exhausted their information, and any advance to be made or additional matter to be added must be furnished from other sources. Psychology has been the science to step forward and offer its services. Its first contribution was a destructive one and came from that borderland realm where psychology touches the physical sciences. Physiological psychology furnished a stubborn objection. Physical science has proved the mortality of the body; in its attempts to connect vitally the mind and the body it has essayed to demonstrate also the cessation of mental activity. Allow science to speak for itself through one of its chief exponents, Professor Huxley:

“So with respect to immortality. As physical science states this problem, it seems to stand thus: Is there any means of knowing whether the series of states of consciousness, which has been casually associated for threescore years and

<sup>1</sup> For a general survey of the history of the subject, see L. Elbé, *Future Life in Light of Ancient Wisdom and Modern Science*.

ten with the arrangement and movements of innumerable millions of material molecules, can be continued in like association with some substance which has not the properties of matter and force? As Kant said, on a like occasion, if anybody can answer that question he is just the man I want to see. If he says that consciousness cannot exist, except in relation of cause and effect with certain organic molecules, I must ask how he knows that; and if he says it can, I must ask the same question."

For many years it has been noticed that an injury to the brain interfered with conscious acts and the interference was approximately proportionate to the injury; that the blood supply must be adequate both in quantity and quality to enable the mind to function properly; that certain parts of the brain were concerned with movements of certain parts of the body; and that many other facts showed an intimate connection between the physical and the mental. Not knowing the nature of mind and having some idea of the body it was, perhaps, only natural it should be considered that in some way the mind was directly dependent upon the brain. Of course the primary crass statement that the brain secreted thought as the liver did bile was not long espoused, but the domination of physical science during the last half century has led many to believe that in some way thought was a function of the brain.

So fatal was this objection considered that many expedients have been resorted to in order that it might be overcome. Various physical substances have been suggested as a fitting material for a "spiritual body." Not the least ingenious of these is the one which hypothesizes luminous or interstellar ether as the physical substratum of the post-mortem spirit. This ether, the medium through which the "X ray" and wireless telegraphy operate, is supposed to provide an exact counterpart of the brain, which it readily

penetrates. Thus the spirit is not unclothed nor disembodied, and if necessary the appearance of ghosts has a rational basis.<sup>1</sup>

That mind and matter are different is clearly recognized by physical science to-day, but if mind is not a function of the brain how can we explain the relation? Some years ago one lucid writer, John Stuart Mill, expressed himself in the following words:

“There are thinkers who, because the phenomena of life and consciousness are associated in their minds by undeviating experience with the action of material organs, think it an absurdity *per se* to imagine it possible that those phenomena can exist under any other conditions. But they should remember that the uniform coexistence of one fact with another does not make the one fact a part of the other or the same with it. The relation of thought to the brain is no metaphysical necessity, but simply a constant coexistence within the limits of observation.”

This objection was dealt with in one of the Ingersoll Lectures<sup>2</sup> at Harvard University and the explanation there given, or rather the hypothesis there presented, at least admits of our positing a less vital connection. There are three kinds of functions: productive, releasing or permissive, and transmissive. In speaking of thought as a function of the brain, only the productive function is usually considered, and if this is true, then when the brain stops producing, thought ceases to exist. But if we consider the function as of either the last two classes, then so far as thought being dependent on the brain and ceasing with it is concerned, the removal of the brain would tend to facilitate the action of the mind. To use an illustration: the window serves the purpose, not of producing the light, but of transmitting it. If made of very dark colored glass or if dirty

<sup>1</sup> S. D. McConnell, *The Evolution of Immortality*, chap. XV.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *Human Immortality*.

and dusty less light is admitted, so that the room may be nearly dark. If the window is entirely removed not a cessation of light but a great increase of light is noticed, in fact, the light is admitted untrammelled. Do we not find that this sort of function best applies to what we know of the relation between the mind and the brain? It might be well to notice in passing that, on the productive theory, telepathy, clairvoyance, and spiritism are impossible, for how can the brain produce these things apart from the sense organs? The transmission theory places no objection in the way of theories including these phenomena.

