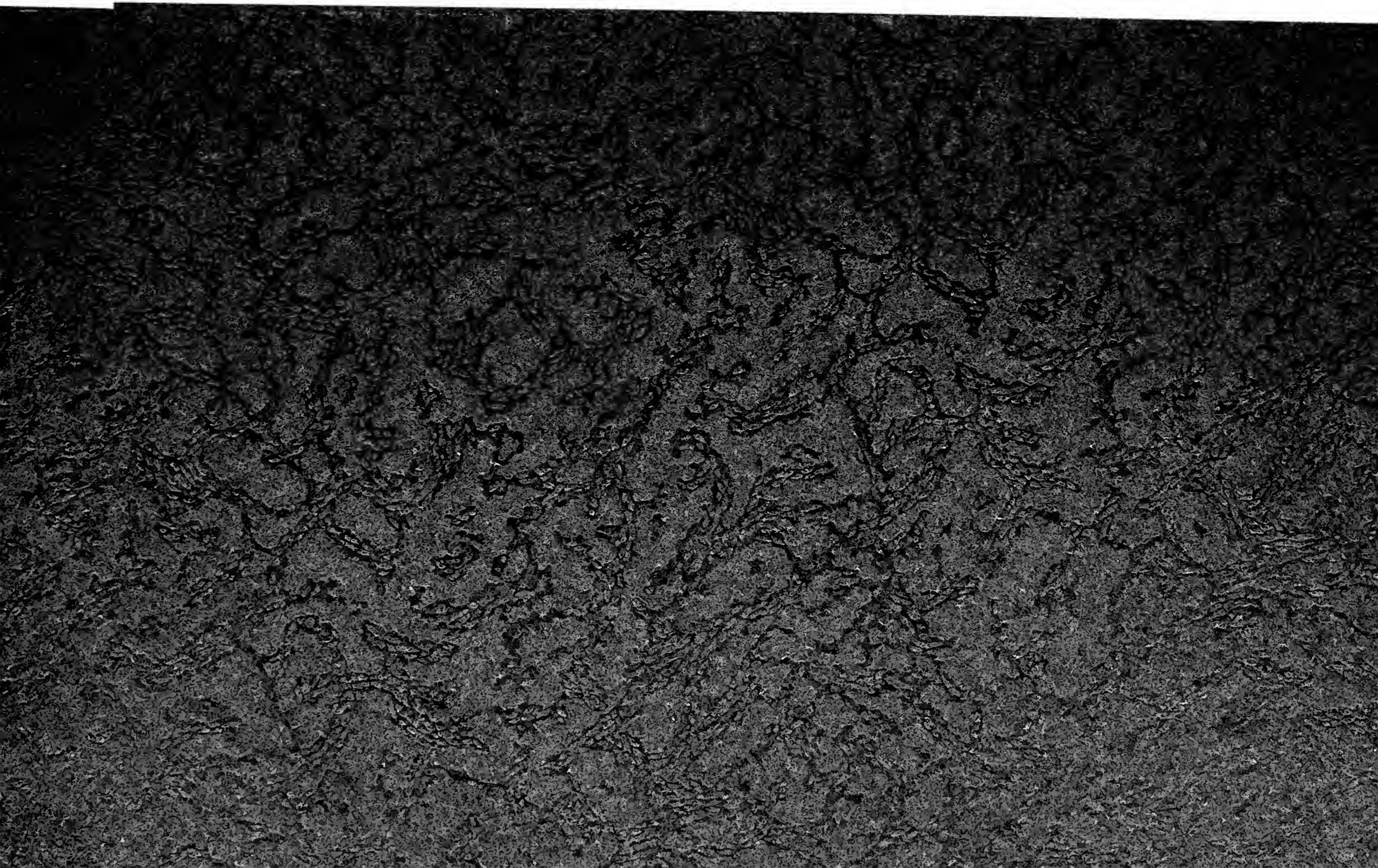

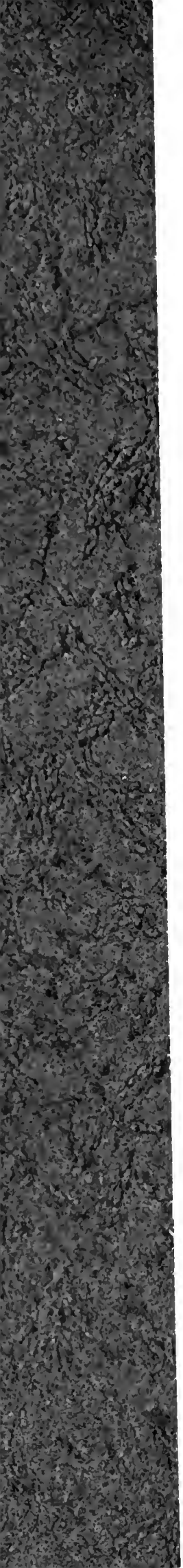

RELIGIOUS VALUES

AND

INTELLECTUAL CONSISTENCY

BY
EDWARD HARTMAN REISNER, PH.D.

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of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Philosophy
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E. H. R.

MANHATTAN, KANSAS,
August 28, 1914

OUTLINE

RELIGIOUS VALUES AND INTELLECTUAL CONSISTENCY

CHAPTER I

Religious Values and Intellectual Consistency

We are taught by modern psychology that emotion is secondary to physical changes taking place in the subject. These physical changes are directly dependent upon the presence of objects or ideas to which the subject ascribes value in an immediate judgment. The emotion of fear, for example, follows on the perception of an object or the having of an idea that points to disturbed or destroyed values, as the loss of life or limb, friend or fortune. The emotion of joy arises in the presence of an object of desire and accompanies the presence and the continuance of welfare. And so on we might run through the list of emotions and find that in every case there is an original perception of value in connection with an object or an idea.

No less do emotions call for a certain consistency of objective experience. The play that can not present a convincing case is called melodrama. The expressions of esteem that are ill-founded and casual are called "gush." The religion that arouses a high pitch of feeling on ill-defined and vague grounds is condemned as being "hysterical" by one who demands an adequate reason for the enthusiasm.

Whatever else it may be, religion is an emotional attitude toward the whole of one's experience. As such, it turns upon judgments of value and demands a certain amount of intellectual consistency.

To illustrate the need of intellectual consistency, Augustine refused the proffered solace of Christianity until he came to interpret the grand appeal in terms of Platonic thought. Locke, too, had to qualify his acceptance of the Christian faith to the extent of relieving it of its unbelievable materials through positing human reason as superior to revelation. Likewise, a man imbued with the spirit of modern science must modify his acceptance of the Christian tradition to an extent that is often considered fatal to the spirit of that faith.

We must remember, however, that intellectual consistency in

religious experience is only a relative matter, as it is in business, politics, or literary composition. What will constitute consistency for any one depends upon his type of mind and the depth of his interest. A man who may exact absolute consistency in the details of a building plan, will be blissfully careless in the details of a political argument. Another who must find consistency to the hundredth of one per cent. in the conditions of an international loan may accept very broad discrepancies in the particulars of a religious faith. A knowledge of science may well comport, if our knowledge of men tells us anything, with miracles and hell-fire. Accordingly, when we talk of the necessity for intellectual consistency in religious matters, the term is used in the relative sense of what may constitute consistency for any given individual.

For the overwhelming majority of those who are called by the name of Christians to-day, the classical statement of the faith suffices, and among them are those who are not to be accounted weak of understanding. As a case in point, the will of the late J. Pierpont Morgan begins with an unqualified statement of his acceptance of the classic dogma of the Church. It is a striking tribute to the simple majesty of the orthodox faith that a man of Mr. Morgan's gigantic intellectual powers found solace therein. And not only for the sake of this one tribute, but because of millions of lives that have drawn comfort and power from that message, we must acknowledge the fundamental appeal of the theistic world-plan. It is majestic in its simplicity, its beauty, and its practical logic, and amply justified in the works of many of its believers.

But we must recognize the fact that a different way of looking at the problems of existence causes some men of our time to regard classical Christianity as a stupendous and beautiful ruin. The facts they learn in the laboratory, or through a study of history, or from a pursuit of philosophy, demand a new intellectual setting for their religious experiences. At its best, they regard the Christian plan of sin and salvation as a remarkable poetic conception, worthy of admiration and never to be despised, but nevertheless unable to furnish the intellectual background for their free spiritual development; and at its worst, as a nest of logical inconsistencies, involving a barren saying of names and practise of forms and favoring maudlin and ineffective sentimentality.

Certainly many men of this latter type of intellectual temper are not less devoted in their lives, have no less a need for a total point of view from which their own individual significance may be evaluated, and probably have no less attained to such a point of view, than those of the former. Furthermore, they no less represent the

historical development of our Western religious tradition. The entire question of the significance of the intellectual background of the religious experience, accordingly, is for us a matter of acute concern, just as it has been for Christians generally during the best part of two thousand years.

But not only does religion demand a certain amount of intellectual consistency. As an emotional attitude toward the whole of one's experience, it turns upon judgments of value. To be informed as to how thoroughly this is the case, one has only to turn the pages of any devotional book or to attend a church service. Continued life, here and hereafter, health of body and mind, material prosperity, the welfare of friends, ethical purity and the furtherance of God's kingdom on earth, are some of the most notable values with which men are concerned.

Since religion is so largely concerned with values, it necessarily follows that it contains a large amount of contingency; for values are empirical in their origin. To be sure, there is almost unanimous recognition of a certain group of values that are very closely related to the preservation of biological integrity. These values represent man's dependence on his physical environment. As the main conditions of life are everywhere the same, we find in our own devotions petitions that have made their appeal to mankind through all ages. On the other hand, there are values that are highly contingent. These occur in connection with the ethical life and vary with economic, political, and intellectual conditions. The ethical values that we discover in the experience of successive heroes of our religious history differ vastly from one another. Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Amos, Deutero-Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jesus, Paul, Benedict, Luther, Fichte, to come no nearer the present day, may each be said to stand for a significant change in the valuation of conduct. Among them is a wide variation in regard to what is to be called good. Some of the values held to directly contradict and annul others. But all are parts of the same developing tradition, all are referred to God for his sanction, and each, in its time and place, expressed the current need.

We wish, then, to recognize two facts: that the main concern of religion is with human values, and that the spontaneity and richness of the religious experience depend upon an intellectual consistency among the objects that carry those values. Furthermore, one who is acquainted with the history of Western religious thought must see that vast changes, both in values held to and in intellectual settings accepted as self-consistent, have occurred. During the entire process of evolution of our religion, a single concept, God, has done duty as

the guardian and sponsor of values; and, what is more, this same concept has been the chief point of contention among those who have demanded readjustment of intellectual foundations. The preliminary situation that has developed indicates that a treatment of the God-concept, historical in spirit, gives large promise of throwing light upon its origin and meaning, and of furnishing us with a clue that will go far toward clearing up many of the difficulties of religious philosophy that are current and that have been recurrent ever since Greek philosophy threw its spell over the naturalistic faith of Jesus.

CHAPTER II

The Origin and the Disintegration of the Intellectual Setting of Classical Christianity

1. *The Growth of the Dogma*

Classical Christianity has been produced by the fusion of the religious experience of the Hebrews with the religious philosophy of the Greeks. The Hebrew tradition begins with Jehovah's call of Abram to leave his native land and with Abram's acceptance of Jehovah as the patron divinity of his house and tribe. The relationship between Jehovah and the tribe is strictly clannish, involves mutual obligations, and reflects the crude morality of nomadic life. At the time of Moses, the general relationship between Jehovah and the Hebrew people is little changed from that of the earlier period, but, if anything, Jehovah is more definitely recognized as the guide of his people, who have developed a more specialized conception of their tribal ties. The development within the tribe of a set of mores that is representative of a finer sense of reciprocal social obligations is reflected in the moral demands of the Jehovah of the Ten Commandments. The exigencies of a hard struggle to win a footing in the Land of Canaan, followed by a phenomenal national growth under Saul, David, and Solomon, developed to a high pitch the feeling of racial solidarity and of dependence upon, and love for, the God who had brought national success. But the period of national prosperity was followed by crushing vicissitudes that resulted both from internal dissension and from the aggressions of more powerful neighbors.

The kaleidoscopic changes that took place in the political fortunes of the Jews, since these changes were so closely bound up with the conception of Jehovah's guidance, led to searching consideration of such conduct as was consistent with the possession of his favor; and the final loss of political autonomy at the hands of the Babylonian Empire could lead to no other conclusion than that the sins of the people and their disregard of chastity, temperance, justice, charity, and humility were the causes of their destruction as a nation. God's chastisement of his people through the agency of foreign nations was only an indication of his universal influence; so the religious leaders of the Jews set up as their ideal of life just such a character as was believed to be desired by a universal God, and, accordingly, to be of

universal significance. The political ambitions of the Jews were modified by their great spiritual leaders, to the expectation of the establishment of God's kingdom in a world-wide order of peace and good-will.

The culmination of the Hebrew tradition occurs in Jesus's identification of himself with the expected messenger of this new order and in his preaching of the expected coming of the new kingdom. History has never told us and probably never will tell us just what relation Jesus conceived himself as bearing to the new kingdom, nor even just what that kingdom was to be and how and when it was to be established; for the generation of Jesus distinctly exhibits the influence of Greek thought on Hebrew religious tradition, and the rapid changes in the intellectual setting of the religious experience occurring at that time had their effect on the accounts of his life that we have from his disciples. This is true to the extent that it has been impossible to separate satisfactorily the beliefs and attitudes of those who handed down and formulated the Christian message from that message as it was delivered by the Master.

The main outlines of the Greek intellectual life with which the Hebrew religious tradition fused during the cosmopolitan period of the early Church may be summed up as follows: The inner essence of reality is eternal, rational, creative Unity. It is the uncaused cause of the phenomenal, changing world. It is the law and order of the universe and the principle of reasonable, virtuous conduct in men. These phases of Being were separately viewed, on the one hand, as God, the principle of inner unity, of unimpeachable perfection and of causation that was unaffected by its creative office; and, on the other hand, as the Logos, the begotten of God, the principle of natural law and of moral excellence in humankind.

The similarity in position, function, and meaning between the Jehovah of the later prophets and the God of Greek thought made easy the identification of the two forms. Paul, standing on Mars Hill in Athens, quotes the Hymn of the Stoic Cleanthes and claims that the Perfect Beings of the two racial traditions are one and the same. The peculiar position given Jesus by his disciples immediately after his death, namely, as the founder of the Kingdom of God and the only Son of the Father, made it easy to substitute his name and office for that of the Logos. And, finally, the kingdom of the redeemed, the Church, was composed of those whose lives had been touched by the purifying Spirit of God and transformed by its presence. Thus we have a point-for-point substitution within the Christian faith of the main elements in the Greek philosophy. God is pure being; Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the community are the Logos, viewed, firstly, as individual and, secondly, as common possession.