Leaving, then, the objections we eagerly ask if psychology has anything to add by way of evidence in support of the doctrine of immortality. We might examine the genesis of the quite universal belief in immortality even among those individuals and races which can provide no rational statement of either their beliefs or the reasons underlying them. Philosophy has, however, used this fact so freely and so long a time that it is hardly worth while for us even to mention it. We might also speak of mental development both in the individual and in the race and base our argument on this, but again philosophy has forestalled us. We are forced, then, to bring forward but one argument, or rather to make way for one set of facts which promises to be stronger and more forceful the more it is investigated. I refer to the phenomena included under the investigations of spiritism.

For a century or more the reaction from the age of witchcraft has caused a disbelief in any form of spirit manifestation. Science, however, laughs at nothing except the fear of being laughed at. She has learned by far too many bitter experiences that what is laughed at by one generation is not infrequently accepted and lauded by the next. Facts, facts, and the explanation of facts are what science feeds upon and its appetite is never satiated. Now there is a large body of facts

which cannot be explained by current, generally accepted theories, but scientific curiosity and religious hope spur us on to submit them to a rigid, careful investigation.

For centuries religion has been asking, "Is it true that there exists a reality corresponding to our faith? Is there a spirit world inhabited by the spirits of the departed?" Science has but one answer to this: "If a spirit world exist it ought to be discoverable, and I will discover it." To this attitude of science two objections have arisen, one among the friends of religion and the other among the friends of physical science. The objector representing religion says that, although for centuries he has believed in immortality, he does not want it proven to him, but he would rather keep it as an object of faith than present it as a fact of science. This must remain a matter of individual preference. The physicist says that this cannot be, and places himself in the position of those of whom it was said, "neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." For years science has been the chief apologist for century-old beliefs, and it may even be in this case. Neither of these objections is a valid one.

Paul, the greatest exponent of Christianity, says that Christianity rests upon the resurrection, and our faith is vain without it. Christianity must perish or flourish with a belief in the resurrection. If it were possible for us to prove immortality Christian apologetics would be greatly aided in its work. Physical science objects to supersensible evidence or foundations, yet it, itself, is founded on supersensible bases, as, *e. g.*, atoms and ether. This should surely pave the way for other supersensible theories and explanations. It would not be difficult to point out hypotheses of science founded on less evidence than spiritism can produce.

What shall we say concerning the evidence? In the first place we must recognize that, notwithstanding the importance of the subject, scarcely fifty serious students have devoted

themselves to it.<sup>1</sup> With the great amount of evidence to examine and the nature of the evidence to consider, we must expect the subject to be as yet in a rather chaotic condition. One thing appears evident, however, while no theory adequately explains all the facts gathered, the hypothesis of chance or coincidence is excluded. Certainly one single instance of survival after death would be worth more than all the philosophical arguments or statements of disbelief and agnosticism or of belief and confidence. It is further to be considered that one example is as good as one thousand if it has good evidential value. Hundreds of millions of people believe that this case has been furnished, and the resurrection accomplished in the experience of Jesus Christ. Apart from the faith of so many to-day, the evidence to support this is better in quality and more plentiful than that for most events of its time, many of which are accepted without question. Science, however, is not content to rest upon evidence centuries and millenniums old, but desires first-hand facts if possible and of recent date where they can be examined. To the discussion of these, then, we must turn.

For the past few years certain investigators have been concerned with some phenomena which may be classed under the name of telepathy. While we understand in general what this word stands for, when we come to define it specifically we find considerable confusion. The definition has been extended or contracted to fit the exigencies of certain cases or theories, and it is difficult to assign its limits. Of course we recognize that in general it is the transference of thought from one mind to another without the use of the ordinary means, speech, signs, or symbols. This, then, could be accomplished when persons were separated by long distances. Now, the scientific use of this term restricts it to the trans-

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, II, p. 206.

ference of thought from one person to another at the time it was consciously in the mind of the former;<sup>1</sup> but it has been used to refer to the transference of any mental content which could be recalled by the former person, or anything which has ever been in his mind, either consciously or subconsciously. One can easily see how this wider and looser use of the word would interfere with the interpretation of facts which could otherwise be used as evidence for spirit manifestation.