The practical results of this fusion were not slow to make themselves felt. When the Logos was identified with a person, a temporal succession was involved that extended back into history before that person and reached forward into all time to come. The Hebrew tradition, as pointing forward to Christ, is specialized as the embodiment of the Spirit before Christ came; and the Church, the Beloved Community, as Royce describes it, became the custodian of grace for future generations. This narrowing down of the field of operation of the Logos was not without its effect upon the definition of the virtuous life. Virtue became limited to the virtue acceptable within the Church, which had its ideals materially influenced by the accidents of persecution and outlawry and by the expectation of a speedy coming of an eschatological kingdom. The world and all the interests thereof, as untouched by the transforming influence of the spirit of the community, were depraved and lost. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." A profound distrust and condemnation of all things biological and natural was the sharply defined attitude of the Christian community. All values were believed to be found within the realm of Grace and were believed to have been created through the redemptive office of Christ. Furthermore, the doctrine of an immortal life was a handy vehicle for the transposition of all interests to the heavenly kingdom, for which life on earth was to be regarded only as a preparation.

The detailed accommodation of the Hebrew and the Greek elements, while represented in the doctrines of the Church, is the work of the Middle Ages and occurs in its most thoroughgoing form in the work of Thomas Aquinas, the official philosopher of the Catholic Church at the present day. While recognizing a difference between the realms of natural reason and of faith, he subordinates the former to the latter and thus finds a place for the dogmas of the church that are not demonstrable by means of the natural reason. The conception of God, however, is for Thomas a strictly demonstrable fact, for there must be a first cause of the world, a final link in the otherwise unending chain of natural causation. In Aristotelian terms, Thomas thought of God as pure, immaterial form, as pure actuality, wholly free from potentiality, the efficient and final cause of the world. Other important scholastic proofs of the existence of God are the ontological and the teleological. The former passes from the conception of an absolutely perfect Being to the actual existence of that Being on the grounds that perfection must include actual existence. The latter concludes, from the presence of law and order and apparent design in the world, that there must be a great architect who

formed the world in its perfection. A more comprehensive statement of these proofs will be given later on in connection with Kant's criticism of their validity.

2. *The Disintegration of the Intellectual Setting of Classical Christianity*

The foregoing description of the elements that came together to form classical Christianity is intended to present, in sufficiently detailed fashion for our purpose, the setting of the stupendous struggle in regard to both the intellectual elements of religion and the values concerned therein, that has been going on in Western Europe for the last two hundred years and the end of which is not yet. This conflict has often been described as being between Christianity and science, but it might better be spoken of as being between Greek metaphysics and modern empirical science. A second factor that enters into the situation is the development and the acceptance of a new set of values, which, however close they may be in the main to the values of classical Christianity, are quite independent of the traditional realm of grace and, in some particulars, directly opposed to the accepted values of the Church.

We must recognize the fact, however, that the reconstruction of the intellectual setting of religious values that is mentioned above has not taken place in the whole of society taken in cross-section, but only within a very limited part. Classical Christianity still survives in the Catholic Church without acknowledged change; and for the orthodox Protestant, which means practically every member of the sects of the present day, the intellectual setting of the religious life remains to all intents and purposes the same as it was in the flowering period of the Church. But there has taken place among certain elements of the intellectual class a change of attitude that is profound, and it is with the experiences of this portion of society that we shall be primarily concerned in the discussion to follow.

As was said above, the developing influence of modern empirical science has been responsible, more than any other agency, for the overthrow of the authoritative position of Greek metaphysics in our intellectual life and, consequently, for the discrediting of a creed representative of Greek thought. When men had only Hellenic philosophy to turn to, they found their way ordinarily to some sort of belief in the dogma; but when they gained independent intellectual interests that were in no sense related to the dogma, their allegiance to the doctrines of the Church was seriously disturbed.

The first notable influence of modern science on the Christian

faith came in connection with a criticism of the scientific conceptions of the Bible. The Copernican system of astronomy (1543), for example, ran counter to all the astronomical references of the sacred writings. With a new cosmological theory in vogue, proved by the highest sort of intellectual authority known to the times, a book that set forth an inconsistent and disproved theory necessarily lost prestige. Furthermore, the narratives of miraculous events, as given both in the Old and in the New Testaments, were distasteful to the newly-awakened scientific sense. When the claim of divine revelation stood opposed by these inconsistencies, the choice was between a retreat from the position gained by the progressive learning and the denial of the divine character of the Bible and its literal revelation. As it turned out, the explanation of the physical universe begun by the pioneers Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo and completed by Newton, was too convincing, too real, too authoritative, to allow the less strongly substantiated biblical conceptions to stand before it.

The disintegration of the classical intellectual setting of the Christian religion had thus begun in the attack upon the divinely inspired character of the Bible. So far the classical conception of God had not been disturbed except in so far as God had been considered as the inspirer of Holy Writ. The quarrel of science had so far been only with the book and the idea of revelation. In proof of this, Descartes's God is that of St. Anselm and he uses the same proofs of his existence. Locke uses the teleological proof to demonstrate the existence of the identical omniscient, eternal, omnipotent Being that his times accepted as a legacy from medieval thought. Leibnitz began his "Metaphysics" with the following: "The conception of God which is the most common and the most full of meaning is expressed well enough in the words,—God is an absolutely perfect Being." He did not criticize the concept on his own account, but accepted it *in toto* from tradition and common opinion. English Deism might reject the doctrine of the Trinity and deny the mediation of the Christ between an angry God and the sinner; but it retained its confidence in the power of reason, unaided by any miraculous means, to prove the existence of the single, all-wise, all-perfect Creator of the universe. Voltaire might rage against *"l'Infame,"* proclaiming unceasingly against priestcraft and fanaticism, but he never denied God's existence. The God of the Enlightenment may be defined in the terms used in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, as "a spirit infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth."

The beginning of the critical overthrow of the above conception of God occurred in Locke's statement about substance, namely, that

he had "no other idea of it at all except a supposition of he knows not what support of such qualities which are capable of producing simple ideas in us."[1] Again he defines it as "nothing but the supposed, but unknown support of those qualities we find existing, which we imagine can not subsist without something to support them." Locke did not work out the implications of his definition, but used his position to defend his belief in spirits, and hence in the Absolute Spirit, on the ground that it was no harder to conceive the existence of a spirit than of a body.

The forcing in of the wedge planted by Locke, which takes place in the work of Berkeley and Hume, is known to all. Berkeley developed the position that matter is not an entity and that its existence is limited to the sensations that are referred to it for support. To be is to be perceived. Spirits and their ideas comprise all of reality. But as Berkeley was pleading the special cause of spirit, and therein of the God of religion, he failed to see that the same criticism that he had so well applied to matter was no less cogent in its reference to spirit. This point was developed in the philosophy of Hume, who insists that if one is to be truly empirical in his procedure, as becomes your true scientist, he will accept nothing except what he gains through his experience. Under such drastic conditions, Berkeley's recognition of spirits as substantial entities is unwarranted, for one never so much as perceives his own self, or spirit. What one gains from looking into his experience consists of some isolated and particular sensation or feeling. He can perceive that one idea follows another, but he is altogether unable to discover or to prove the presence of connections and causal linkages between them. If the direct perception of spirit is as impossible as the direct perception of matter, then on the basis of experience as the warrant of belief, we have as little ground for belief in spirit substance as we have for belief in matter substance. But not only are we unable to gain a direct knowledge of substance; we are not able to gain an inferential knowledge of it, because the linkages of experience that might lead to the proof of such a unity are undiscoverable. Take for example the conception of cause and effect. We see the motion of a ball and its contact with another, and we say that the first ball's motion caused the motion of the second. But all we know is that the second ball moved after it was struck by the first. We do not know why it moved and the only warrant for our expecting the same phenomenon to be repeated is force of habit. We are acquainted with the fact of succession, but not with the fact of necessary connection.

Hume's criticism may be seen to have set a number of problems

[1] "Essay," II, Ch. 23, Sect. 2.

for philosophy. If spirit substance does not exist, then what of God and what of the finite ego, both of which had up to that time been defined as substances? If there are no discoverably valid linkages between the individual facts and perceptions that we discover in consciousness, then what can be the ground of a unified and law-abiding experience of a natural order and of our own personal selves? But his skeptical attitude toward the constitution of experience went so far as to contradict the actual conditions of an experience that might be shown as already possessed. For our experience does hold together as a unity. Every item of it has for each of us a personal reference and its relationship to other items within the same experience. The objective world holds together in cause and effect series. No object is perceived except in space, which is discoverable as a precondition of any objective experience whatever. No variety of experience is possible except on the condition of temporal succession, which is equally recognizable as an ineradicable inner quality of experience.

On such grounds as the above, Kant is led to consider experience as the product of reason acting upon the raw materials of sensation. Experience must exhibit spatial and temporal quality, cause and effect relations, unity and continuity, for these are of its inner constitution. However, if Kant is thus able to validate experience and thereby the possibility of mathematical and physical science, he is compelled to limit judgments that are to pass as matter of fact to the field of verifiability. The judgments of mathematics and physics are justifiable because they can be tested. If they are proved and not found wanting in a fruitful manipulation of experience and a control of further fact, they are to be accepted. Otherwise, not.

This result of the Kantian criticism substantiated Hume's scepticism regarding the possibility of discovering the substantial ego and of demonstrating God's existence as a spiritual substance. For, if Kant proved to his own satisfaction that there is a unity of experience, a central reference and practical connection and continuity that establishes empirical selfhood, he was no less urgent in his contention that to posit a substantial, immaterial, imperishable ego from the presence of experience in its empirically knowable form, was an induction entirely beyond the facts. "I think, therefore I am," had been expanded without warrant into "I think, therefore I am spiritual substance and substantial ego."

Not less unjustifiable than the attempt to verify by theoretical reason the existence of the pure ego, was the attempt to describe a completed cosmos. Kant showed that it was equally possible to prove that the world has had a beginning in time and has a limit in

space, and to show that such a temporal beginning and such a spatial limit are unthinkable; to prove that the world is composed of indivisible atoms and to prove that there can be no limit set to the divisibility of things in space; to prove that there must be a free first cause of the finite series of cause and effect, and to show that such examples of free causation can never exist in the natural order; and, finally, to prove that the world as a whole must depend on a necessarily existent Being, and to show that there is no support for belief in the existence of such a Being. Such contradictions arise from the attempt to consider a constantly developing experience as at some one time completed and static, and to apply to that experience, viewed as a connected whole, conceptions that occur only within the network of its living and expanding unity. For example, the principle of cause and effect is one of the established relations of experience. Unless its elements were bound together in cause and effect series, experience would not be what it is. But it is a confusion of terms to attempt to apply a conception that is valid within experience to the same experience viewed as a whole, for "the whole of experience" is really *extra*-experiential. The conceptions of a finished cause and effect series and of a necessarily existent Being are precisely such conceptions as we can find no empirical warrant for, because they lie outside the jurisdiction of experience. In general, we may say that Kant establishes, through his discussion of the Antinomies of Pure Reason, the necessary limitation of legitimate cosmological speculation to the field of empirical fact and to hypotheses that represent only an extension of such expectations as are verifiable within known experience.

A further negative result of the Kantian criticism is its discrediting of both the methods and the findings of dogmatic theology. As has been said before in this paper, the traditional proofs of the existence of God were three: the Cosmological, the Teleological, and the Ontological. Of these, the Cosmological is based upon the theses of the third and fourth antinomies discussed above. God exists because there must be free causation to explain the beginnings of causal series, and the existence of the contingent world of fact must be based upon an absolute and unchanging reality. The same argument that was used by Kant in opposition to these theses, namely, that experience gives us no possible link of a series of causation that can be possibly conceived of as independent of a like causal relation to that which it maintains with the rest of the series, is applicable in connection with the Cosmological proof of God's existence. It is simply impossible to reconcile the demands of experience with the conception of a Being that lies quite outside the conditions of that experience.

The Teleological proof argues from the presence of order and design in nature to the existence of a great architect who planned the perfection of things. But could such design be substantiated it would only point to the existence of a very powerful and very wise manipulator of given materials and would still necessitate proof of the existence of a creator as well as of a builder. And, at all events, neither the Teleological argument nor the Cosmological could prove that the First Cause was the Perfect Being that is the conception of theology and the object of religious worship.

The last prop of dogmatism is, accordingly, the Ontological argument, in which proof is brought that existence is necessarily an attribute of the most perfect Being. Existence, it is said, is the final badge of perfection, without which our conception of God would be a self-contradiction. Much has been said about the validity of the Ontological argument, and Kant has been accused of failing altogether to see its real significance. Most baldly stated, as in Falckenberg's "History of Philosophy,"[2] Kant attacks the argument on the grounds of "the impossibility of dragging out of an idea the existence of the object corresponding to it." Just as a dream of one hundred dollars does not increase my purchasing capacity, just so my idea of a Perfect Being, no matter what its attributes, does not give that Being existential reality independent of my idea. According to Kant, then, the Ontological argument is an absurd tautology.

There is, however, a certain sense in which Kant's critics may accuse him, not of misunderstanding the ontological argument as it existed at his time, but of failing to take into account the enlarged significance of the argument for post-Kantian Idealism, for which his own philosophy was the propaedeutic. To say that in every triangle the sum of the angles is equal to two right angles, is to posit the existence of the triangle *as a conception*. It does not imply the existence of any triangular plot of ground or any triangular outline upon the blackboard or triangular anything whatsoever. But, it is said in truth, the exemplification of the triangle is not, after all, its reality; when you have stated the conditions of its existence, you have *ipso facto* posited that existence. The same application may be made on a larger scale to the Reality of Absolute Idealism, and is made, in fact, by Hegel. But for Kant's day and in the spirit of Anselm, certainly there was had in mind to correspond to the existence of God, a kind of existence that was quite independent of experience.

By way of summary, we may say that Kant's critical philosophy undermined the intellectual foundations of classical Christianity. It

[2] Tr., p. 380.

disproved the existence of a scientific proof of a substantial ego that could be saved to immortal life; it showed the impossibility of a scientific proof of a creative act by means of which God would be seen as responsible for the initiation of the physical cosmos and the human race; and, finally, it exhibited the futility of ever trying to make consistent with the facts of science, the conception of a perfect spiritual Being outside the realm of human experience.

It would be interesting to follow Kant in his attempt to rebuild the religious structure, that he had so badly shattered, on the new foundations of active moral purpose and "practical" autonomy that he described as actually experienced. But to do so would be to follow Kant back into the spirit of the very philosophy that his critical efforts had discredited. The forward movement of modern philosophy leads beyond Kant into forms of speculation that are hardly less subversive of the principles of science than the dogmatism that he so vigorously and successfully attacked. We expect, however, in the course of our argument to return to the spirit of the Greater Critique and to the methods of scientific description.

CHAPTER III

Modern Values and the Religion of Idealism

In turning away from the discredited intellectual structure of Classical Christianity to a new formulation of beliefs about God, it is necessary to take into account the development of a fundamentally different set of values, according to which man and his natural interests and proclivities are appraised at a very different rating than under the conception of the realm of grace. It will be obviously impossible, in such a treatment as this, to do justice to the historical evolution of the new spirit as it has developed in Europe since the fourteenth century, so we shall be content with indicating some of the earlier results. By the eighteenth century, a voice was found to speak out the belief in the dignity and worth of humanity; and from that day to this it has never been stilled, but is gaining in force and power of speech. It has moved giant arms to do its bidding and is so moving them to-day.

The Enlightenment in almost all its aspects and through most of its representatives is a strong statement of man's independence and power as a thinking being. It also sounds the note of human worth, of the intrinsic value of the individual as an individual. To Rousseau, however, we are indebted for embodying in language this new sense of the instrumental character of institutions and their real mission of ministering to the larger life of the man, whose happiness, welfare, and self-expression become thereby the end and object of states and laws. Rosseau calls upon his nation to take up again the power which resides within the citizenship and make of the forms of social organization just what they should be and what they ideally are, ministrants to human welfare and the embodiments of mutual rights and obligations. The French Revolution is the great response to the growing conviction among the people of France of the fundamental truth of the propositions voiced by Rousseau and others. It is the great practical demonstration in Europe of the existence of a new sense of values and of the widespread and emphatic conviction of the worth of man and the importance of his earthly existence. The American Declaration of Independence and American democratic institution indicate the same trend of ideas. The appeal of Bentham in England for social forms and conditions that would insure "the greatest good of the greatest number" is a theoretical formulation

of the same spirit. The general impulse of the times was felt also by Kant, who lends content to his rationalistic ethics through his statement that every man should be considered as an end in himself and never as a mere means to some one else's end. For him, conduct universally rationalized turns upon individual rights and individual worth as its center. But it is when we come to the philosophy of Fichte that this conviction of the truth of social democracy as the larger setting of man's entire ethical life, gets its most elaborate and emphatic presentation and is taken up as the value element of a religion.

At this point we may briefly indicate the general characteristics of the new intellectual life that furnishes a setting for the conception of values outlined above. The philosophical movement may be described as post-Kantian Idealism, and it may be said to build upon the foundations of the "Critique of Pure Reason." But the things-in-themselves, last relics of a philosophy that Kant discredited, are banished into the limbo of speculative antiques, and the world of experience, the world of the Esthetic and the Analytic, is accepted as the realm within which philosophy may work or dream or upon which it may erect superstructures of invention. The conditions of mental life that Kant describes as the guarantee of safety and sanity, are magnified into world-large forms and made the indwelling and active soul of the world of phenomena. Instead of going beyond phenomena, and explaining them by means of independent noumenal substances, post-Kantian Idealism links together the facts of experience and makes of them a unity, just as Kant represented the experience of an individual as holding together by means of the transcendental unity of apperception. The universe was regarded as a developing, purposeful consciousness.

1. *Fichte*

The initial development of Idealism, as exhibited in Fichte's philosophy, was one-sided and incomplete. Fichte saw in the phenomena of experience only the necessary raw material for the development of a moral World-Self. This World-Self finds its expression in the individual lives of men, coming to self-consciousness only upon the recognition of a duty to be performed. Action, effort, conquest, are the price of selfhood. Reality is a process of moral evolution. The aim of the World-Self, realized through the individuals that represent its own particularization, is the production of values. The religious implications of this philosophy are that God lives in the lives of men. His reality is the net sum of their moral worth. He is in the world of action, not outside it. His existence is in the ideals

and moral strivings of men. The story of his life is in the development of humanity out of slavery to natural, sensuous impulses and into the life of reason as revealed in the stern call of social duty.

It is needless to say that spiritual pantheism of this sort is a new kind of philosophical religion. It is *new* because it represents God as being inside the world instead of outside it, and because it identifies God with the spiritual life of man instead of separating him in abstract, lonely grandeur, from any concerns of humankind. We recognize it as *philosophical* religion because it is the result of speculation and stands or falls with the intellectualistic postulates upon which it rests. Just as the validity of theism and deism depends upon the autonomy of the mind in dealing with ideas that lie beyond the possibility of experiential testing, just so the religion of post-Kantian Idealism depends upon the justification of the mind's reading into the sum-total of the phenomena of experience, a conception of unity and purpose that equally lies beyond the possibility of experiential testing. And, finally, *it is religion* because it represents a formulation of the current sense of values—human, social, democratic values—as set into the matrix of a consistent intellectual background.

The story of German Idealism shows that Fichte's system was not satisfactory on the grounds of intellectual consistency, as it did not take sufficient account of that order of experience which is obviously independent of human wishes and notoriously unresponsive to human efforts. In Hegel we get the first full flowering of the idealistic movement, and it is to him that we turn for a more complete exposition.

2. *Hegel*

The groundwork and the limit of Hegel's speculation is the realm of experience; by the adoption of which conditions, he shows himself the lineal descendant of Kant. But in the life that he reads into experience, he is far enough removed from the spirit of the Critical Philosophy. Whereas Kant sets up a realm of potential experience, Hegel posits an Absolute experience: the world for him is a living Spirit.

Kant describes the world of possible experience as created through the cooperation of human individuals, and the categories were for him the inner constitution of human, individual experience. Hegel uses the same world as Kant's world of possible experience, but it has its life and existence prior to the point where the experience of human individuals collaborates in the development of self-consciousness. Taking the universe over all, according to Hegel it exhibits the characteristics of a living, conscious, and self-conscious experience. It

possesses constituent relations, or categories, ready-formed within it; it finds content in the sense objects of a physical order, and it possesses self-consciousness of the inner unity of the apparently diverse aspects of form and content. This conception of the nature of the spirit-life of the universe takes account of a triangular framework within which there is exercised continual activity and initiative. The three sides of the triangle are Being, Nature, and Spirit. Being may be described as the original life of the world-self. It has a development of its own and a variety and wealth of self-expression. Hegel's Philosophy of Being presents the constituent character of the spirit-life of the Universe, which may be said to correspond to the Kantian categories; but, whereas for Kant the categories are discoverable upon analysis of experience, for Hegel they possess an independent and necessary life of their own. The life of Being begins in the simplest and most abstract category, Being, and develops successively into the categories of Becoming, Quantity, Quality, and so forth, up to the richest and most inclusive category, the Absolute Idea.

The second side of the triangle is Nature, which represents a continuation of the self-development of Absolute Spirit. Nature is the necessary complement of the categories, for without objectification in a concrete experience, the framework of that experience would be null and empty. Nature, as well as Being, possesses a rich and self-connected life that is in process of development.

The third side of the triangle is Spirit, as exhibited in the consciousness of human beings. It is at once a culmination of the life of the Absolute Self and a return upon itself of the entire process of self-development of the Idea. For in the self-consciousness of humanity the process becomes known for what it is, and thereby alone is made what it really is, namely, the absolute and indivisible unity of a spiritual life.

With the appearance of consciousness in the human individual, the World-Spirit has produced a being which approximates its own nature. Man is self-conscious and free. At first concerned only with the recognition and assertion of its own individuality, the life of the Spirit is Subjective; but with the recognition of the rights of others and the appearance of the social bond, Spirit has entered into a higher plane, that of Objectivity. Rights of others come to be regarded as the personal concern of the individual, and these rights are secured by means of law. Still higher stages of the development of the Idea in Objective Spirit are found in the self-motivation to good on the part of the individual, irrespective of law, and in the reduction of social-minded action to group habit, or custom. Objective

Spirit has run its full course when men live together in peace and harmony under institutions that guarantee the free development of the individual and are only the codification and objective statement of what the needs of the individual demand.

The third and final phase of Idea within the stage of Spirit represents the complete return of the Absolute upon itself in the experience of individual men. There are three phases of Absolute Spirit, namely, art, religion, and philosophy. In art, Spirit is striving for self-expression in material forms,—in rock and mortar, clay, marble, colors, sounds, letters. Art is always conscious of its failure to embody its conception: the outer reality is obstinate and ultimately victorious. In religion, the strivings of the human spirit win their own, for the religious experience passes immediately over the material obstacles lying between it and its self-expression and posits spirit as superior to things. And, finally, Spirit Absolute, through the insight of philosophy, combines the reach of art with the grasp of religion and sees things and ideals as mutually complementary. Both are necessary aspects of an Absolute Idea that expresses itself in the dual rôle of conception and fact.

In our attempt to describe the general form of Hegel's philosophy, it has been impossible to ignore the principle of movement that is exhibited throughout. If reality is a triangle whose sides are Being, Nature, and Spirit, it is a self-tracing and living triangle. Reality is a development, and its three aspects are moments within a process. In this day when evolution is a commonplace conception, it is necessary to understand clearly the kind of evolution of the Absolute Life that Hegel had in mind. In defiance of the danger of repetition, we may say that Hegel conceives of Being as the first stage in the development of the Absolute Life, the world of Nature as the second, and the life of Spirit as the third and last. Yet he does not think of Being as causing Nature, nor of Nature as causing Spirit. While Being is prior in existence to Nature, and Nature to Spirit, these relations of priority and succession are only the exigencies of the inner life of the Absolute. As long as Hegel is working with Pure Being, there is a natural relationship of necessity in the way in which one conception passes over into its opposite and combines with it on a higher plane of self-expression. But when he passes out of the realm of Pure Being into the world of physical nature and human beings, the causal leadings between successive manifestations of the Absolute are lacking. The development, while recognized as progress, is from within. It takes place in the private subjective life of the Absolute; and the successive forms are only the laying bare to human eyes of its inner urge and necessity of seeking self-expression.

Hegel's philosophy is meant to serve as a religion. To be sure, he makes a distinction between philosophy and religion, saying that religion is reason thinking naively. But he continually leaves the religious expression behind and speaks in terms of his philosophy. And, after all, it is his philosophy that is his religion, for it is only after one has comprehended the figurative language of religion in its philosophical meaning that it can be acceptable to him. He says: "God exists only for the man who thinks, who keeps within the quiet of his own mind. The ancients called this enthusiasm; it is pure theoretic contemplation, the supreme repose of thought, but at the same time its highest activity manifested in grasping the pure Idea of God and becoming conscious of this Idea."[1] This preference for the rigorously philosophical point of view is further illustrated in the discussion to follow.

Hegel believed that religion was essentially a knowing relation, and that, as such, an object of knowledge was required. He says: "If something objective is to be really recognized, it is requisite that I should be determined as universal, and should maintain myself as universal only. Now this is none other than the point of view of thinking reason, and of the man who thinks rationally,—who as individual posits himself as Universal, and annulling himself as individual, finds his true self to be the Universal. Philosophy is in like manner thinking reason, only that this action in which religion consists appears in philosophy in the form of thought, while religion as, so to speak, reason thinking naively, stops short in the sphere of general ideas, or ordinary thought."[2] "The standpoint of religion is this, that the true, to which consciousness relates itself, has all content in itself, and consequently this condition of relation is what is highest of all in it, is its Absolute standpoint."[3] "The true home of religion is absolute consciousness, and this implies that God is himself all content, all truth and reality."[4]

Most comprehensively taken, religion for Hegel is no more nor less than the finite individual's recognition of his own participation in the life of the Absolute. *The finite individual is nothing in himself,* for his reality is indissolubly joined with that of the Absolute; *but he is something in himself* because he represents the particularization of the Absolute and is essential to its self-realization. Hegel says, "Religion is therefore a relation of the spirit to absolute Spirit: thus only is spirit as that which knows also that which is known.

[1] "Philosophy of Religion," tr. Speirs and Sanderson, III., p. 11.
[2] *Id.,* 193–94.
[3] *Id.,* 204.
[4] *Id.,* 205.

This is not merely an attitude of the spirit towards absolute Spirit, but absolute Spirit itself is that which is the self-relating element, which brings itself into relation with that which we posited on the other side as the element of difference. Thus when we rise higher, religion is the Idea of the Spirit which relates itself to its own self—it is the self-consciousness of absolute Spirit.''[5] Or again, ''Religion is the Divine Spirit's knowledge of itself through the mediation of finite spirit. Accordingly, in its highest form, religion is not a transaction of man, but it is essentially the highest determination of the absolute Idea itself.''[6] The emphasis is thus seen to be put upon the fact that God is not a Being, independent of human experience, as is the God of dogmatic theology. On the contrary, God is always produced through the medium of individual minds and only so. He is spirit, at once human and divine.

In the act of worship, the finite spirit is lifted up, says Hegel, to a conscious recognition of his oneness with the absolute Spirit, while retaining his sense of individuality. ''The finite in relation to the Infinite is posited as the negative, the dependent, that which melts away in relation to the Infinite. When the two are brought together, a unity comes into existence through the abolition and absorption of the finite in fact, which can not maintain itself against the Infinite. . . . On the one hand, I determine myself as the finite; on the other, I am not annihilated in the relation,—I relate myself to myself. I am, I subsist; I am also the Affirmative. On the one side I know myself as having no real existence; on the other, as affirmative, as having a valid existence, so that the infinite leaves me my own life.''[7] ''If I now go further and begin to consider the matter from a spiritually higher standpoint of consciousness, I find myself no longer observing, but I forget myself in entering into the object; I bury myself in it, while I strive to know, to understand God; I yield myself up to it, and if I do this I am no longer in the attitude of empirical consciousness, of observation. If God is no longer to me a something above and beyond me, I am no longer a pure observer.''[8] ''All particularity belongs to it (the Universal Object); as universal it overlaps or includes me in itself, and thus I look upon myself as finite, as being a moment in this life, as that which has its particular being, its permanent existence, in this substance only, and in its essential moments.''[9] To recapitulate, as I worship, I recognize both my separate individuality and my unity with God, while my sense of weakness, finitude, and unworthiness is swallowed up in the realization of my oneness with the infinite selfhood known as God.

[5] *Id.*, I., 205.
[6] *Id.*, 206.
[7] *Id.*, 174.
[8] *Id.*, I., 176.
[9] *Id.*, I., 197.

It is easily seen from the foregoing that Hegel's philosophy of religion is only a reduplication of the main outlines of his entire philosophy. Indeed, his interpretation of the dogma of the Trinity, which he recognizes as fundamental in Christianity, the Absolute Religion, is only a restatement of the divisions of the great triad, Being, Nature, and Spirit. We may, accordingly, sum up Hegel's understanding of religion in saying that the individual, who is at once the embodiment and the self-expression of the Absolute, is in a religious frame of mind and takes on an attitude of worship, when he recognizes himself in his absolute and universal capacity. The values that Hegel takes account of are those of the modern Western world. He puts a positive valuation upon life and effort and self-expression. His ethical ideals are social, for he says that only as man coerces his impulsive, self-aggrandizing tendencies in the interest of the social whole, is he truly good. Institutions and laws are the embodiment of the principles of most advantageous self-expression in community and national existence; and the philosophy of history is just the record of successive development of the Absolute into more and more adequate forms, culminating in such institutions as represent wholly and perfectly the balance between the rights and the obligations of the citizens of the state.