Telepathy has made a good case and may soon be considered as established. Not that it is always operative or that all persons can act as either agents or percipients, but sporadically, or between certain persons, experiences, for which no other explanation is available at present, have been noticed. But after you have posited telepathy as a working hypothesis you have not thereby explained the *modus operandi*. It is generally considered that in some way one mind has an influence or power over another, which shows itself by the reproduction of thought; but some investigators opine, after examining many cases, that the real relation seems to be the effect of a mind over a body, *i. e.*, that an external mind uses a body in place of the mind which ordinarily rules it.<sup>2</sup> However, the laws of telepathy are so little known that one cannot affirm or deny anything which may be presented.

In the discussion of these abnormal psychic phenomena, telepathy as the most simple hypothesis has been accepted wherever it could offer an explanation. If telepathy were inadequate, clairvoyance was next called upon to explain the facts. This failing, spiritism, as the least likely, was allowed an opportunity. The order appears to me incorrect. If telepathy is accepted as the intercourse of two minds, then spir-

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Hyslop, *Science and a Future Life*, p. 34 f.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, II, p. 196.

itism is next in order; for what do we mean by spiritism but an enlarged telepathy? It is simply the intercourse of two minds without the use of ordinary means. We all believe in immortality and the persistence of personal identity and mental powers; why then should we not extend telepathy to include spirits? Clairvoyance is least likely of the three hypotheses, for there is no mind to act as agent and consequently there can be no transference to or reproduction in another mind by any mental force. With telepathy accepted as a scientific hypothesis it is but a step—a short step—to spiritism.

Many objections have been raised to a spiritistic hypothesis and many efforts have been made to explain a part of the phenomena, so classed, by other means, or simply to deny it. Some can undoubtedly be explained, but there yet remains an inexplicable residue, and on this the spiritists found their doctrine. Nothing could be more elaborate than Mr. Myers' attempt to explain every fact by some other means, and his honesty and general ability in this cannot be doubted.<sup>1</sup> Notice the following quotations:

“While sounding a timely warning, however, by thus calling the public attention to the methods of trickery at present in vogue, I do not wish it to be understood that I thereby relegate the *whole* of the evidence for the supernatural to the waste-basket. That is precisely what I do *not* wish to do or lead others to do. It is because I believe that there do exist certain phenomena, the explanations for which have not yet been found, and which I think science should be induced to systematically study, that I think it necessary to distinguish those phenomena from the fraudulent ‘marvels’ so commonly produced, and which are the only spiritualistic phenomena with which the public is acquainted. When these

<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*.

shall have been cleared away, and the weeding-out process carried sufficiently far to enable us to see what are the 'real problems' to be solved, then the real, systematic, scientific study of psychic phenomena will have begun."<sup>1</sup>

"In respect to that [Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death], I record with pleasure my appreciation of the ability and devotion of the author, as well as of the skill of his presentations; and I record with regret, that in spite of a common interest in the same range of phenomena, and a fair measure of agreement in the interpretation of the more objective and verifiable data, I yet find my point of view as little in accord with his, that I have been able to profit but slightly from his discerning labors."<sup>2</sup> In Professor Jastrow's book which follows these words his eclecticism is very marked. He accepts without question the evidence of certain witnesses concerning crystal gazing and similar phenomena, but as unquestioningly refuses the evidence of the same witnesses regarding telepathy and spiritism. His explanations do not seem to be sufficient to remove the paradox.

To prove immortality and positively disprove the materialist's arguments, we must separate human consciousness from the body. To accomplish the proof of this two kinds of evidence must be adduced: the communication purporting to come from the dead should show supernormal knowledge, and the communication should illustrate and prove the personal identity of the one represented and communicating.<sup>3</sup> Now, a great amount of such evidence is already at hand and is accessible to any reader. This being so, only three explanations are possible, viz., fraud on the part of the investigators, telepathy, and spiritism.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. Carrington, *The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism*, p. 415 f.