If the philosophy of Hegel is a satisfactory intellectual setting for the accepted values of his experience, and represents those values as a consistent part of the reality which his philosophy describes, we must say that it is, in the truest sense of the word a religion.

Does Hegel's Philosophy Exhibit Intellectual Consistency?

We have endeavored to maintain throughout this paper that there must be self-consistency in the intellectual description of reality if it is to be competent to bear the treasure of human values. In our study of Hegel, we have witnessed his deliberate attempt to set forth an interpretation of reality that is intellectually consistent in all its parts and that, at the same time, embodies the values of our Western life. It is our present purpose to consider his system from the standpoint of its success in giving us an account of reality that is sufficiently satisfying intellectually to enable it to support the element of value.

At the expense of some repetition, we may say that Hegel's philosophy takes account of three positions. The first of these is equivalent to the Kantian ego-machinery, the categories. The second is concrete, objective experience, living nature. The third is the self-conscious awareness of the reciprocity that exists between the first

two positions, or the self-realization of the Idea in human consciousnesses.

The network of relations, or categories, that Hegel develops, constitutes the nature and substance of Being, and in all the particularity of its inner life represents the first stage of the life of the World-Self. Furthermore it is said to exist logically prior to the diversity and the particularity that constitute its Other-of Self, the world of nature and living things. But if one accepts a fact basis and utilizes the most authoritative knowledge available in the present generation, he must recognize consciousness as a development, as something that came into existence as consciousness from non-existence as consciousness. Granted the presence of experience, it may be analyzed and its subjective and objective phases may be exhibited as the opposite and complementary aspects of reality. For example, I recognize cause and effect as one of the never-absent conditions of the experience I possess. We may call it, to be consistent with historical usage, a category of our experience. We further recognize cause and effect as an aspect of objective reality, or experience as viewed from an opposite and external standpoint. Now, if Hegel's classification of the categories as given in the "Logic," means anything, it means that he is pointing out the universal, underlying characteristics of experience. As such, his work is analagous to that of the grammarian who exhibits the forms or principles underlying speech, or that of the logician who exhibits the possible combinations used in practical and concrete thinking. Ostensibly, Hegel found his categories of Being before a true self appeared and quite independent of experience as had in and by a human self. Actually, he was analyzing out the general relations that are discoverable in concrete experience. Granted that his analysis is correct, it means no more than that he has reduced to definite and nameable form an abstruse phase of experience. The categories are implicit in experience, and it is a task of investigation to make them explicit. As such, the procedure is scientific and subject to revision after more satisfactory analysis.

However, Hegel claims much more for his work in connection with the categories than the facts seem to warrant. He thinks of his results as going beyond experience; the categories are the constitution and make-up of Being prior to the existence of the only kind of experience that we are able to find. The stage of Being, with all its show of life, depends for its existence upon a condition to which, for him, it is logically prior. Hegel's Being is the shadow of experience; but in his system, the shadow exists before the thing it shadows. If one proceeds with a due regard for experience and at-

tempts to find its *prius*, he encounters a nexus of biological forces and a sum of chemical equations, which in turn possess meaning only in terms of the same experience that was to be explained. Accordingly, it does not seem too much to say that Hegel has no basis of fact for his forcible disjunction of the categories of Being from that actual experience in which they are discoverable. And, furthermore, if he is not justified in his diremption of what he calls Being from its natural and necessary objective counterpart, then his treatment of the latter, under the heading of the Philosophy of Nature, suffers equally from the fault of "abstractness," in the sense of his own pet aversion. And, finally, the third phase of his system, the Philosophy of Spirit, with its work of connecting the first two, is left without any moments to fuse and conjoin, and consequently becomes functionless.

Not less slow to exhibit its limitations than the place of the categories in Hegel's system, is his speculative, unempirical formula of evolution when strictly applied to the facts of history. It is, of course, not to be considered a condemnation of Hegel to say and to prove that his conception of the evolution of Idea is hypothetical. Science lives by hypotheses, and philosophy may find a use for them as well. But the temper of the intellectual life changes from time to time, and what was once a satisfactory sort of hypothesis is no longer regarded as such. Kepler might think, in his early years, of angels as responsible for the orderly movements of the planets, but such an hypothesis is laughed at to-day. The same change of attitude has affected Hegel's hypothesis. It was the product of a romantic age, and had its fellow in Goethe's *Zeitgeist*. Even to-day it has its value when we recognize its poetic origin and quality; for it is undeniably a stirring conception to think of the changes of nature and human institutions as the life of a World-Spirit. But we recognize the figure as a figure; and when we use it we know that we are dealing in terms of poetry and not in terms of fact. As poetry, even though rather crabbed and pedantic poetry, we must recognize the worth of Hegel's world-conception; for its scope and sweep are universal; it is epic in its subject-matter and in its proportions. But as scientific hypothesis, demanding respect and belief, it simply no longer makes an appeal.

Hegel's conception of evolution is in reality not an evolution in the sense in which we have come to use the term. It is rather a series of aspects of a changing subject-matter. The unity is conceived from without and externally imposed. The development is not development within the subject-matter, but of the schema.

It is essential to the development of a drama that the characters

exhibit development either in their circumstances or in their attitudes. The same individuals must be continued through succeeding acts. It would hardly be called a play if each scene or act should introduce new characters, allowing the old characters to continue side by side with them, altogether indifferent to the actions and the attitudes of the new company of players. A drama must be more than a mere succession of unrelated panoramas. And yet, Hegel's drama of the Idea is simply that,—a succession of panoramas. The stages of Nature, namely, Mechanics, Chemism and Organics, do not develop into one another, but exist side by side. Subjective, Objective, and Absolute Spirit do not successively disappear into one another: there is no reciprocity, no give and take among them, but only the exhibition of succeeding phases along with the continuance of the older. For example, the religion of sorcery (China) does not develop into the religion of phantasy (Brahminism), nor does Brahminism change gradually into the religion of inner contemplation (Buddhism). The religions of Nature in general do not develop into the religions of Freedom. The former were and even now are, after these thousands of years. Nothing about them is taken up and modified into that which succeeds them. They exist and are evaluated by Hegel, and other religions in turn come into being and are evaluated; and when the course of history has been traversed, the catalogue of religions is susceptible of arrangement and classification according to Hegel's preconceived principle. Of evolution, meaning transformation and development of a given conception, or organization, or institution, there is none.

What is more, Hegel's schema does violence to the facts, omitting details that do not fit in and supplying others to fill out the arbitrary diagram. A good example of Hegel's partiality in choosing facts is his failure to take any account of the Mohammedan religion. His classification of religions falls into three heads: the Oriental objective religions, in which God in Nature stands over against the human individual; the Religions of Freedom, in which man reads his subjective nature into the Godhood; and the Absolute Religion of Christian revelation, where God as object expresses himself in human spirit, thereby combining and synthesizing objectivity and subjectivity in an indivisible unity of self-experience. In the course of development as historically exhibited, Mohammedanism should be the cope-stone of the structure, but this stone which should be the head of the corner is never noticed by Hegel.

A further example of what the writer regards as partiality in arranging his facts on the part of Hegel, occurs in his classification of the religions. It seems evident that the Hebrew religion of the

prophetic period is the nearest approach to the religion of Jesus, called by Hegel the Absolute Religion, of any that we have record of. Indeed, Jesus builds upon the Hebrew religion, using it as his foundation. He averred that it was his intention and purpose to bring new life into the "law" of his day by infusing into it the true spirit of prophetic religion. Hegel, however, tracing a line of historical development, interposed both the Greek and the Roman religions between the Hebrew and the Christian. Rather would it seem that the frank naturalism of the Greek mythology, with its immature ethics, and the formalism of the Roman pantheon, are in no sense logical forerunners of the exalted spirituality of Christ's teachings about the nature of God.

Hegel may be said to have tried to use an evolutionary hypothesis in the interests of a perfectionist plan of reality. He has put a descriptive instrument of modern science to work as a teleological agency. It is no wonder, then, that the philosophy of Hegel encounters difficulty and exhibits ambiguity and inconsistency when it undertakes to force contingently developing circumstances into the rigid moulds of a preconceived logical schema. For evolution, as a descriptive formula, is quite independent of final causes; and changes occur both for the worse and for the better, as we express our judgment from a given and prejudiced standpoint. Furthermore, quite apart from the question of moral purpose, Hegel considers the evolution taking place in the physical, organic, and social world, as the outward expression of the changes of the internal, subjective volition of the Absolute, which, in the hidden depths of its life, evolves according to its perfect character. But evolution, as science can understand it, always takes place on the fact plane, the plane of phenomena. There is true evolution in the preparation, by means of mechanical and physical forces, for organic life, and the passing over of mechanical and chemical forms into organic existence. But it is the phenomenal materials that register and undergo the changes. There is development from Brahminism into Buddhism, but it is the exigencies of experience that bring about the new adjustment. There is evolution of the Hebrew religion, but it takes place on the plane of experience as seen in economic, or political, or ethical, or intellectual changes, or in all four together. But such evolution is not of an inner core of reality; rather is it of human experience facing incompleteness and dissatisfaction and going on to something new and different that fills up the lack.

In conclusion of our discussion of the philosophical religion of Hegel, we may say that the intellectual setting for the system of values that we believe in with him, is unsatisfactory. He has tran-

seended the fact-world to find an interpreter of reality, and, as a result, his interpreter does not speak the sober language of fact. Where Hegel raises the eharacteristies of phenomenal human experience to Absolute heights, those eharacteristics fall to their proper level because they have no support of fact; and where he attempts to confine the infinitely rich and waywardly contingent life of phenomenal experienee to his preeonceived, Absolute forms, it overflows his sehema.

3. *Royce*

In the philosophy of Hegel, we have seen the logical completion of a movement of thought that considered reality in its physical, psychical, and social aspeets as the expression and the embodiment of a single life striving for fullness of truth, goodness, and beauty. Hegel's method was to try to embody within his system the concrete life of nature and man and nations; and we have been at some pains to show why we believe that the concrete reality he was deseribing does not fit into his logical forms except with a very large remainder. It was at onee the strength and the weakness of his philosophy that it attempted to be specifieally conerete. Its strength, beeause in making of the drama of cosmic and human history the developing selfhood of the Absolute Life, it invested with eternal and absolute significanee the daily actions of finite beings and showed the meaning of each finite aspect of reality to be conneeted with its true existenee in the living whole. Its weakness, because, on the one hand, the faets of our experience of men and nature are too diverse and contradictory to fall into the pattern of a single developing self-conseiousness, and, because, on the other hand, in order to keep in touch with facts, the sehema intended to include them is made purely hypothetical and fails to exhibit any analogy with selfhood as we ean understand that concept.

The development of Hegelianism at the hands of Hegel's followers has been in the direetion of inner self-eonsisteney with the analogy of selfhood. Finding it impossible to aeeount for the variety of human experience in all its eoncrete beauty and ugliness, goodness and evil, truth and error, and to arrange the faets of experience in accordanee with a logical sehema such as Hegel's, they have emphasized the rational necessity of a certain Absolute eonstitution of experience and have let eonerete details shift for themselves. We may say with referenee to this philosophieal tendency that we believe that the distortion of fact necessary to meet an idealistic programme is so pronounced as to vitiate the logical advantages it possesses, through its reduction of all experience to a dead and mean-

ingless formalism. As an example of this later form of Absolute Idealism, we have chosen the philosophy of Josiah Royce.

Royce describes reality in terms of experience, and his dialectic in opposition to realism and mysticism is certainly in the interests of true philosophy. For objects that can be known at all are in experience and can never be considered understandingly as outside of experience. This, of course, implies that there is an inner and indivisible bond between the object known and the experience for which it is an object at all. Likewise, the direct intuition of the mystic is a complete negation, for it pretends to be independent of the experience series. If Realism represents an aggressive denial of the original and necessary setting of objects within experience, mysticism represents an elusive escape from such an enmeshment. The true object of knowledge, for the mystic, lies beneath the troubled waters of experience. The whorls and the bubbles that mark the spot of its disappearance are the only evidence of its existence; but who, then, shall say that the object is at all? For the whorls are naught and the bubbles are naught: indeed, the whole wide sea is nothingness. Certainly, philosophy can not deal with a reality that is always just beyond the vanishing point and denies the evidence of its own disappearance.

But if reality is not to be defined either in terms of realism or in terms of mysticism on the grounds that both these forms of speculation deny the fundamental conditions of our experience of objects, we must find a means of representing reality that will have due regard for the matrix of experience out of which and into which the object is born. The most obvious method to follow at this point is just to postulate the object as a form of experience and nothing more. The sun is just as warming, just as large, occupies just the same position with regard to the earth and the other planets and heavenly bodies, wheels through space just as unerringly, and meets our astronomical expectations just as satisfactorily, if we think of its reality as summed up in these empirical manifestations, as it would if it had a different sort of reality that could not be made consistent with the conditions of knowledge. And so with all the realm that we describe in terms of physical science and the world of sociology and history. That the facts we know are more than our facts; that experience implies more than experience; that reality as it is known and reality as it exists are possibly two different things,—philosophy is simply content to leave on one side as irrelevant questions. For what does it profit the philosopher to go beyond the materials that are amply sufficient to give him an orderly, regular world, in which scientific laws reign, in which experiences are put together

precisely and inevitably, in which hypotheses may be verified and questions asked and answered, and in which the whole realm of human values is discoverable?