<sup>2</sup> J. Jastrow, *The Subconsciousness*, Preface, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> J. H. Hyslop, *Science and a Future Life*, p. 105 f.

<sup>4</sup> J. H. Hyslop, *Science and a Future Life*, pp. 246 ff.

The high standing of the investigators, both in the community and in the scientific world, precludes the hypotheses of fraud. No men of science are more eminent. Men of such world-wide renown as Lombroso, Flammarion, Marconi, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Richet, Professor Hyslop, Professor James, and others, cannot be easily set aside by calling them fanatics or dupes. It is rather interesting to note that in 1898 Sir William Crookes was simultaneously president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and of the British Society for Psychological Research. All the world accepted his conclusions concerning physical science without question, but most men laughed at his conclusions of a psychical character. Dr. Giuseppe Lapponi, medical adviser of Pope Leo XIII and of the present pope, has recently published a work entitled, "Ipnotismo e spiritismo," in which he admits the facts of spiritism but denounces the investigation of it as "dangerous, damnable, immoral, and reprehensible." This is in harmony with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church which considers spiritism a revival of demonology. An experience of over twenty years with Mrs. Piper has failed to reveal the slightest trace of fraud.

Some of the investigators find telepathy fraught with more weighty and more numerous objections than spiritism—objections too numerous for us even to mention in this resumé. And even extending telepathy to its widest limits, there are some cases which it cannot explain. Further, telepathy alone is inadequate, for in some of the simplest cases double personality or some similar phenomena must be invoked to aid. If the evidence is true, and there is no reason to doubt it, the spiritistic hypothesis seems to present the best case up to the present time.

We have only been able to touch this subject in its barest outline and an adequate presentation would require far more

time and space than we could here give. Two points out of many we wish to mention further. The first is the trivial character of the incidents given, especially those used to prove personal identity. One investigator tried an experiment of this same kind on living persons, endeavoring to have them prove their identity by relating incidents over a telephone. He found that the incidents related were of the most trivial character, and although the subjects were college professors and students, they might as well have been boot-blacks as far as the character of the incidents was concerned.<sup>1</sup>

The second point, and one which throws light upon the one just mentioned, is the difficulty of communication. Most of the evidence has been received through mediums. Now, the medium must be in an abnormal condition—in a trance—in order to communicate, and there is reason to suppose, not only by analogy from this side, but from evidence of an internal character, that an abnormal condition is also necessary for spirit communicators. If this is true, the wonder is not that the incidents given are trivial but that any communication at all can be held. Communication would also be difficult if the language and signs were not well understood by both parties trying to communicate.

Recently Professor Filippo Bottazzi, head of the department of Physiology in the Royal University of Naples, has been making a series of experiments in what may be called the physical manifestations of spiritualism.<sup>2</sup> Together with some other careful observers of repute, he met the medium, Eusapia Palodino, in the laboratory of the university, where instruments of precision could be and were used to measure the force used in certain phenomena. Professor Bottazzi

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Hyslop, *Science and a Future Life*, p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> C. Johnson, "Exploring the Spiritual World," *Harper's Weekly*, Aug. 15, 1908; H. Garland, "The Shadow World," *Everybody's Magazine*, Aug. and Sept., 1908.

reached the following conclusion: "Mediumistic phenomena, when they are not entirely hallucinations of those present at the séance, are biological phenomena entirely dependent upon the organism of the medium; and if so, they occur as if accompanied by prolongation of the natural limbs, or as if by additional limbs which spread from the body of the medium and re-enter it after a variable time, during which time they show themselves, as regards the sensation they bring about in us, as limbs differing in no essential matter from natural or physical members." Since the conclusion of the experiment there is a disposition among some to explain all phenomena which were formerly used as a basis for spiritism by the hypothesis of a spiritual, psychic, or astral body, whatever these paradoxical terms may mean.