When reality is defined as above in terms of validity, we have to all intents and purposes the world of Kant's critical philosophy, leaving out of account the realistic elements provided in the things-in-themselves. But Royce recognizes the incompleteness of such a philosophy as defines reality as merely validity of experience. He endeavors to supply a lack by so filling out experience as to give it independence, autonomy, and substantial reality. He takes Kant's world of experience and binds it together into a purposeful consciousness. Kant's substratum to experience is ignored, because Royce finds no need of taking it into account. Reality is reality in terms of knowledge. The world is a self-conscious Being, a Person, an Individual. It is the external representation of an internal meaning, just as the song you sing or the tune you pick out upon the piano is the outward expression of the melody that haunts your inner consciousness. The world of suns and Milky Ways, of inorganic and organic evolution, of states and religions and art, of private struggle, hidden grief, and personal triumph, is the song of the Infinite Being. Or, to change the metaphor, the World is the game which the Absolute is playing out as his objectified purpose. As a corollary of this main theorem, space, in its absolute sense, contains no here and beyond, for all space is present in the conscious glance of the All-knower. Time rolls up like a scroll, and the Absolute knows all things, past, present, future, in one indivisible and undivided time-span. Cause and effect are simply the before and after in a series and the relations are absolutely reversible. The effect that follows—as an element in an absolutely fixed and certain reality—is to be viewed teleologically as the cause, for both cause and effect are subordinate to the reality in which they are elements. Each individual thing is so called because it is a unique and essential expression of the life of the Absolute; and because it is just so a unique and necessary aspect of the self-expression of the Absolute, each finite act, viewed in the light of all Reality, is a free and purposeful representation of that Absolute purpose. Viewed from the standpoint of the finite individuals, they, in all their uniqueness and freedom, are the active agencies of the World Individual. The stars that clash headlong in sidereal space are thus freely and uniquely expressing their own and the World Individual's purpose that new heavenly bodies be formed; the atoms at work in the hidden recesses of the mountain, here or in other solar systems, are thereby living their own purposeful lives and thereby performing the will of God; the

races of men that have struggled up to social democracy or have slipped down to savagery, the individual man that slays his fellow or devotes himself to a righteous cause,—are all doing the will of the Absolute, finding their own reality and asserting their own precious freedom. The evil that men experience, singly and collectively, not to mention the hypothetical heart-burns of atoms and animals, is self-elected and self-borne by the Absolute. Evil exists, truly enough, but only as an element in the larger reality that means well and has in advance secured a positive result. The World is one and infinite, but present here; eternal, but present now; indivisible, but self-broken into an infinitude of elements that are not meaningless fragments, but comprehensible and fitting parts. The World is conscious; it is active; it is purposeful. What is, is known as necessary and as good in a vast experience of "the whole, all at once." "By the absolute reality we can only mean either that which is present to an absolutely organized experience inclusive of all possible experience, or that which would be presented as the content of such an experience if there were one."[10] "The terms Reality and Organized Experience are correlative terms. The one can be defined as the object, the content of the other."[11]

The dialectic by means of which Royce clinches his argument for the existence of the Absolute experience is given concisely in his "Conception of God." Therein[12] he reduces the possible alternative considerations to two. "The first alternative to saying that there is no such real unity of experience is the assertion that such a unity is a bare and ideal possibility. But there can be no such thing as a merely possible truth, definable apart from actual experience." The second consideration "appears when we ask our finite experience whereabouts is in any wise even suggested the actually experienced fact of which that hypothetical proposition relating to the ideal or absolute experience, is the expression. What in finite experience suggests the truth that if there were an absolute experience it would find a certain unity of facts?" And the answer to this question is as follows: "Any finite experience must regard itself as suggesting some sort of truth. To do so, an experience must indicate what a higher or inclusive—*i. e.,* a more organized experience would find presented thus or thus to itself. . . . Granted that there is no absolute experience as a concrete fact, but only the will to have it; then this absolute erroneousness of the real experience will be the absolute truth. . . . The very effort to assert that the

[10] "Conception of God," p. 24.
[11] *Id.,* p. 27.
[12] Pp. 27–30.

whole world of experience is a world of fragmentary and finite experience is an effort involving a contradiction. Experience must constitute, in its entirety, one self-determined and consequently absolute and organized whole. For truth is, so far as it is known. Now this proposition applies as well to the totality of the world of finite experience as it does to the parts of that world. There must then be an experience to which is present the constitution (*i. e.,* the actual limitation and narrowness) of all finite experience, just as surely as there is such a constitution. But this fact that the world of finite experience has no experience beyond it could not be present, as a fact, to any but an absolute experience, which knew all that is or that genuinely can be known."

As is to be expected, Royce identifies God with his Absolute. In the work quoted above[13] he says that in advance of any proofs of God's existence he will mean by the word God a being who is conceived as possessing to the full all logically possible knowledge, insight, and wisdom. His final description of God is as follows:[14] "God is thought that sees its own fulfilment in the world of self-possessed life—in other words, a thought whose ideas are not mere shadows, but have an aspect in which they are felt as well as meant, appreciated as well as described,—yes, I should unhesitatingly say, loved as well as conceived, willed as well as viewed. Such a thought you can also call in its wholeness a Self; for it beholds the fulfilment of its own thinking, and views the determined character of its living experience as identical with what its universal conceptions mean. . . . God is known as thought fulfilled, as Experience absolutely organized, so as to have one ideal unity of meaning; as Truth transparent to itself; as Life in absolute accordance with idea; as Selfhood eternally obtained."

Obviously, the implication of Royce's philosophy as finally formulated in "The World and the Individual" is that religion consists in the conscious acceptance on the part of the finite individual of his part in the life of the Absolute. His little life is to be viewed as secure and meaningful in its universal setting. He is a part of a purposeful plan, and thereby does his finite effort receive value and are his finite failures and weaknesses swallowed up in the guaranteed success of the infinite reality of which he is a significant element. The evil that life brings him he will suffer bravely, for does not God agonize with him? His sword may snap in the conflict; he may even die in the heat of it; but even so he has a share in the glory of the victory, for he is a known and valued compatriot of the great Leader, and he is sure that the battle is the Lord's.

[13] P. 9. [14] P. 22.

The Conception of Individuality

As has been said above, Royce conceives of reality as a self-conscious, purposeful Individual. All reality is comprised within its grasp and there is no other individual in the world beyond itself. Our first objection to such a conception is this: If there be only one individual in the universe, then it can have no individuality, for individuality depends for its existence upon alternatives, upon choice, upon clash of wills and purposes; in short, to use Royce's own phrase, as it occurs in "The Problem of Christianity," individuality depends upon "the possibility of interpretation." Royce says:[15] "Metaphysically considered, the world of interpretation is the world in which, if indeed we are able to interpret at all, we learn to acknowledge the being and the inner life of our fellowmen; and to understand the constitution of temporal existence, with its endlessly accumulating sequence of significant deeds. In this world of interpretation, of whose most general structure we have now obtained a glimpse, selves and communities may exist, past and future can be defined, and the realms of the spirit may find a place which neither barren conception nor the chaotic flow of interpenetrating perceptions could ever render significant." If I understand Royce's meaning of the world of interpretation, it seems to be a most valuable contribution to a true philosophy of experience; for it insists upon the existence of the linkages that make a world of experience possible. Experience is a social product that depends upon meanings, upon interpretations, for its being. It is not constituted by a set of eternal concepts, nor by myriad direct perceptions or intuitions. Rather it is a complex composed of direct and immediate data, which are at once known and described and modified and used in the light of such past experience as we possess. Conceptualism abstracts the linkages of experience and elevates them to a lonely grandeur of especial distinction. Intuitionalism denies the linkages and sets up a world of fragments. The true philosophy of experience must recognize both these elements as functionally fused into an instrumental product that means acquaintanceship and understanding and the possibility of manipulation.

Returning to Royce's conception of the Absolute Experience, we may well ask how, if the world of experience is a world of interpretation, any single individual can have meaningful experience. Royce frequently implies his own answer to the question. The world may be an individual because it possesses its own infinite variety for its content. But we may further ask what is the need of interpretation

[15] II., p. 160.

and where is its possibility if the life of the Absolute is present before it as a *totum simul,* involving an immediate knowledge of all time, all space, all purpose, and all fulfilment. Interpretation is a triadic relation, as Royce defines it, involving the knowing individual, the object to be interpreted and the body of social experience in the light of which the object has meaning and through which the interpretation may be justified. How then can an experience which is essentially an immediate knowledge have room for any interpretation whatsoever? It might be said that the interpretation lies in the conscious life of finite individuals, and that, as the Absolute is ultimately within its parts, interpretation is truly the process by means of which its own life is built up. But on such a basis, the Absolute recedes to the vanishing point and ceases to possess an independent life of its own. Needless to say it would be impossible to arrive at an Absolute experience through a process of summation.

Granted, however, that the Absolute exists, then what of the finite individual? Royce believes that the finite being has his own rights, his own purposes and his own freedom in conception and in performance. The true status of absolute and finite individuality is expressed in the following alternatives: Either the Absolute exists and the finite selves are only his objects of self-realization; or the finite selves exist in a unique and purposeful way and the Absolute is only a name. In other words, either the finite variety of the world is only the objectification of a unified inner purpose that requires just that variety of objects and no other for the Absolute's self-realization, in which event the finite elements or selves are controlled by a power beyond them; or the finite selves engaged in living their own lives and fulfilling their own ends, represent an incalculable element in reality that breaks through and evades any attempt to coerce and control it in the interest of a preconceived end. In the former event, the term individuality is inapplicable to the finite selves, for they are thus made puppets of a larger will; in the latter event, the term individuality is inapplicable to the Absolute, for the sum of purposes represents no single purpose and seeks no single goal. Royce's philosophy can meet neither alternative and stand.

Royce identifies freedom with uniqueness of self-expression. Certainly such a definition of freedom is empirically satisfactory; for what greater freedom a man could ask than the freedom to act unconstrainedly in the pursuit of an end that is representative of his whole selfhood, is hard to conceive. If we accept Royce's Absolute, then every act that takes place in the world may be regarded as unique and necessary for the complete expression of the Absolute purpose—an act that completely fulfils the purpose and for which no

other could be substituted. But even that is only to say that the Absolute is free and not that the finite individual is so, for the given quantity in the case is made to serve at the same time in an active and a passive rôle. It is passive as the embodiment of an Absolute will; it is active as the expression of a unique meaning for itself. The dual rôle of finite individuality, each phase of which is incompatible with the other, presents an insuperable difficulty.

Individuality and Time

We have so far criticized Royce's conception of the Absolute Individual on the grounds of his own description of the World of Interpretation, in which it was said to be essential to the existence of experience that it represent functional linkages within a triadic community of interest. From another point of view, his conception of Absolute Individuality seems to be vitiated by his treatment of the element of time, for we believe that, to treat the conception of time as Royce does, is to eliminate from your philosophy all consideration of values. As we know, Royce reduces all time to the present experience of the Absolute, whose time-span is coequal with the entire series of total reality. In the life of the Absolute, there is no past, no future, but one eternal now. The primeval nebula and the last clash of frozen suns are even now present in his knowledge, while the little play of human races upon the planet Earth is at once begun and ended.

Royce makes a vigorous effort in his philosophy to take account of the presence of evil in the world. His treatment consists of showing that all evils that finite individuals suffer are *ipso facto* suffered by the Absolute as well, and that in his divine insight these evils, while recognized as such, are viewed and known as necessary for the fullness and the perfection of divine life. But, manoeuver as he may, Royce can not bring upon the field of his Absolute Experience anything that can be called an evil. For even as an event is called evil, it is at the same time known as good in the larger vision. There is no evil, for there is no real disturbance or destruction of values. Whatever is, is right and desired. This Triangle Fire, this Titanic Disaster, this system of industrial economy that results in poor pay and long hours and frightful accidents to the workmen, yes, this very human existence where Love and Death keep watch together,—are all to be viewed in their ultimate reality as good, for they are all part of the divine will and purpose and their final significance is even now consciously present to the Absolute.

But it is just the strain of expectancy, the horror of destroyed

values, the slow and sometimes never-accomplished process of healing life, that constitute the evil of finite experience. If we could know in advance the fate of the life that is hanging in the balance, if we could discount our dead losses at some universal clearing house, and could experience here and now the ministry of healing days and months and years, then we, too, might understand the Absolute economy that Royce speaks of. But life is lived in time; and time means waiting, strain, expectancy, endurance. Time, in its human sense, is necessary for the production, the enjoyment, and the disappearance of values. Satisfaction in possession is closely linked up with the joys of expectation and the pangs of regret. If we could know in one conscious present the uncertainty of anticipation, the fact of possession, and the ultimate gain that comes from loss, wherein would be the significance of what we now describe as the value element of experience?

The conception of time is likewise closely bound up with the significance of action and purpose. Since Royce describes his own philosophy as Absolute Voluntarism, it is to be expected that the system make adequate provision for just these elements of action and purpose, but an Absolute philosophy of the type of Royce's is unable to do this. His world is a finished world. There can be no action, for everything is already done. There can be no purpose, for nothing remains to be done for which a purpose might be formed. The time-span is present; the world is here and now spread out before the Absolute consciousness with the divine purpose eternally fulfilled. But it is just the looking forward to the consummation of a purpose *not* now fulfilled that constitutes what we call by that name. When we say that a certain end was my purpose, and that it was realized or given up, then it is a dead purpose. It is in the pickling solution of retrospect. When I say, here and now my purpose is fulfilled, I thereby give myself the cue for the formation of new and unfulfilled purposes. Purposes look to the future. They represent potential existence. They may come to realization or they may not, and there is always connected with them an element of contingency, as they must await the passage of time. Ideally, the result is present; but if ideal presence were a guarantee of actual occurrence, one would never go to the trouble of forming plans and setting up ends at all. For it is just the fact that the coming to pass of the thing hoped for, the realization of the evidence of things unseen, depends on what I may do, upon my skill, my persistency, my ingenuity, or even upon aleatory elements over which I have no control, that causes my purpose to have a definite relation to my actions and to be a significant aspect of my self-expression. Purpose possesses

meaning only in the light of future contingency; and if for the Absolute there is no future and no contingency, he can not be said to have the power of setting up purposes.

The Incompatibility of Absolute Inclusiveness and Individuality

A final objection to Royce's conception of the Absolute Individual arises in connection with the infinite catholicity in accepting moral standards that such an individual must exhibit. Inconsistency of action is, of course, a common enough phenomenon. We say that no one is all bad or all good. But we do classify persons with reference to their common tendencies to action of different sorts in given situations. We say that a person has a strong individuality when he commonly acts decisively and consistently with standards that he clearly recognizes. He who is lacking in decision, or who fails to recognize any standard or plan of life that he may call his own, is described as being deficient in individuality; and when an extreme form of chameleon-like propensity is developed, we say of a man that he is a nobody, a nonentity.

If, now, we view the Absolute from the standpoint of the contradictory actions of the finite individuals that constitute his self-expression, he appears to be a moral nonentity. From the point of view of the preceding section, the Absolute has no choice of ends because the result is already accomplished. From the present point of view, he makes no choice of ends because he is both alternatives. He is the natural order that decreed the *Titanic* disaster, while at the same time he is the heroism of the dying, the heartache of the living, and the moral purpose of the investigations that followed the event. He is the stern economic order that decrees hard conditions of life and labor, while at the same time he is the suffering humanity, either wise or foolish, self-destroying or fate destroyed, that labors under the hated yoke. He is, furthermore, the spirit of philanthropy that strives for better conditions, the spirit of the Beloved Community that endeavors to link all men together in the embrace of a humane and other-regarding social regime. The love of the Absolute for the finite individual is compatible with any amount of cruelty; his wisdom, with any excess of stupid folly; his warfare on the side of right, with any victory for the party of evil. His ultimate triumph is consistent with infinite delay in bringing the triumph to pass. He is not "the fairest among ten thousand," for in his person he bears the blots and blemishes, the disfigurements and deformities, of every one of the ten thousand, along with their beauty and their strength. Such a conception as Royce's may be called an Individual; but in

the moral sense it can never mean what we are trying to express when we use the word in ordinary speech.

The implication of the incompatibility between individuality and all-inclusiveness for ethical and religious concerns is just this: the Absolute is neither the object of moral endeavor nor of religious fervor, for it is impossible to make a definitive statement of moral and religious purpose except in terms of selected ends which carry their own empirical values. It is of no small significance that Royce frames his ethical ideal, that of loyalty to loyalty, in empirical terms, and his religious ideal in the very practical, unmetaphysical conception of a Beloved Community. To be loyal to loyalty means, be loyal to such causes as can command your allegiance and to respect a like devotion on the part of others. The formula, indeed, seems to be needlessly abstract and to have its edge dulled by being compelled to include too much. For loyalty to B's loyalty on the part of A quite possibly cuts across the boundary line of their separate causes. A serves his flag and B, his, of a different nation. A's loyalty to B's loyalty is than a rather empty matter, for A is hacking might and main at B's cause. Except for the sound of the thing, they might as well be enemies. But both A and B may justly be supposed to be interested in furthering justice and equity upon the earth, and thus their common cause is large enough to include both their lesser loyalties. On the other hand, B may be consciously devoted to a cause that is in every sense incompatible with that of A. He may be engaged in an iniquitous traffic that opposes in spirit the promotion of happiness among men. In that case, A would seem to have no alternative except both to oppose B's cause and to attempt to break down his loyalty to that cause.

Royce's latest formulation of the object of the moral and the religious life represents the adoption of just some such universal cause, some such ideal of the spread of human values, as has been indicated above. In the "Problem of Christianity," he describes the object of Christian loyalty as the Beloved Community, in which all members are devoted to the upbuilding and the extension of a life of mutual forbearance, affection, and helpfulness. "Loyalty, in the individual, is his love for an united community, expressed in a life of devotion to that community."[16] "The realm of grace (synonymous with the Beloved Community) is the realm of the powers and the gifts that save, by thus originating and sustaining and informing the loyal life. The realm contains, at the very least, three essentially necessary constituent members: First, the ideally lovable community of many individuals in one spiritual bond; secondly, the

[16] I., p. 178.

spirit of this community, which is present both as the human individual whose power originated and whose example, whose life and death, have led and still guide the community, and as the united spiritual activity of the whole community; thirdly, Charity itself, the love of the community by all its members, and of the members by the community."[17] Royce, of course, does not identify the Beloved Community with the Universal Community of the Absolute Life, but rather regards it as a type of the latter. In so far as the Beloved Community exhibits the ideal of loyalty and is engaged in furthering the coming of the Absolute Community, it is consistent with his philosophy. Assimilate and apply the creed of loyalty "and you have grasped the principle of Christian institutional life in the past, and the principle which will develop countless new institutions in the future, and which will survive them."[18] We may sum up the religious bearings of the work in Royce's own words: "Aid toward the coming of the universal community by helping to make the work of religion not only as catholic as is already the true spirit of loyalty, but as inventive of new social arts, as progressive as is now natural science. So you shall help in making, not merely happy individuals (for no power can render detached individuals permanently happy, or save them from death or from woe). You shall aid towards the unity of spirit of those who shall be at once free and loyal."[19]

Royce has herein very acceptably described a most important aspect of true religion; but the arguments we have brought forward in this section lead us to consider it a mistake to suppose that the Universal Community that Royce would have us aid in bringing to pass, is in any sense identifiable with his Absolute. The finite individuals that are known as mankind, do not comprise any such community to-day, and it is problematical if they ever will. But mankind has made vast strides in that direction and we accept the working ideal that some day a true universal community may be realized. It is just such an ideal that we adopt as the great cause to which we are loyal. To posit this ideal as certain of realization, is simply to say that your faith is so strong that you must believe in the final outcome so firmly as to set it up as at present, here and now, assured. But as far as the logical consistency of Royce's Absolute is concerned, every man's hand might as well be lifted against his brother, and human ethical values might disappear from the face of the earth.

[17] I., p. 192. [18] II., p. 429. [19] II., pp. 431–32.

CHAPTER IV

A Descriptive Study of Religious Experience and the God-Concept

In a previous chapter of this paper we have followed the disintegration of the intellectual supports of Classical Christianity under the criticisms of modern science and philosophy. It is our belief that Kant has totally discredited the possible existence of the central figure of the Theistic and Deistic world-plans as a Being independent of the cosmos and human experience. He did this by placing such a conception outside the boundaries of scientific demonstration and making it unacceptable to the scientific sense. In addition, we have described the attempt of Absolute Idealism to establish the existence of God through a philosophy of religion. And as we have examined such systems as those of Hegel and Royce, we have been compelled to deny on the very basis of intellectual inconsistency the success of these efforts to manufacture a God out of whole cloth.

It is our belief that any attempt to elaborate a God through philosophy will fail. God must first exist to be discovered and described, or he does not exist at all. The work of science, and of philosophy as science, is to analyze, classify, delineate, explain; never to produce, except as better understanding is real production. Philosophy as applied in the study of religion must abide by the same rules of procedure. It can not produce a religion; it can only describe one as given. If it can be shown that God and religion have empirical sources, and if these sources can be laid bare, then we shall feel that a methodology will have been established that may be applied as well to the religion of Caliban as to that of Jesus or Paul. To this end, the writer will rehearse the anthropological commonplaces that go to show that religion was present in the life of mankind before the conception of any God arose; he will try to show that the conception of God has been very variable and has undergone, in our Western religion at least, continual change, and, finally, that just as religion has existed before the God-concept arose, just so it may exist at the present time after the demands of science have reduced the meaning of God to a name representative of certain values, that is adopted and used as a convenient and historically significant means of self-expression. In other words, our last point means that the conception of God as a Being represents an

historical phase of religion that modern scientific knowledge finds no place for; and that the religious man who is at the same time scientific adopts this name only as a convenient vehicle of self-representation.

1. *Religion below the Plane of the God-Concept*

Anthropologists have differed largely among themselves as to the meaning that should be conveyed by the term religion. Tylor, one of the pioneers in this field, would have the minimum definition of religion imply "the belief in spiritual beings." J. G. Frazer insists that the word religion should be limited to apply only to "a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life." This definition aimed to make a distinction between primitive scientific control and the worship of spiritual beings. Primitive men have been found to believe very generally "that the course of nature is determined, not by the passions or caprice of personal beings, but by the operation of immutable laws acting mechanically." Personal beings were to be propitiated by worship; the impersonal forces of nature were to be controlled by the possession of the proper charm or the performance of the proper ceremony, before which there was no denial.

This clear-cut distinction between religion and magic that Frazer made, has, however, been denied in the more recent anthropological literature. Rather, it seems that there is no division line between the two. Shotwell, in an article entitled "The Rôle of Magic"[1] says: "Religion was no special creation midway along the centuries of human groping; it was but the intenser action of that mystic power which lay at the heart of magic," And again, "For mana (the mysterious power behind contagion) does not die out when animism appears, nor when animism grows into anthropomorphism, nor even when polytheism passes away before monotheism. Its maleficent element grows less and less apparent and its beneficence more, until, as divine grace, it nourishes the faith and strengthens the moral purpose of the Christian world. In the sacraments of the Church it still works by the laws of sympathetic magic. In the realm of faith it has at last left the material media of its long prehistoric phase."[2] The point made by Professor Shotwell is well illustrated in our Western religious tradition by the automatically communicable magic of the ark, or pork, or of manna collected in quantity, as related of that phase of Hebrew religious evolution when Jehovah was as yet a polytheistic deity.

[1] *Am. Jour. of Soc.*, Vol. 15, p. 791.
[2] *Id.*, p. 791.

More recent attempts to define religion make it conterminous with the range of objects to be described by such words as sacra, hiera, mana, manitou, etc. Certain experiences of the primitive man seem to be more highly charged with the essence of life than others. It is as if the all-pervading current of reality produced sparks at certain given points, which thereafter represent *par excellence* the force behind life. Such places, persons, or things are set apart as different, exceptional. They are to be employed carefully, for, while rightly used they are powerful aids, wrongly used or carelessly approached, they are extremely dangerous. Hence the meaning of sacra, mana, etc.

The conception of mana appears in the religions of Melanesia. It means psychic energy of all kinds and is, essentially, created by human beings. It may, however, act through the medium of water, or a stone, or other natural object. The chief point in Melanesian religion is to get this mana for oneself or to get it used in one's behalf. Whatever has come to be regarded as mana exerts an extraordinary power.

The Algonkin conception of manitou is described by William Jones in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*,[3] in part as follows: "In the first place the term manitou is a religious word; it carries with it the idea of solemnity; and whatever the association it always expresses a serious attitude, and kindles an emotional sense of mystery. The conception involved in its use can best be shown by taking up some features of Algonkin religion.

"The essential character of Algonkin religion is a pure, naive worship of nature. In one way or another associations cluster about an object and give it a certain potential value; and because of this supposed potentiality, the object becomes the recipient of an adoration. The degree of the adoration depends in some measure upon the extent of confidence reposed in the object, and upon its supposed power of bringing pleasure or inflicting pain. The important thing with the individual is the emotional effect experienced while in the presence of the object, or with an interpreted manifestation of the object. The individual keeps watch for the effect, and it is the effect that fills the mind with a vague sense of something strange, something mysterious, something intangible. One feels it as the result of an active substance, and one's attitude toward it is purely passive.

"To experience a thrill is authority enough of the existence of the substance. The sentiment of its reality is made known by the fact that something has happened. It is futile to ask an Algonkin for an articulate definition of the substance, partly because it would be something about which he does not concern himself, and partly be-

[3] 18: 183–90.

cause he is quite satisfied with the sentiment of its existence. He feels that the property is everywhere, is omnipresent. . . .

"The ceremonial lodge is a holy symbol; it means a place where one can enter into communication with higher powers, where with sacrifice and offering, with music and dance one obtains audience and can ask for things beyond human control; it means a place where one can forget the material world and enjoy the experience of that magic spell which one feels is the sign that not only is one in the presence of the supernatural property, but in that of the beings who hold it in high degree. It is a function with a very definite purpose. It is to invoke the presence of an objective reality; the objectified ideal may be animate or inanimate. And the effect is in the nature of a pleasing thrill, a sense of resignation, a consolation. This effect is the proof of the presence of the manitou."

In summing up the meaning of primitive religion, R. R. Marett, in the article "Primitive Religion," Encyclopedia Britannica, says it is "the consecration of life, the stimulation of the will to live and to do." He adds that "this bracing of the vital feeling takes place by means of imaginative appeal to the great forces man perceives stirring within him and about him, such appeal proving effective doubtless by reason of the psychological law that to conceive strongly is to imitate." The general effect of contact with the sacred objects or "churinga," is said by Spencer and Gillen in their works on the Central Australian tribes, to be to make the tribesman "glad." It likewise makes him "good," so that he is no longer greedy and selfish. It endows him with second sight, gives him success and confidence in war, and strengthens him in unlimited ways.

2. *The Various Theisms*

Anthropology has as yet been unable to furnish a thoroughly satisfactory classification of religions in an ascending series. But it seems enough to say that religion begins in the primitive forms discussed in the preceding section and exhibits development until it reaches the plane of monotheism. The worship of sacred objects develops into animism, the worship of spirits. The savage, tripping over the vine that lay concealed in his path, feels that he has had a contact with an evil spirit. Returning from a bootless hunt, he blames his ill-fortune upon an unfriendly genius of the woods; or, staggering homeward under the heavy weight of spoils, he is careful to offer up to his good spirit the choicest morsel of the quarry. He lives in a world that is peopled with spirits. The river, the tree, the thunder-cloud, the fruitful field, the shining crystal, the peaceful moon, the life-giving rain, the grateful sunlight,—all are more than

just river, crystal, and sun: they are living spirits and have an attitude of praise or blame toward him. There are spirits of earth and sky and air; spirits of the nation, of the province, of the district, of the hills, of the lakes, of the grains: spirits that guard the crafts and guilds of the industries and agriculture; spirits for the household operations, for the kitchen range and the sauce-pot; spirits protecting the threshold, the door, the hinge; spirits fertilizing the land with water-springs, the givers of corn and wine and oil; spirits that guard the mores of the tribe and punish transgressions against the established ways of acting.

Group life, with its institution of common worship, tends to reduce to common possession all those values that represent the welfare of its members. Such aspects of their experience as appertain to all,—the group-ancestor, the arching sky, the broad river, the moon, the sun, or the storm-cloud, are celebrated in chant and dance and sacrifice. As any or all of these objects of experience become matters of common knowledge and regard, the culture of the group ministers to the perpetuation, the enlargement and the coordination of the tradition that concerns them. As one or other object of worship becomes preeminent within the group, a special cult arises and the deity gains in definiteness and distinctness of conception. Thus there develop gods of nature, such as Varuna, Dyaus, Neptune, Apollo, and Zeus; plant and animal deities; ancestral gods; gods of social institutions and national feeling, such as the hearth-fire gods, city gods and national deities; and gods that represent the sentiments and affections of men and consecrate their moral energies; as well as others too numerous to mention.

It is difficult to believe that religion is other than a natural psychological product. It begins with the conception of sacred objects that foster or decrease human values; it continues in the attribution of particular values to the control of certain spirits, and ends with the attribution of all, or at least much more numerous values to the disposal of a divinity or a group of divinities. No one is likely to question the subjective element in the process of god-making if the reference is to the phenomena of animism, for that is to be regarded as akin to a belief in ghosts. Nor is there likely to be any objection to one's saying that gods are subjective creations, arising out of the poetic impulse, if the term god is applied to the divinities of the Greek or Roman pantheon, the mythology of the Aryans or the Norse Saga. But when one attempts to show that God, the God we worship, was originally just such an autochthonic divinity, there is likely to be considerable demurring and frequently flat denial. To be sure, the God of the present-day Western tradition is not the same

as the God that brought the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but he is the lineal descendant of that God, Jehovah, who was one God out of many that arose among the Semites, just as Zeus and Apollo did among the Greeks, and was no more than the subjectively originated divinity who represented the values held dear to the descendants of Abraham.

One can ask for no better illustration of the elements that enter into the conception of a god, and of the progress through polytheism to monotheism, than the naturalistic, poetic creation of God at the hands of the Hebrew prophets and teachers, as represented in the course of the history of the Jewish people. Hebrew literature abounds in examples of the way in which those values that relate most directly to man's biological continuance and enjoymnet were attributed to Jehovah. It was he that gave or withheld fertility of soil, sunshine, rain, increase of flocks and herds, many children, long life and protection from enemies, disease and the violence of nature. He is the sublime and worshipful one, whom the psalmist apostrophizes and whose glories he sings.