In this survey I have not attempted to prove spiritism: that is not the object. The space is insufficient and the evidence not yet conclusive. My object here is simply to open the way for the evidence for immortality which the science of psychology is trying to present. Of course some will say that in trying to encourage such evidence we are reverting to the age of witchcraft and the testimony of the witch-doctor, and instead of advancing with the age we are retrogressing several centuries. It does not matter when spiritism first was proposed nor who proposed it, the question for us to ask is, "How far does it accord with the facts?" Immortality is believed in by the most advanced nations and individuals; why object to its proof? If this should be proved by spiritism it would not be the first instance of the regeneration of crude ideas by scientific men, and the incorporation of these ideas into the latest scientific theories.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### PREACHING

“Well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

CHRISTIANITY has never been without its great preachers, and its propagation has been more or less dependent upon public speaking from the time of its Founder to the present. A great difference has been noticed in the effectiveness of preachers, and in former times this was said to be due to the Holy Spirit. This may have been true, but to-day we are recognizing that the effectiveness of speakers can be analyzed and certain rules may be laid down which, if followed, assist a preacher much in cogently proclaiming his message. The psychological principles of successful preaching must concern us in this chapter; these principles would also be applicable to other forms of public speaking.

Is preaching declining in its power? The pulpit as an institution with its *ex cathedra* utterances, its assumed authority, and its preëmpted dignity, probably has declined, but the preacher as a preacher is yet to be regarded as a mighty power. It is true that people can read for themselves now as they could not years ago, but the difference between spoken and written discourse will always cause a demand for the preacher. The sermon which may seem weak and insipid when read, may have been powerful when preached. Not only the truth, but the man back of it, is a factor of importance. The present, personal touch and influence, whatever we may find that to be, must be reckoned with.

The personality of the preacher back of the words makes the difference between a good sermon and a poor one, a difference not so easy to distinguish in a written discourse. One may speak of this as temperament, but temperament plus; it is the man as a whole, the balance of his powers and his methods. People have not tired of preaching, but only of certain styles of sermons and preachers. It is the personality which is not attractive. Rather than any particular truth or sermon, the chief thing that a man contributes to his congregation is his tone—the influence of his personality; if that is lacking he is as booming brass or a clanging cymbal. “Whether the minister feels the congregation or not, the congregation feels the minister.”<sup>1</sup>

The physical basis of personality cannot be neglected. Spencer says, “He that with men is a success must begin by being a first-class animal.” The interdependence of mind and body is well known, and the sound body is necessary to healthful mental activity. A good appetite and normal digestion are valuable mental aids to a preacher. Those who have succeeded without good bodies have done so notwithstanding this handicap, not on account of it. “There are men a large part of whose magnetism is in their fine, impressive physique, men who command attention largely by a massive figure, a noble bearing, a masterful air, and an organ-like voice.”<sup>2</sup> Not only indirectly in its effect on the mind, but directly the bodily influence is a help to a preacher.

In common with all public speakers, the preacher has the problem of interest and attention on his hands. It is true that persons who attend church come because they wish to, and know beforehand, to some extent, what subjects may be presented and their treatment, but, notwithstanding this, the problem is still present. External conditions count for much,

<sup>1</sup> P. Brooks, *Lectures on Preaching*, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> J. S. Kennard, *Psychic Power in Preaching*. p. 33.

for if they are not favorable the hearer finds it difficult to attend, or else there is a struggle of interests so that attention is an effort. Ventilation, temperature, and acoustics may be singly or combined of such a character that attention is practically impossible, or the counter claims on the attention of giggling choir girls, conflicting noises, inharmonious surroundings or gorgeous attire may make the preacher's task a difficult one.

It is not my intention to present a full psychology of the attention, for if that is not already known it may be obtained from any standard work on psychology; a few points, however, in application may be of value. Coming together as a congregation with one thing in mind, there is yet a variety of interests. Every person voluntarily attends at first, and the problem of the preacher as of the teacher is to change attention from the voluntary to the spontaneous variety. Professor Ribot says that the process of gaining voluntary attention may be reduced to the following single formula: "To render attractive by artifice what is not so by nature, to give an artificial interest to things that have not a natural interest." "The whole question," he continues, "is reduced to the finding of effective motives; if the latter be wanting, voluntary attention does not appear."<sup>1</sup> This, however, is not the prime problem of the preacher. He may well take for granted that at the beginning his hearers voluntarily attend. To change this to spontaneous attention is his task.

The power of expectancy is as valuable to the noted preacher as to the physician with a great reputation. If a preacher has a reputation for brilliancy, wit, or even eccentricity, he will be aided by expectancy, not only in gaining the attention of his hearers, but in holding it. They will voluntarily attend to hear what is coming next, always expecting

<sup>1</sup> T. Ribot, *Psychology of Attention*. The whole book will be found valuable.

and indeed finding, because of their expectancy, things of interest in what may really be an uninteresting address.

The power of personality, already referred to, may be and probably is, in part just this. Even the physical appearance is a great aid. A small, insignificant looking man with a weak voice may have to preach ten minutes, giving utterance to the grandest sentiments, before people will begin to listen to him; his brother of imposing appearance and rich voice gets the attention from the beginning because people, for some reason, expect more from him. Bigness of body, voice, subject, or treatment is a law of attention; it is always attractive.

The same thing is true of earnestness and sincerity. A study of the great preachers shows the expression of this to be very different, in fact often contradictory, in style. Some shout, others use little voice; some talk rapidly, others slowly; some use many gestures and are always in motion, others are almost motionless. Each one's style, however, must betoken sincerity, and be recognized as his way of expressing earnestness. The speaker must be interested—this interest is contagious. His interest, though, must not be of such a character that he forgets the people in the pews. He must always have them in mind, not as subjects to whom to preach, but as persons who think, and he must, if he is to be interesting, view the theme which he presents from their standpoints. The reason for this is obvious: nothing entirely new can be interesting; in fact, nothing entirely new is comprehensible. On the other hand, if a subject and its treatment are old and threadbare, it is equally uninteresting. Interest lies between the two extremes. The new in its relationship to the old is always attractive. A series of sermons may, therefore, be more interesting because a place has been made for the new in the previous sermon, and coupled with this is the element of expectancy.

A further word: preaching, to be interesting, should be suggestive not exhaustive. Every hearer should be given some mental work—he should be allowed to think. A sermon which makes us think, whether it is in harmony with our ideas or not, is always interesting. Activity is pleasurable; if we have all the work done for us interest ceases. On the other hand, care must be taken not to start lines of interest which we do not satisfy, or which shall lead the hearers off the main subject or away from the ideas which one wishes to present; that is giving them too much to do, or rather is giving them things to do which may defeat your object. Keep the hearers busy, but lead them your way.

A psychological fact which must not escape our notice is the fluctuation of the attention. We are not able to hold the full and undivided attention of a hearer for more than a few seconds or minutes at a time. The time will vary with the conditions, as, *e. g.*, the physical condition of the hearers, time of day, season of the year, or subject discussed. Attention comes in waves and we listen as we read, not continuously but intermittently; we rest every few seconds. The unit of hearing is probably from two to four seconds, and sentences should be constructed so as not to exhaust by their length nor to shock by their brevity. The sentence, the completed thought, then becomes the unit and is pleasing. The preacher must take advantage of this and by skillful adjustment get the maximum effect with the minimum of voluntary attention.

As a further lesson from the fluctuation of attention, we must have variety. The monotony of any factor of style or expression will fail to coax the attention when it has flagged. Especially at the beginning of a discourse this variation must be more marked; after the audience has been gripped the necessity is not so great, but nevertheless it can never be neglected with profit.

Closely connected with this is the subject of rhythm.<sup>1</sup> Probably the best examples of the use of rhythm in preaching are found among the negro preachers in the south. The congregation aids by the swaying of the body, the rhythmic shout, or response. The effect on the hearers is more noticeable than that produced by the words uttered. Some revivalists have also taken advantage of this force. The primary function of the rhythm is in the æsthetic effect which it produces, but it also assists the hearers in grasping the thought, the accent of the rhythm being a spur to the attention. This rhythm, to be of most advantage, must correspond in length to the unit of thought.