The ethical values that Jehovah favors originate in the moral practises and ideals of the Hebrew tribe or nation, and are easily and spontaneously transferred to him. The beginning of the Hebrew tradition occurs when "Jehovah said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show unto thee." Jehovah was then not even a tribal god, but the patron divinity of a single family. He met with his protegés at springs of water, in clumps of trees, and upon high places, appearing in apparitions and dreams and talking with them in the most open and democratic way. He was no less approachable for Hagar, the servant in the tent of Abraham, than he was for the patriarch himself. His protection was over the members of the family, and he brought them peace and plenty. They worshipped him at the sacrificial meal, pouring out his portion upon the sacred rock or smearing the sacred pillar with fat and oil. In morals, he was as easy-going as they, and accepted the crude nomadic code. Abraham's harsh treatment of Hagar and his willingness to offer up his first-born son, Isaac, are imputed to him for righteousness. Jacob's deception of Isaac, aided and abetted by his mother Rebecca, a heroine of the early story, is related only as a tale worth the telling. Evidently, Jacob's moral obliquity (from our point of view) had no fatal consequences to his peace of mind, for on his journey from home to escape the wrath of Esau, he had reassuring heavenly visions. Lying, drunkenness, adultery, and incest are unrebuked elements in the moral life of the patriarchs.

The laws promulgated by Moses at the Mount exhibit a distinct advance over the earlier moral standards of the Hebrews; and, accordingly, they represent God as ethicized to the same degree. By this time, the exigencies of a more intricate group life have compelled and brought about a more involved and definite statement of mutual obligations and privileges within the tribe, although the members of the out-group remain as yet without moral status. At this stage of the historical development, Jehovah is thought of and worshipped as the giver of just laws for the governance of his chosen people. Whether or not Moses wrote the fundamental mores of his tribe upon tablets of stone and presented them to the people for ratification, is neither here nor there; but that the historic consciousness of the group recognizes the occurrence as a fact is all-important. When the people of Israel accepted their obligation to do the will of Jehovah, the God of Nature and the guardian of their national destinies, they brought deliberately into consciousness the moral demands of that divinity and took upon themselves the consequences of failure to fulfil their part of the contract. For, in that act, their relation to Jehovah became one of contract, entailing mutual obligations. Service of Jehovah on the part of the people was recognized as bringing national prosperity and tribal success; while a falling away in service was inevitably followed by loss of Jehovah's favor. And the converse was equally true; national or individual calamity was the sign of sin, secret or known, and prosperity was the indication of satisfactory performance of obligation.

When wider political contacts and crushing national vicissitudes in the late centuries of the Two Kingdoms had caused the religious geniuses of the day to see the cosmopolitanism of virtue and the world-sweep of moral movements, the religion of the Hebrews came to possess its universal significance. Jehovah is recognized as the guide of all national destinies and not as simply the champion of a given race. His function is no longer to guarantee the success and sanctity of a single set of mores, but he is recognized as the commander-in-chief of all the forces of good everywhere in the world. And if Jewish religion thus gains in universality, it gains no less in intensiveness. Each individual is to know his moral independence and his moral responsibility. Outward ceremonial gives way to inward experience. The fat of lambs and the blood of slain beasts are distasteful to a God who insists upon the sacrifice of an humble and contrite spirit. Mercy and justice and humility are required of man, but only such manifestations of a regenerated and purified life are of worth in God's sight.

The mouthpieces and the creators of religious opinion during this

period were the great spiritual innovators, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and others of scarcely less power. They studied the social and ethical conditions of their day and cried out against the greedy, swinish guilt of the orthodox followers of the cultus. Without hesitation, they ascribed to Jehovah characteristics that were called for in their own application of the principles of ancient custom, but missed in the formal application of law and rule, or voluntarily set aside. Of their own initiative they broke through the inconsistencies connected with using a tribal unit in ethical concerns and extended wide the frontiers of the moral kingdom. "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians to me, O children of Israel? saith Jehovah. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?"[4] They recognized new ethical values, produced by changed political and social conditions, and they unhesitatingly spoke of them as the requirements of Jehovah for his people. The prophets literally remade their God to include an intensive, spiritual, and universal morality.

The next phase of the developing Hebrew religion is to be regarded, from the standpoint of a later time and a more inclusive retrospect, as a backward step. Israel returns from captivity with a codified system of moral and religious practise, but without the political freedom that had been the main source of ethical movement in the earlier centuries of its history. An ecclesiastical feudalism takes the place of the monarchy. A petrified legal code is substituted for the free spiritual life that had fostered the insight and the influence of the prophets. Regulation and systematization of the religious practises, as laid down in a book of laws, supplant the former autonomy of worship. Scribes and lawyers are needed to interpret the intricacies of a general code when it is to be applied to the exigencies of daily practise; and their decisions come to represent precedent that may never be disregarded. Hebrew religion becomes the practise of a legal code, and God himself is made subservient to the power of the Book. As was to be expected, the spirit of life fled the religion of later Hebraism, and the dry bones of a static creed stultified the Holy of Holies of spiritual insight and moral endeavor.

The true succession of the Hebrew prophetical tradition occurs in the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, which represent the revolt of a truly religious and moral nature against the death of legalism and class pride. Steeped in the writings of the great prophets of an earlier day, and possessed in himself of a spirituality that was adequate to the work of ethical and religious innovation, Jesus interpreted to his fellow-men a conception of God and of the

[4] Amos, 9:7.

higher life that has not to the present day been superseded in our Western world and which seems to be universal in its appeal.

Jesus primarily conceived of God as a Father of humanity, and much has been made of this preference. In subsequent estimates of the significance of Jesus, the figurative expression has been exalted to the plane of literal fact. Our own belief is that Jesus no more thought of himself as the only son than did the Psalmist who applied the name father to Jehovah. Jehovah is a Father just as he is a Shepherd, a Protector and Shield, a Teacher, a Judge, or a Rock in a Weary Land. Jesus's choice of the word father to express his conception of Jehovah, is to be understood on the basis of the ethical values he recognized. These values were of the inner spiritual life, intimate and personal. Of utmost importance for him was the maintenance in an individual of a proper motive or attitude, which was the having at heart of the interests of all men. For Jesus, the human race represents a vast brotherhood, all sons of a common Father. He recognized the Father as the source and preserver of all values, both those that reside in the objects of the physical environment and those that have their existence in moral relations. We pray, "Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts" as we exhibit thy spirit in our dealings with thine other children.

Jesus considered himself the lineal descendant of Jewish religious tradition. He came not to destroy the Law, but that it might be fulfilled in the true spirit of its underlying principles. He literally preaches anew the messages of the prophets. His conception of God combines the elements of universal power and absolute goodness. God is all-powerful for good. His kingdom shall come upon earth and is being daily furthered. To be of this kingdom necessitates a state of mind of which the keynote is expansiveness of interest. If your life is to be one with God, says Jesus, exemplify in your dealings with mankind the same solicitude and love that God exhibits toward you. The Universe is friendly to you; then should you also be friendly to men. The call is to a great mission: Be ye perfect even as God is perfect. And as a preparation for this mission, recognize your own weakness and unfitness. Cleanse your heart of pride and self-satisfaction, becoming as a little child, and thus make room for the thoughts and actions that are of God's kingdom. Gain your own worth from the greatness of the cause you serve. Live in the lives and interests of others. Sow the seed of altruism and reap the harvest of a richer, deeper soul-life for yourself.

3. *A Religion Compatible with Modern Science*

We have watched the development of religion from its most primitive forms to its manifestation in an ethical monotheism. In the whole story of this spiritual evolution there has been little notice taken of intellectual consistency. Certainly it was present, but it operated within the easy boundaries of poetry. The point of view taken is well represented by Hocking in "The Meaning of God in Human Experience," when he says, "Taking religious ideas literally and fixedly is, in fact, a modern and Western peculiarity. The Oriental mind realizes that the spiritual atmosphere that men or gods may breathe, must be *created;* it knows nothing of empirical truth in matters of religion, truth passively taken; and postulate joins hands with poetry in constituting the medium in which all spirituality may live."[5]

When men began to cast their observations and theories regarding reality in the stable moulds of fact, when they left off telling tales, philosophy began. The history of Greek philosophy is a progressive record of the overthrow of simple faith in poetic creations, in favor of an intellectually consistent formulation of reality. The first mature systems of Greek philosophy were the materialism of Democritus and the idealism of Plato. Both may be called scientific, but both were speculative science. The latter has been closely connected with the structure of classical Christianity, for which it afforded an intellectual groundwork that so perfectly corresponded with the poetic religion of the Jews that for long centuries the hybrid formed of their union was able to meet the spiritual needs of the people of the Western world. But when a new spirit of inquiry, based on the observation and the manipulation of experience came into vogue in Western Europe, the speculative science of the Greeks was irretrievably overthrown, dogmatic materialism as well as dogmatic idealism falling before the critical philosophy of Kant. The story of this disintegration of the intellectual supports of classical Christianity has been told in a previous chapter and the attempts of speculative philosophy to build anew the walls of a ruined temple have been viewed and discarded. What we now propose is to take with us the method that has, in the preceding section of this chapter, described for us and made understandable the meaning and the evolution of religions among men, into the experiences of a modern life, with the expectation, not of creating a religion and a God, but of finding a vital, inspiring, and satisfying contact with reality that will prove to be the religion that we are seeking; and of then being

[5] P. 149.

able to define the meaning of God with reference to the experience thus discovered.

It will be said at once by the reader and critic that the God of the ages of faith described in the foregoing section was believed in as an entity, a Being that had independent, personal existence, whereas the man who has analyzed out the elements that enter into the conception of God and has explained his existence as residing in certain values, can only be practising self-deception in making an appeal or voicing a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to his own psychological product. It is not the writer's purpose to try to underestimate the thorough-going difference in standpoint that his description involves as against the attitude of an age of faith. It must be admitted that science limits the grounds of faith. When the lightning bolt is the missile of Jove and the thunder is the voice of Jehovah, there is much greater room for religious expression than when lightning is known as an electric spark that finds its point of discharge according to physical laws, and when thunder is known as the result of sudden heating and expansion of the atmosphere. Pestilence in a scientific age does not mean the hand of God, but it signifies the presence of germ-breeding filth and bad sanitary conditions. Boils are not the special dispensation of God but are the result of bad blood. The more there is of knowledge of the conditions governing any phase of human interest and activity, the less there is of mystery. Under modern conditions of scientific agriculture it is impossible to conceive of the worship of a Baal, or soil-god. A crop depends upon known or ascertainable conditions of soil, heat and moisture. When a crop fails, instead of feeling that Baal has been unfavorable, one knows that the land needs bone fertilizer or barnyard manure; or that his agricultural project has been hindered by an unusually low temperature, or an amount of rainfall below that which is known as essential.

It will be said that scientific knowledge and control have driven mystery and prayer out of human experience; that science has banished God. Certainly a great deal of what was included in the conception of God has been removed through the prevalence of rational controls, and if God were only a particular Being with a particular sphere of influence, or if he were a concept with a specific content, once for all given and unchangeable, it would be true that God is dead and that the age of religion is past. But religion existed before any god whatsoever was thought of,—before mankind had developed an intellectual life capable of conceiving reality in terms of gods and goddesses. If religion existed before it was objectified in god-worship, it is to be presumed that it repre-

sents a function of experience that is present even after an intellectual criterion has developed that refuses to allow the description of the religious aspects of life in the poetical language of myth and theology. The writer takes the position that religion is a function of life, and that wherever men are alive to the meaning and possibilities of life, it will be present.

Obviously, the next thing to be done in the development of our thesis is to present, as far as possible, the religious experience of a modern man who is as thoroughgoing in his intellectual life as the scientific attitude compels him to be. This does not mean that every modern man will have the experiences described, for religion is, like many other experiences, somewhat of a specialty. But we shall hope to describe some of the religious experiences of a man whom we shall choose and whom you will recognize, perhaps, in your colleague and neighbor, and in yourself.

The writer admits at the outset the lack of a scientific criterion of the choice of experiences that he will denominate as religious. He offers a tentative list, at the same time recognizing that he has probably erred on the side of omission, and possibly on the side of inclusion. The list as given has been chosen with reference to four criteria: first, the salient points of experience that have been taken account of in so numerous religions and mythologies; second, the literature of the occidental religious tradition (excepting always the other-world emphasis of an eschatology based on Greek metaphysics); third, the messages of modern prophetic agencies, particularly the pulpit that is in touch with modern life as seen through the medium of social science; and, fourth, such introspections into his own experience as seem to the writer to correspond to what others call religion. The method pursued is not, to be sure, rigorously scientific, but it seems to be impossible at the present writing to reduce the conception in mind to more satisfactory form.

To begin with, a certain kind of mystery enters into some of the experiences that are generally recognized as religious, as, for example, the mystery of the cosmos, of birth and of death. The mere brute presence of the universe, without beginning and without end in time and without limit in space, is a matter that presents the thoughtful man with characteristic feelings. It is not merely a puzzle that confronts him, but a mystery of a degree of finality that completely baffles him. The potency of this experience is exhibited in the cosmological proof of the existence of God, for men felt themselves compelled to explain the mystery by positing God as the first cause of it all. Kant's logic showed the futility of such an easy way out of the dilemma, but even in the presence of his proof of the im-

possibility of proof of a beginning, the existent fact of cosmic reality finds men in the same attitude of mysterious awe as caused them in a less critical age to call the name of God. The same feeling of mystery is present when one looks at a new-born babe. You may know the facts of embryology, but that does not lessen the wonder of this new-created life. Protoplasmic cells were transmuted from the commonplace materials of ordinary diet into muscular and nervous and other tissue, and now it lives, a human being fraught with all the possibilities of existence. Had it failed to wail, had it failed to breathe, it had not been. That little difference between being and not-being as a living organism is the point at which one always sticks and before which one bows in reverence. Closely akin to the mystery that accompanies the beginning of life is that which is present when death puts in its claim. Here was a man even as you and I; a friend, a business associate, who moved and talked and laughed. Now he is cold. He is not here. Where has he gone? What has happened to him? We are impatient when it is answered his heart stopped beating, his breathing ceased. A fool could say as much. But what has happened, we ask? and no answer is forthcoming.

Then, too, men find themselves worshipful in the presence of the perfection of the natural world. This experience was long taken as an infallible proof of the existence of God. If a thing exhibits foresight and design, men naturally think that there is foresight and design back of it. Rocks do no fall together by accident to form bridges and cathedrals; wheels and pivots do not spontaneously collect themselves into a watch. On the same analogy, the world, a larger device, does not come into existence haphazard, but by design; and, therefore, as explanatory of the perfection of nature, men have posited God as its maker and builder. One may be thoroughly familiar with the Kantian criticism of the validity of this proof, as given in other pages of this paper, but the facts that led men to embark upon that way of demonstration are yet present. One has but to think of the precision of movement of the heavenly bodies; has but to see a man and know what processes are involved in his moving and thinking; has only to observe the instinctive life of bee or bird,—to feel a sense of reverent worship in the presence of the facts observed.