There is a surprising uniformity in the number of words used in a sentence by different speakers and writers. This average will differ in different ages but be uniform for a certain age. Lately the average has decreased. Before the Elizabethan age the average number was about fifty, now it is approximately twenty-five. The rhythm does not seem to depend so much on the number of words in a sentence as on the number of complete predications; the latter averages somewhat more than two. "The sentence rhythm is very pronounced in many of our contemporary lecturers. With some the sentence is short, and every brief period of expectation is followed by its appropriate satisfaction. The effect produced is quite similar to that produced by the verse and stanza in poetry or music."

In rhythm, time, pitch, and stress are all used, one or more of these elements being present in every recurrence of accent, but varying in proportion with different speakers. They should all be considered by every public speaker as integral factors of rhythm. Prose as well as poetry should be rendered rhythmically to get the best effects.

From what has already been said in the chapter on Con-

<sup>1</sup> See W. D. Scott, *Psychology of Public Speaking*, pp. 121-146.

tagious Phenomena, it will be recognized that the congregation may easily become a psychological crowd and yield to the power of suggestion on the part of the preacher.<sup>1</sup> Even if the congregation does not reach the complete status of the psychological crowd, it tends in that direction, and suggestion is usually more effective than logical reasoning. For the purpose of suggestion we must limit in some way the ideas presented in consciousness to those which are desired and prevent the entrance into consciousness of any inhibiting ideas; this is but restating what we have already said when discussing interest and attention. The very surroundings, the churchly environment, assist in accomplishing this object.

Conditions are much more favorable for changing a religious congregation into a psychological crowd than with most audiences. Although a congregation is naturally heterogeneous from almost every other standpoint, it is to a great extent religiously homogeneous. Equality before God is preached and is supposed to be practised in and during church services if anywhere; the congregation gathers with similar feelings, purposes, and aims; all the members participate in the same ritual at the same time and act as one person all through the service. The limitation of voluntary movements, which is such a valuable accessory in the change from a heterogeneous to a homogeneous crowd, seems to be best accomplished in a religious congregation. Pressed into a pew where movement is difficult, confined in tight and stiff Sunday clothing which suggests motionlessness if it does not prohibit movement, and restrained by the church custom of quietness, the body is held erect and stationary.

The crowd always demands a leader; it cannot well be a

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the references already given in the chapter referred to, see W. D. Scott, *Psychology of Public Speaking*, pp. 149-184; L. W. Kline, "The Sermon: A Study in Social Psychology," *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, I, pp. 288-300.

crowd without one. The preacher, of course, fills this rôle. His personality, especially those physical qualities which do not seem to be otherwise essential, aids him in this position. The greater the authority he presents the more easily the crowd accepts him. Because of this, the crowd becomes very credulous and receives without question anything which he suggests. The ignorant preacher, like a ward politician, unconsciously probably, but none the less truly, becomes a practical psychologist of power in a limited sphere. As a leader the preacher not only speaks with some authority, but he already has, on account of his position, the confidence of the congregation, and thereby has a great advantage over the ordinary speaker who may have to win his way. Authority and confidence are two important factors in rendering an audience suggestible.

Having these, how shall a preacher proceed? He must fit the sermon to the crowd, and this is quite different from fitting the same address to the different individuals of the crowd. We have already noticed that we cannot reason with a crowd, no matter how reasonable each member of the crowd may be individually. By becoming members of the crowd they are thereby deprived of reason for the time. That does not mean that unreasonable things may be baldly suggested, but that no logical development and process can be profitably used. Affirm, affirm the same thing emphatically and repeatedly is the rule. These affirmations are the more effective for being arranged so as to reach a climax, but repetition of the affirmation periodically in the sermon is the principal thing.

What this affirmation should consist of is not so important so long as it contains common ideas saturated with feeling. The more vague it is in definition, within limits, the more effective it is found to be. Such words as unity, brotherhood, salvation, or freedom are examples of those on which the changes should be rung. They are universal in applica-

tion and stimulate the fundamental sentiments of human nature, so all the congregation can be influenced thereby. While these ideas may be general and more or less vague, the crowd thinks concretely. Figures of speech, especially the metaphor, are therefore, much appreciated by the crowd and as a rule very effective. If these figures can be used so as to suggest the climax and conclusion, and have the audience arrive at the conclusion before it is stated, then the statement comes as a verification of its own conclusion and is welcomed heartily. The preacher loses somewhat on account of the inability of the audience to applaud, but all things considered, he has a better opportunity than the ordinary speaker to create the psychological crowd and to handle it.