Again, one has a feeling of personal insignificance as he views the sublime aspects of nature. When one looks up at the starlit heavens above him and has a feeling of the stupendous distances, the mighty masses, the unthinkable forces, that are involved in celestial mechanics; when he tries to imagine the wealth of numbers of those glowing points or to find a limit to their presence in space; when he

allows the sheer beauty and majesty and peace of it all to enter his mind and dwell there, he has had an experience that should be named religious.

Not only does one have this feeling of personal insignificance in the presence of the greatness and the vastness of the natural world, but before other aspects of it as well. He is reduced to awesome fear by its uncontrollable force. Rivers at flood, overflowing their banks and destroying property and life; ocean storms, with waves running mountainously, tossing about as if they were corks upon a rivulet the mightiest engines of war and commerce that man's ingenuity can produce, and swallowing up men's hopes without feeling or remorse; the devastating tornado, crumpling up the buildings of human hands as if they were cardboard and exacting its toll of death and destruction; the dread terror of the thunderbolt, instantaneous and incalculable,—all such meetings bring men upon their knees.

Furthermore, man is controlled, even in his most practical and commonplace activities, by contingencies that beset him behind and before, and render at naught his most cherished purposes. The seed that one plants in the ground, after toilsome preparation and with anticipation of an abundant crop, lives a precarious existence and dies fruitless for want of rain. The growing cornfield, full of promise of sustenance for man and beast, is stripped bare by the devastating hail. The life begun with every promise of success and usefulness, falls by the way, the victim of accident or disease; and you say farewell to the friend of your heart when his race stops in full career. Man's life, from the day of his birth to the day of his death, is waylaid with contingencies. To be sure, this thought is not sufficient to destroy the optimism of life, but it is certainly enough to temper our happiness with sadness, to slow up our headlong pursuits, and to give a certain depth and seriousness to character. Man can never be sufficient to himself; he can not even find self-sufficiency in his labors, his friendships, and his ideals. There is always a residue of uncharted possibility which is present to lay him by the heels; and the man who truly knows life and is reverent before it, recognizes the limit of foresight and prediction.

One has, moreover, a religious feeling in the presence of the benevolence of nature. As one walks abroad after a rain that has drenched the soil and brought renewed growth to the plant world and comfort to man and beast, he feels within him the stir of elemental feelings of worship that are as old as the race. The renewal of life in the springtime, after the long dominion of frost is over, and the gathering of the harvest in midsummer and autumn, no less awaken within one the sense of the goodness of his station. Indeed, if there were

not more of security than of harm, of success than of failure, of life than of death, our God would not be a loving God; our religion would not be one of hope, but would be one of despair; our deity would be a devil. To be sure, storms are comparatively few, and accidents more frequent in anticipation than in realization. We pursue our cherished ends, on the whole, successfully and unafraid. Life is rich, or tolerable, and always desirable. At the last analysis, this positive valuation put upon life is the foundation of our occidental religion and philosophy. The habit and the anticipation of success build bridges from past enjoyments of the goodness of life over the pitfalls and morasses of accident and loss and failure, to the solid ground of future realization of predominant welfare. And thus arises a conception of life as good, and of the universe as, on the whole, friendly to our personal issues.

The religious feelings that have so far been described have related to man's reaction in the presence of his physical environment. Others, yet to be named, are representative of experiences that he has as a member of a social group. Man's ethical life has always been of profound concern to himself and others, and has, with equal unanimity of practise, been put under the protection of divinities or has been their particular and jealous interest. As a practical example of this fact, we have seen how successively widening ethical standards were automatically applied to Jehovah in the course of Hebrew history. In attempting to single out the particular feelings or experiences that are related to this aspect of religion, three seem to stand out as predominant, namely, a feeling of personal worth and significance, a pervasive and warming expansiveness of sympathy, and an invigoration of action in accordance with one's standards and ideals.

We have said that there is something about man's natural environment that tends to produce in him a sense of personal insignificance. When he views life "*sub specie aeternitatis,*" his selfhood shrivels up. But in the ethical realm he comes into his own heritage; he is on human ground. He is a significant part of the process of ethicising conduct that has gone on only through such as he. If we employ figurative language, we may say that God has always spoken his ethical messages through men. The prophet is as necessary to the act of revelation as is the spiritual, divine source. In that way the prophet takes on a divine character, too, and has personal worth. Denuded of the figures of speech, such a statement as the foregoing means that men from time to time have turned their attention vigorously and undividedly to the subject of human conduct and have gained insights that they have regarded as worthy, even divine, and

that the call has been upon them to give to others their own light. This sense of expert knowledge and of commission to speak, operates in the direction of magnifying and intensifying the feeling of personal worth.

We have spoken of the close connection between ethical invention or virtuosoship and the sense of personal worth, but it is not to be implied that the condition of originality is essential to the latter experience. One may gain an enlarged selfhood through mere enlistment in ethical enterprises,—through a personal ratification and adoption of ideals that one finds existent. Indeed, such is likely to be the beginning of all ethical enthusiasm. This sense of rediscovery of ethical values, this enlistment in the army of the Lord, if you please, is accompanied by an experience that is unique. It is one of warmth and expansiveness of affection, of the presence of a general or universal sympathy. There is a feeling that one would do largely and well, that he would like to remake the world to a better pattern, that one would increase by one's own efforts and enthusiasm the sum-total of human welfare in the world. Probably such experiences are more frequent and more powerful in one's early life, especially during adolescence, but it certainly may be present on later occasions as well. There will be times when one seems to be better than oneself; when he would devote himself immediately and unreservedly to an ethical cause or to all ethical causes. His experience is catholic in its inclusiveness of good causes. Such meetings as these are the mountain peaks of the ethical life. It is on such occasions that one builds tabernacles and worships. One's main difficulty is that one is not able to bring all of the potentially realized power down into the plane of every-day existence. One's faith is too small to perform all the miracles that one had proposed.

There is a parallel to the facts above described in the history of a love. There are times when mind and body conspire to make the sympathy and the loyalty of two persons for one another a very poignant realization. The lovers skip over the ever-present clods and boulders and pitfalls of moral and mental and social differences, of drudgery, of poverty, mayhap, without any realization of the existence of such things. But the pace will come to be less furious, and obstacles will have to be reckoned with. Happy is that love which finds itself able to walk and not faint, to furnish an ever-present store of affection to infuse the drudgery of life with its essence, to insure mutual contribution to compromise, to overlook the weakness, the latent incapacity, the mistakes that most lives will furnish in abundant measure. But all these things love can do and continually does do. Just so, the experiences that men have upon the mountain-

tops of ethical vision, while lost in their original freshness and poignancy, follow them down into every-day, practical life, to invigorate them in the pursuit of their vocations and to strengthen them in the service of their causes. This, then, is the third specific character that appears in the religious experience as it develops in connection with the social life: a sense of direction, a knowledge of purpose, a consciousness of satisfaction, even joy, in the doing of one's every-day duty as it appears in one's vocation, in one's family life, or in any other capacity that one's social setting establishes for him.

The objection may be raised that the elements named herein as entering into and constituting the religious experience are too few and make that experience too meager. It may be said, however, that the elements chosen are fundamental and far-reaching, embracing man's reaction to the cosmic mother that brings him forth and sustains him, and his self-expression as a man among men. Furthermore, there is no reason to suppose that religion is a complex matter. Many centuries ago, a religious expert made a pronouncement upon the subject to the effect that the essence of religion is ethical conduct and reverence before life.[6] These fundamental attitudes are, of course, modified and elaborated by the entire experience of the individual who exhibits them. The attitude toward nature as shown in the primitive Bushman or Algonkin, in the theologizing Greek or Jew, and in the modern man highly developed in his knowledge of causes and controls, will differ according to his understanding and means of description. The invigoration of the will of the Melanesian follows the line of Melanesian ethical standards. So likewise of the Greek, or Jewish, or any other race. The Christian of the early Middle Ages was impelled by his mystic experiences of God to seek him in terms of self-denial and the castigation of his body; the Christian of the present day finds his activity heightened in ways suggested by the prevalent social ethics.

We have described religion at the beginning of this chapter as a natural psychological product, and have tried to indicate in very brief fashion the development of religion as related to successively higher intellectual and ethical backgrounds. We believe that the term natural is correctly applied not only to the rude gropings of primitive man, but to the reaction to his total environment on the part of the man exhibiting the most highly developed intellectual and ethical standards. Our final task has been an attempt to exhibit a religion that no longer takes account of a Being called God, having

[6] Micah, 6: 6–8.

specific, individual reality independent of the sense of biological and ethical values as resident in the experiences of human beings.

If it be allowed that we have described a religious experience without having had recourse to the conception of God, there yet remains the question whether such religion has any use for that conception. The answer must be carefully stated. If by God is meant a Being independent of the causal series of the given natural universe, and independent of those human values and human intellectual tendencies that have, according to our description, resulted in his creation at the hands of mankind, then the answer is that the presumed existence of such a Being is contrary to facts supported by the best intellectual standards and usages of our day. If, on the other hand, by the term God is meant a name for a set of experiences that are described as religious, then there is every reason for the retention and use of the word.

The reality of religion is just the same as the reality of fear, ambition, or the paper on which you read these lines. What is fear, for example, except a name that stands for certain experiences? Detach the word fear from its meaning and it is a strange, unrelated, and crazy thing. Spell it, say it aloud, look at it detached from its setting on the page; and what have you? Or paper! What is paper but the things you do with it? the impressions you get of it? Take it apart from its meaning and you have nothing. It does not seem reasonable to condemn the significance of names because they are only names; for they lead us up into the presence of our realities and, in fact, stand so close to those realities that they are thought of and used as the very realities themselves.

The writer would use the name God in the same way that he uses any other name; in fact, in the same way many races have used the names of their religious beings. Venus was to the Greeks not merely the name of the goddess of love and beauty; Venus *was* love and beauty. The Greeks caught the reality in the name. The reality as named was their divinity. Just so, it is not thought by the writer to be in any sense derogatory to the dignity of God that he be known as a named reality. God is the symbol of a set of experiences called religious. He is not an invention of a lively brain, or the mere product of a philosophical interest. God is the name for the reality of religious experiences; the religious experiences are the reality of God. God and religion are synonymous, and both stand for the reality of a realized or realizable experience. To say that one has God in his life is to say that he is religious. Both names, God and religion, are only convenient means of representing the meant facts, without which both would be strange and meaningless sounds.

The objection will probably be raised that the use of the word God has been preempted in favor of another conception that conveys the meaning, among others, of independent, substantial existence, and that it shows a lack of initiative to take an old name to cover a new meaning. Outside of the fact that such is always the fate of words, it might be said that the similarity between the two conceptions is more important than their differences. There is the unlikeness of a slightly different projection. In the one case, God is projected beyond experience; in the other, he lives within it. But both conceptions represent the same experiences and operate through the same functions. If one wants to make himself understood when he talks about the facts of religion, he can do so by using the name of God. If he wishes to participate in the religious thoughts and feelings of another, he will translate in his own way the use which that one makes of God. Even if he is talking with some one of like mind with himself, he will use the word God as a means of clear and concise self-expression. Accordingly, there is every reason for the continued use of the name God to signify our religious experiences, as it makes for continuity in the religious tradition of the Western world, and furnishes a simple and poetic method of describing a set of experiences that are not too clearly defined but very generally comprehended.

It seems necessary to anticipate and try to meet a final objection to our thesis. It will be said that such a God as has been described is no God at all. His existence is dependent wholly upon a human individual. If that individual has the experiences herein described, then God is; if he does not have them, then God is not. The problem as stated has at least two references. One of these is to the continuity of the God experience in the life of any individual. It will be said that the feelings on which the God-consciousness hinges are comparatively infrequent; and where is God in the meantime? In answer, it may be advanced that, although the most significant meetings are occasional, they throw their influence over the intervals between; they color the whole of one's experience and finally come to infuse their spirit into an habitual way of conceiving reality and confronting life. Neither must one lose sight of the fact that in the lives of many persons who conceive of God as a Being, he sometimes appears to be absent. Even in that supreme experience of courage and self-sacrifice of Jesus, he had a feeling that God had forsaken him; and many lesser men have had the same experience for longer periods than the momentary eclipse that the Master's faith suffered. Indeed, it may be said that some men are forsaken and call in vain.

A second reference of the problem stated is to those lives that never experience God, or religion, at all. It is said that God exists

whether wicked and callous men know him or not. But how different is the position of men who do not know God under either of the two conceptions of God's being? If God is worth taking account of at all, to know him is of positive worth. That man who is hard and unresponsive, who does not expand to the meaning of life, has already had his sad reward. If the opponent is thinking of a God who will clap the sinner into hell after he dies, there may be a practical advantage, even if an ethical loss, in the conception of God as a Being. But, brought down to the level of concrete facts, the different conceptions see the unreligious man in the same light.

4. *Practical Conclusions*

The practical religious situation to-day exhibits a strange medley of intellectual points of view. There are men (and I am speaking now of men who possess intellectual interests) who understand God's nature and prove his existence in terms of the dogmatic rationalism that represents the spirit of Greek thought. There are others whose intellectual setting for their religious experience is some form of post-Kantian Idealism. There are yet others who frankly say that they do not know what God is nor how to prove his existence, but their firm conviction that he is and that he is working mightily for good, affords them all the assurance they require for hearty service. On the other hand, we see a very fair unanimity of opinion in regard to the values that are worth preserving and propagating. Religion has ceased, in a large measure, to be an other-world interest and is concerned with the promotion of social values that represent the progressive ethical spirit of the times. The missionary movement, for example, is not bidding for support on the grounds that heathen may be saved from hell, but that an opportunity may be given to carry to those lands that are socially backward, those ideas and practises that make for the larger, richer life here on earth. And so, in countless lines of effort, the churches are exhibiting a concern for such values as are fully abreast of the best ethical feeling of the generation.

This substantial agreement in ethical aims that is exhibited in current religious life, as contrasted with the confusion of intellectual formulas, is a matter for congratulation. It is hardly to be expected that all men will ever reach the same plane of understanding, or that they will ever attain unanimity of belief; it is a present fact that they have already largely attained a unity of purpose. But if, as we have said and tried to show in this paper, intellectual consistency in religion is essential only to the extent of being able to free the life for wholesouled action, and the really important thing is to live

consciously and steadfastly in the presence of the highest human values, then surely disagreements in regard to intellectual settings may be discounted and largely ignored in the presence of single-minded zeal for the furtherance of the universal kingdom of peace and good-will.

VITA.

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