We must recognize that rarely if ever does the entire congregation lose itself in the crowd. There are some who will remain indifferent and others who will be critical. The reaction is, therefore, different; some are unchanged, some are bored, but the majority are affected. The emotions are stirred, the intellect quickened, and this finally develops into conduct in some cases. The reader should notice that the ethics of forming and influencing a psychological crowd is not discussed here. I am neither recommending nor condemning it, but simply endeavoring to state the facts.

The matter of mental imagery has been referred to and should receive further consideration. In the chapter on Imagination the value of the imagination in religion was indicated, and the fact that imagined lines of conduct, in common with all ideas, tend to be realized is set forth as an important psychological fact. Most persons are able to reproduce visual images easily, and the great orators of the past have used visual imagery as frequently as all other kinds combined.<sup>1</sup> Every speaker, however, is inclined to use that

<sup>1</sup> W. D. Scott, *Psychology of Public Speaking*, p. 44; the whole treatment of the subject here is interesting.

form of imagery which impresses him most. The general order of frequency of mental images is visual, auditory, motor, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, pain, and temperature.

Mental imagery is especially valuable to a preacher in arousing emotion. If an object is described so clearly that the auditors have no trouble in forming a mental image of it, the emotions are almost sure to be awakened. Certain forms of imagery are most successful in stirring certain emotions, as, *e. g.*, auditory images are more likely to produce fear than are visual ones.

Not only are we affected by the words which are spoken, but the expression of the speaker is very suggestive. Actors are divided into two schools, one of which claims that an actor must himself feel the emotion to which he gives expression, and the other opines that feeling the emotion would spoil the art. No doubt that in most if not in all actors there is some feeling. In the pulpit it is to be supposed that the preacher feels what he expresses, and as he is moved so he moves his audience. We do not have to learn how to express emotion or how to interpret the emotional expression on the part of others; we do these things instinctively. Both, however, may be cultivated so as to be more exact and more decided.

Three principles of emotional expression are laid down by Spencer, Darwin, and Wundt, respectively. First, the violence of the physical expression is in proportion to the intensity of the emotions, *i. e.*, intense emotions are accompanied by violent expressions, and weak emotions by weak expressions. Supplementary to this is the following: the nervous excitement which accompanies emotions affects the muscles in the inverse order of their size and the weights of the parts to which they are attached. From this we may understand why the muscles of the face are so easily moved, and why each facial muscle is moved as it is to correspond to the in-

tensity of the emotion. We can also understand the disgust which is generated when there is an exaggerated expression of a weak emotion.

Second is the principle of serviceable associated habits. Our primitive ancestors in case of fear, for example, would shut their eyes, hold their breath, crouch, etc., in order to better meet the anticipated attack. Even although these have now ceased to be of value they are retained by us. The third principle is that of associated related feelings. For instance, a "bitter" experience is expressed in a manner similar to the movements we make in tasting a bitter substance; a pleasant experience has concomitant "sweet" expressions. These three principles of expression will cover all cases, and prove an explanation of, as well as a guide for, the expression of the emotions in public speaking. In cases where the audience is some distance from the speaker the facial expression may have to be exaggerated in order to be detected.<sup>1</sup>

Expression attracts attention far more easily than do words, as the visual is always more attractive than the auditory. By the means of expression, then, we are able to get the maximum of impression with the minimum of tax on the voluntary attention, and a great gain is made thereby. The preacher must use all *legitimate* help he can from every source so that the effectiveness of the message may be augmented, or at least have a fair chance, on account of the delivery.

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of this subject, see W. D. Scott, *Psychology of Public Speaking*, pp. 63-101; C. Darwin, *Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals*; H. Spencer, *Language of the Emotions*.



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